



SACRAMENTO AREA COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

**Final Environmental Impact Report
for the
2020 Metropolitan Transportation Plan/
Sustainable Communities Strategy**

State Clearinghouse # 2019049139

Prepared by:
Sacramento Area Council of Governments
1415 L Street, Suite 300
Sacramento, California, 95814
November 2019

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**SACOG NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY
OF THE FINAL MTP/SCS, FINAL MTP/SCS ENVIRONMENTAL
IMPACT REPORT, AMENDMENT #18 TO THE MTIP, AND
AIR QUALITY CONFORMITY ANALYSIS**

The Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) is pleased to announce the release of the following documents on November 14, 2019:

- Final 2020 Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Community Strategy (MTP/SCS)
- Final EIR (FEIR) on the 2020 MTP/SCS
- Final Amendment #18 to the 2019-21 Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (MTIP)
- Final Air Quality Conformity Analysis, associated with the proposed MTP/SCS and MTIP

A public meeting will be held on November 18, 2019, by the SACOG Board of Directors at 1415 L Street, Suite 300, Sacramento CA, to consider adoption of this package of final documents.

Copies of the documents are available as follows:

- Access online at <https://www.sacog.org/2020-metropolitan-transportation-plansustainable-communities-strategy-update>
- Review printed copy during normal business hours at SACOG offices prior to November 18, 2019
- Request a printed copy for a fee or an electronic copy for free from SACOG

Contact SACOG staff with any questions at 916-321-9000.

Issued November 14, 2019.

CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION

PURPOSE OF THIS FINAL EIR

This document has been prepared to respond to comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR – State Clearinghouse No. 2019049139) prepared for the Draft 2020 Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (Draft MTP/SCS). SACOG updates the MTP/SCS every four years, or more frequently, in order to plan for the long-range transportation needs of the region and ensure that the region remains eligible to receive federal and state transportation dollars for public transit, street/road, bicycle and pedestrian improvements. Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the Draft EIR analyzes the potential adverse environmental impacts associated with implementation of the Draft MTP/SCS and recommends mitigation measures to reduce potentially significant impacts. This FEIR contains all comments on the Draft EIR received during the public review period, provides responses to comments on the Draft EIR, and identifies revisions to the Draft EIR, as necessary, in response to comments or to amplify and clarify material in the Draft EIR. SACOG has determined that the identified revisions do not alter the conclusions of the Draft EIR.

This document has been prepared by SACOG pursuant to CEQA and the State CEQA Guidelines (14 California Code of Regulations [CCR] 15000 et seq.), and together with the Draft EIR, constitutes the Final EIR for the proposed project.

SUMMARY OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT

The plan area for the proposed MTP/SCS includes the counties of El Dorado, Placer, Sacramento, Sutter, Yolo and Yuba counties, exclusive of the Tahoe Basin. The plan area encompasses 3,859,812 acres (6,030 square miles) and contains 686,847 acres of developed land (as of 2016). To accommodate a projected increase of approximately 620,500 people, 260,000 new housing units and 270,000 new employees in the region through the year 2040, the proposed MTP/SCS projects the development of an additional 46,400 acres of land.

The proposed MTP/SCS includes a set of capital and operational improvements to the regional transportation system including road, bicycle, pedestrian, and transit projects. The plan also includes maintenance and rehabilitation activities to preserve the existing and expanded transportation system through 2040. Funding to support the transportation investments in the proposed MTP/SCS comes from a number of federal, state and local sources, each with specific purposes and restrictions. In total, SACOG forecasts \$34.9 billion in revenues over the planning period. The transportation projects contained in the proposed MTP/SCS are matched to the available revenues for the planning period.

The project requires a conformity determination under the federal Clean Air Act section 176(c), to be made by the Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Transit Administration. This conformity determination requires a consultation process involving the Metropolitan Planning Organization (SACOG is the MPO for the Sacramento region), state and local air quality

planning agencies, state and local transportation agencies, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and the U.S. Department of Transportation. Other public agencies may use this EIR in their decision-making regarding future land use and transportation projects, as described in Chapter 2, Project Description, of the Draft EIR (see Section 2.8.4 on pages 2-49 through 2-54). These agencies include local governments within the plan area, state agencies, regional transportation planning agencies within the plan area, public transit providers, air districts, Native American tribes, colleges and university transportation providers and transportation management associations, among others.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW PROCESS

SACOG used several methods to solicit public input on the project and environmental analysis. These methods included the following:

- distribution of a Notice of Preparation on April 25, 2019
- a scoping meeting on May 9, 2019
- filing of a Notice of Completion (NOC) and copies of the Draft EIR with the State Clearinghouse on September 20, 2019
- circulation of a Notice of Availability (NOA) of the Draft EIR on September 23, 2019
- distribution of the Draft EIR for a comment period of September 23, 2019 through November 7, 2019
- four public hearings to receive oral and written comments were held as described below:
 - 1) October 3, 2019 at the SACOG Transportation Committee meeting at the SACOG offices, on the MTIP and Air Quality Conformity Analysis
 - 2) October 6, 2019 at the Folsom Community Center, on the Draft MTP/SCS
 - 3) October 16, 2019 at the Woodland Senior and Community Center, on the Draft MTP/SCS
 - 4) October 24, 2019 at the SACOG offices, on the Draft MTP/SCS and the Draft EIR
- release of this FEIR on November 14, 2019.

The Draft EIR was distributed to various public agencies, responsible agencies and interested organizations and individuals. Copies of the document were made available at the SACOG office and at public county libraries in the six-county SACOG region. The public was notified of the availability of the Draft EIR through SACOG's website (www.sacog.org) and various electronic communications. Electronic copies of the documents were made available on SACOG's website. The report was made available for public review and comment for a total 45-day period. The

agency review period established by the State Clearinghouse commenced on September 20, 2019 and expired on November 7, 2019.

CONTENTS OF THIS FINAL EIR

CEQA requires that a Final EIR consist of the Draft EIR; revisions to the Draft EIR; comments and recommendations received on the Draft EIR; a list of persons, organizations, and public agencies commenting on the Draft EIR; the responses of the lead agency to significant environmental points raised in the review and consultation process; and any other information added by the Lead Agency (Section 15132 of the CEQA Guidelines). The content and format of this Final EIR were developed to meet the requirements of CEQA and the State CEQA Guidelines.

This Final EIR meets the requirements of CEQA and the State CEQA Guidelines as follows:

- Chapter 1, “Introduction,” provides a summary of the proposed project and gives an overview of the EIR process.
- Chapter 2, “List of Commenters,” includes a list of all commenters who submitted written or oral comments during the review period.
- Chapter 3, “Comments and Responses on the Draft EIR,” explains the method used to respond to comments, includes written and oral comments of all agencies, organizations, and individuals commenting on the Draft EIR, and provides responses to all comments received.
- Chapter 4, “Revisions to the Draft EIR,” includes excerpts from the Draft EIR showing revisions or changes to the original document text.
- Chapter 5, “List of Preparers,” lists the people responsible for preparing this Final EIR.

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CHAPTER 2 – LIST OF COMMENTERS

The list that follows identifies all comment letters received on the MTP/SCS Draft EIR. Each letter is numbered, and the author, agency and date received are provided.

1- Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation, Matthew Lowell	10/17/2019
2- Delta Stewardship Council, Jeff Henderson	10/25/2019
3- California Department of Fish and Wildlife, Kevin Thomas	11/4/2019
4- Delta Protection Commission, Erik Vink	11/7/2019
5- Walk Sacramento, Chris Holm	11/7/2019
6- CA Clean Energy, Eugene Wilson	11/7/2019
7- 350/ECOS, Laurie Litman/Ralph Propper	11/6/2019
8- ECOS, Ralph Propper	11/7/2019
9- SACOG Public Hearing #3	10/24/2019
10- Governor's Office of Planning and Research, Scott Morgan	11/7/12019

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CHAPTER 3 – COMMENTS AND RESPONSES TO COMMENTS

Written responses to each comment letter received on the Draft EIR are provided in this chapter. All letters received during the public review period that contained comments on the Draft EIR are provided in their entirety. The letters are listed in the order that they were received by staff. SACOG conducted four public hearings around the region to receive oral comments on the Draft 2020 MTP/SCS and/or Draft EIR. The hearing dates and locations were as follows:

- 1) October 3, 2019 at the SACOG Transportation Committee meeting at the SACOG offices, on the MTIP and Air Quality Conformity Analysis
- 2) October 6, 2019 at the Folsom Community Center, on the Draft MTP/SCS
- 3) October 16, 2019 at the Woodland Senior and Community Center, on the Draft MTP/SCS, and
- 4) October 24, 2019 at the SACOG offices, on the Draft MTP/SCS and the Draft EIR

Each comment letter has been numbered consistent with the list in Chapter 2. Within each letter, distinct comments have been bracketed and numbered consecutively. Relevant responses follow each letter using comment numbering for reference. For example, the response to the first comment in Letter 1 is Response to Comment 1-1.

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YOCHA DEHE
CULTURAL RESOURCES

October 7, 2019

SACOG
Attn: MTP/SCS Comments
1415 L Street, Suite 300
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Sacramento Area Council of Governments – Metropolitan Transportation Plan

Dear Sir:

Thank you for the notice of public hearing letter dated, September 23, 2019, regarding cultural information on or near the proposed SACOG Metropolitan Transportation Plan, Yolo County. We appreciate your effort to contact us and wish to respond.

1-1

The Cultural Resources Department has reviewed the project and concluded that it is within the aboriginal territories of the Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation. Therefore, we have a cultural interest and authority in the proposed project area.

1-2

Based on the information provided, the Tribe has concerns that the project could impact known cultural resources. Please send us the draft environmental impact report for this project.

Should you have any questions, please contact the following individual:

Kristin Jensen, CRD Administrative Assistant
Yocha Dehe Wintun Nation
Office: (530) 796-0105
Email: kjensen@yochadehe-nsn.gov

1-3

Please refer to identification number YD-04132012-01 in any correspondence concerning this project.

Thank you for providing us with this notice and the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Matthew Lowell, Jr.
Tribal Treasurer/Tribal Historic Preservation Officer

YOCHA DEHE WINTUN NATION

Comment 1-1

Thank you for your comments on the draft MTP/SCS.

Comment 1-2

Staff responded to this request in an email dated October 17, 2019, and provided the web link to the DEIR.

Comment 1-3

Comment noted. Thank you for your comments on the draft MTP/SCS.



October 25, 2019

Chair
Susan Tatayon

Renee De Vere-Oki
Sacramento Area Council of Governments
1415 L Street, Suite 300
Sacramento, CA 95814

Members
Frank C. Damrell, Jr.
Randy Fiorini
Michael Gatto
Maria Mehranian
Oscar Villegas
Ken Weinberg

Via email: eircomments@sacog.org

Executive Officer
Jessica R. Pearson

RE: Comments on the Draft 2020 Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy and Draft Environmental Impact Report, SCH #2019049139

Dear Ms. De Vere-Oki:

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the Sacramento Area Council of Governments' (SACOG) Draft 2020 Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (MTP/SCS) and the associated Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR). The Delta Stewardship Council (Council) recognizes and supports SACOG's objective to prepare a regional transportation plan that links land use, air quality, and transportation needs to meet federal and state air quality standards.

The Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta Reform Act of 2009 (Delta Reform Act) requires the Council to review and provide advice and input to local and regional planning agencies regarding the consistency of local and regional planning documents, including sustainable communities strategies and alternative planning strategies, with the Delta Plan, including consistency with the ecosystem restoration needs of the Delta and sufficiency of the lands set aside for natural resource protection for meeting the Delta's ecosystem needs. (Cal. Water Code § 85212.) This letter constitutes the Council's review and advice on the Draft 2020 MTP/SCS pursuant to Water Code section 85212, as well as the Council's comments on the associated Draft EIR.

SACOG's 2020 MTP/SCS is a regional transportation plan for a six county region that includes El Dorado, Placer, Sacramento, Sutter, Yolo, and Yuba Counties and the 22 cities in these Counties. Portions of Sacramento and Yolo Counties include land within the Delta.

The Council is an independent state agency established by the Delta Reform Act, which is codified in Division 35 of the California Water Code, sections 85000-85350. The Reform Act charges the Council with furthering California's coequal goals of providing a more reliable water supply for California and protecting, restoring, and enhancing the Sacramento-San Joaquin River Delta (Delta) ecosystem, to be achieved in a manner that protects and enhances the unique cultural, recreational, natural resource, and agricultural values of the

"Coequal goals" means the two goals of providing a more reliable water supply for California and protecting, restoring, and enhancing the Delta ecosystem. The coequal goals shall be achieved in a manner that protects and enhances the unique cultural, recreational, natural resource, and agricultural values of the Delta as an evolving place."

– CA Water Code §85054

Delta as an evolving place. (Cal. Water Code § 85054.) Pursuant to the Delta Reform Act, the Council has adopted the Delta Plan, a legally enforceable management framework for the Delta and Suisun Marsh for achieving the coequal goals. (Cal. Water Code § 85001(c).) The Delta Plan contains recommendations as well as regulatory policies (set forth in Title 23 of the California Code of Regulations, Sections 5001 through 5016.

2-1
cont.

Delta Reform Act Requirements for Regional Transportation Plans and Sustainable Communities Strategies

The Delta Reform Act requires that metropolitan planning organizations preparing a regional transportation plan that includes land within the primary or secondary zones of the Delta consult with the Council early in the planning process. (Cal. Water Code § 85212.) Council staff and SACOG staff met for this early consultation on January 15, April 2, and August 19, 2019.

2-2

The Delta Reform Act also requires that the metropolitan planning organization provide a draft SCS and an alternative planning strategy, if any, to the Council, no later than 60 days prior to adoption of the final regional transportation plan, along with concurrent notice of the submission in the same manner as an agency filing a certification of consistency. (Cal. Water Code § 85212.) SACOG submitted its Draft 2020 MTP/SCS to the Council on September 19, 2019, including concurrent notice, in the same manner in which agencies file a certificate of consistency, pursuant to Water Code section 85225.

Council Review of and Input on the Draft 2020 MTP/SCS and Draft EIR

This section summarizes the Council's review of and input on the submitted Draft 2020 MTP/SCS, pursuant to Water Code section 85212. It also summarizes the Council's comments on the Draft EIR.

2-3

1. Consistency with Ecosystem Restoration Needs and Sufficiency of Lands Set Aside

Section 85212 of the Delta Reform Act requires that the Council's input on local and regional planning documents, including sustainable communities' strategies, include, but not be limited to reviewing:

2-4

- the consistency of local and regional planning documents with the ecosystem restoration needs of the Delta; and
- whether the lands set aside for natural resource protection are sufficient to meet the Delta's ecosystem needs.

Thank you for acknowledging this authority in the Biological Resources chapter of the Draft EIR.

a. Consistency with Restoration Needs

The Delta Plan designates six priority habitat restoration areas (PHRAs) that have the greatest potential for large-scale habitat restoration (Delta Plan, Chapter 4, p. 136-138) and are

2-5

therefore necessary to meet the ecosystem restoration needs of the Delta (depicted in Delta Plan Appendix 5: <http://deltacouncil.ca.gov/sites/default/files/2015/09/Appendix%205.pdf>). Delta Plan Policy **ER P3** (23 Cal. Code Regs. § 5007) states that significant adverse impacts to the opportunity to restore habitat must be avoided or mitigated in these areas. Two PHRAs are located within the SACOG region: the Yolo Bypass, which passes through Yolo County; and the Cosumnes/Mokelumne confluence located at the southern edge of Sacramento County. Draft 2020 MTP/SCS Figure 3.5 identifies *Lands Not Identified for Development*, a placetype where urban growth is not assumed. Both the Yolo Bypass and the Cosumnes/Mokelumne Confluence are located within *Lands Not Identified for Development*. Therefore, the Draft 2020 MTP/SCS does not accommodate urban growth in either of these PHRAs.

2-5
cont.

In its June 21, 2019 comments on the Notice of Preparation (NOP), the Council requested that SACOG's EIR for this project analyze whether the proposed project would induce growth in any of the areas that the Delta Plan has designated to meet the Delta's ecosystem restoration needs. Thank you for including this discussion in the Growth-Inducing Impacts section of the Draft EIR.

2-6

The Draft 2020 MTP/SCS does not forecast growth on *Lands Not Identified for Development* during the planning period. The Draft EIR notes that proposed transportation improvements in these areas are limited to ongoing road maintenance and operational improvements to support safer and more efficient agricultural goods movement. The DEIR finds that because the Draft 2020 MTP/SCS does not propose investments that would expand the capacity of the transportation network serving *Lands Not Identified for Development*, it supports projected population and employment growth without inducing "the type of population growth that would require development of more land for urban purposes" (Draft EIR, p. 19-8).

Sufficiency of Lands Set Aside

The Draft 2020 MTP/SCS does not specifically set aside lands for natural resource protection. SACOG notes that this is the prerogative of lead agencies that adopt land use plans and implement projects (i.e., city and county agencies, transit providers, land developers). However, the MTP/SCS does have an ability to incentivize natural resource protection by encouraging growth in existing population centers and by maximizing the efficiency of the existing transportation network. The Council appreciates that the Draft 2020 MTP/SCS aims to achieve this by accommodating nearly two-thirds of the region's new housing and 85 percent of its job growth in existing downtowns, commercial corridors, and suburbs. The remaining future development, consisting of one-third of the region's new housing and 15 percent of its job growth, is accommodated in more than two-dozen new *Developing Communities*, a placetype the MTP/SCS describes as greenfield areas located at the edges of established communities; and in scattered rural residential areas outside the Delta.

2-7

Senate Bill 375 (Chapter 728, Statutes of 2008) provides California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) streamlining benefits for certain projects that are consistent with the MTP/SCS land use and transportation pattern. The Draft EIR states that SACOG aims to facilitate these

2-8

CEQA streamlining benefits for qualifying residential, mixed-use, and transit priority projects by designating high-frequency transit areas within one-half mile of a major transit stop or an existing or planned high-quality transit corridor. Draft 2020 MTP/SCS Figure 3.7 illustrates the location of these areas. Based on the mapped locations, the 2020 Draft MTP/SCS would not afford CEQA streamlining benefits to projects outside of existing city boundaries, within the Delta, or within any PHRA. Based on the locations of the high-frequency transit areas, the Draft 2020 MTP/SCS would not incentivize development in areas within the Delta that are necessary to meet the Delta's ecosystem needs.

2-8
cont.

Based on review of the Draft 2020 MTP/SCS and associated Draft EIR, in compliance with the Delta Reform Act, section 85212, the Council concludes that the MTP/SCS is not inconsistent with the ecosystem restoration needs of the Delta.

2-9

2. Consistency with the Delta Plan

The Delta Reform Act requires the Council to review and advise local and regional planning agencies regarding the consistency of local and regional planning documents, including sustainable communities strategies and alternative planning strategies, with the Delta Plan (*Cal. Water Code* § 85212). Thank you for acknowledging and describing this authority in the Land Use chapter of the Draft EIR.

2-10

b. Land Use Pattern

In its June 21, 2019 comments on the NOP, the Council requested that SACOG's EIR for this project analyze whether the 2020 MTP/SCS would induce new residential, commercial, or industrial development in the Delta Secondary Zone that was not accounted for at the time of the Delta Plan's adoption. Thank you for including this discussion in the Growth-Inducing Impacts section of the Draft EIR. The Draft EIR finds that the proposed MTP/SCS accommodates projected growth, and is not expected to induce additional growth beyond the levels or in the locations accounted for in the plan.

2-11

Delta Plan Policy **DP P1** (23 Cal. Code Regs. § 5010) places certain limits on new urban development within the Delta. New residential, commercial, and industrial development must be limited to certain areas, shown in Appendix 6 and Appendix 7 to the Delta Plan, or to areas that city or county general plans designate for such development as of the date of the Delta Plan's adoption (May 16, 2013) if the development is otherwise consistent with Delta Plan regulatory policies. This policy is intended to strengthen existing Delta communities while protecting farmland and open space, providing land for ecosystem restoration needs, and reducing flood risk.

2-12

State and local agencies are required to demonstrate consistency with this policy, as well as the other regulatory policies contained in the Delta Plan, when carrying out, approving, or funding a covered action. However, the Delta Reform Act exempts actions within the Secondary Zone of the Delta that a metropolitan planning organization determines are consistent with a sustainable community strategy or alternative planning strategy that the State Air Resources Board has determined would achieve regional greenhouse gas emission

reduction targets. Such proposed actions are not covered actions regulated by the Council (Cal Water Code § 85057.5(b)(4)). This statute provides SACOG with a significant role in shaping the State's Delta policy in urban areas.

2-12
cont.

The Draft 2020 MTP/SCS seeks to accommodate nearly two-thirds of the region's new housing and 85 percent of its job growth in existing downtowns, commercial corridors, and suburbs. As described previously, the remaining one-third of new housing and 15 percent of job growth is expected to be accommodated in more than two-dozen new *Developing Communities* and in scattered rural residential areas outside the Delta. The Draft 2020 MTP/SCS designates two new *Developing Communities* in the City of West Sacramento, within the Legal Delta. The Council has reviewed the locations of these communities and determined that the planned land uses were adopted by the City of West Sacramento and incorporated into its general plan prior to the Delta Plan's adoption (May 16, 2013).¹ Therefore, the two planned *Developing Communities* in the City of West Sacramento are consistent with DP P1 because they fit within the exemption for development set forth in DP P1, subsection (b). As such, the Draft 2020 MTP/SCS land use pattern would not create development within the Secondary Zone of the Delta that is inconsistent with Delta Plan Policy **DP P1**.

2-13

Based on review of the Draft 2020 MTP/SCS and associated Draft EIR, in compliance with the Delta Reform Act, section 85212, the Council concludes that the MTP/SCS is not inconsistent with Delta Plan Policy DP P1 that limits new urban development in the Delta Secondary Zone.

c. Transportation Investments

The recommended transportation projects in the 2020 MTP/SCS (Appendix A) include a variety of investments in both urban and rural areas within the Legal Delta. These transportation projects are consistent with recommendations in the Delta Plan including **DP R5** and **DP R11**. The 2020 MTP/SCS includes a number of planned trail investments, which are consistent with Delta Plan Recommendation DP R11 to protect and improve existing recreation opportunities while seeking ways of providing new, and better coordinated, opportunities. The 2020 MTP/SCS Project List includes multiple separate trail projects, for instance, to improve the Clarksburg Branch Line Trail and Sycamore Trails within and immediately south of the City of West Sacramento (Draft 2020 MTP/SCS Attachment B).

2-14

The Delta Plan also recommends providing adequate infrastructure in the Delta. Recommendation DP R5 states "The California Department of Transportation, local agencies, and utilities should plan infrastructure, such as roads and highways, to meet needs of development consistent with sustainable community strategies, local plans, the Delta Protection Commission's *Land Use and Resource Management Plan for the Primary Zone of the Delta*, and the Delta Plan." A number of planned transportation investments in the 2020 MTP/SCS would improve the capacity and safety of roads and highways in the Delta. For example, the Draft 2020 MTP/SCS includes a variety of projects to expand, improve, and connect South River Road, which links the City of West Sacramento to legacy communities in

2-15

¹ These planned land uses were also included in the 2012 SACOG MTP/SCS, though they were subsequently removed in the 2016 plan due to changes in the market forecast.

the Delta. The Draft 2020 MTP/SCS also includes multiple projects to replace structurally-deficient bridges in the Delta, restore pavement, and redesign streetscapes to be more pedestrian and bike friendly. Roadway improvement projects in the Delta described in the *Rural Residential Communities* section of the Draft 2020 MTP/SCS would improve agricultural and goods movement travel and improve accessibility for slow-moving farm equipment.

2-15
cont.

The Draft EIR also analyzes typical construction impacts associated with transportation improvements and proposes mitigation measures for construction such as reducing the visibility of construction-related activities and minimizing construction-related impacts to agricultural and forestry resources. The mitigation measures outlined in the Draft EIR related to construction impacts are generally aligned with the mitigation measures identified in the Delta Plan EIR.

2-16

Based on review of the Draft 2020 MTP/SCS and associated Draft EIR, in compliance with Water Code section 85212, the Council concludes that the recommended transportation projects identified in the 2020 MTP/SCS are not inconsistent with Delta Plan policies and recommendations concerning transportation in the Delta.

2-17

Closing Comments

Pursuant to Water Code section 85212, the Council has reviewed and provided advice and input on the Draft 2020 MTP/SCS and Draft EIR as outlined in this letter. The Council has not identified any inconsistency with the Delta Plan. The findings in this comment letter were presented on October 24, 2019 at the Council's monthly meeting, and were unanimously approved by the Council. The Council believes that the two plans are complementary in nature, serving to protect the Delta while promoting sustainable growth and economic vitality in the broader region. The Council invites you to continue to engage Council staff following the adoption of the 2020 MTP/SCS to coordinate implementation and subsequent plan updates. Please contact Harriet Ross at (916) 445-5825 or Harriet.Ross@deltacouncil.ca.gov with any questions.

2-18

Sincerely,



Jeff Henderson, AICP
Deputy Executive Officer
Delta Stewardship Council

CC: Clint Holtzen, Jennifer Hargrove

DELTA STEWARDSHIP COUNCIL (DSC)

Comment 2-1

Thank you for your comments on the MTP/SCS.

Comment 2-2

Thank you for your comments on the MTP/SCS.

Comment 2-3

Thank you for your comments on the MTP/SCS.

Comment 2-4

Thank you for your comments on the MTP/SCS and Draft EIR.

Comment 2-5

We appreciate DSC confirming consistency with ER P3 related to habitat restoration areas.

Comment 2-6

The MTP/SCS assumes that growth will occur in specific areas of the region. The Plan does not forecast growth in the *Lands Not Identified for Development* areas and, as noted, the transportation investments in these areas do not induce the type of population growth that would require development of more land for urban uses.

Comment 2-7

Thank you for your comments on the MTP/SCS.

Comment 2-8

Thank you for your comments on the MTP/SCS and Draft EIR.

Comment 2-9

SACOG appreciates the DSC conclusion that the MTP/SCS is not inconsistent with the ecosystem restoration needs of the Delta.

Comment 2-10

Thank you for your comments on the MTP/SCS and Draft EIR.

Comment 2-11

Thank you for your comments on the MTP/SCS and Draft EIR. As noted, the comments are sufficiently addressed in the Growth-Inducing Impacts section of the DEIR.

Comment 2-12

Thank you for your comments on the MTP/SCS.

Comment 2-13

SACOG appreciates the DSC conclusion that the MTP/SCS is not inconsistent with the ecosystem restoration needs of the Delta.

Comment 2-14

Thank you for your comments on the MTP/SCS.

Comment 2-15

Thank you for your comments on the MTP/SCS.

Comment 2-16

Thank you for your comments on the MTP/SCS and associated Draft EIR.

Comment 2-17

We appreciate DSC confirming that the transportation projects in the MTP/SCS are not inconsistent with the Delta Plan.

Comment 2-18

Thank you for your comments on the MTP/SCS and associated Draft EIR. The MTP/SCS reflects the advice and input provided by the DSC throughout the development of the Plan and we value our collaborative relationship. SACOG appreciates DSC's recognition of the work SACOG has done to demonstrate consistency with the Delta Plan related to land use and transportation.



State of California – Natural Resources Agency
 DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
 North Central Region
 1701 Nimbus Road, Suite A
 Rancho Cordova, CA 95670-4599
 916-358-2900
www.wildlife.ca.gov

GAVIN NEWSOM, Governor
 CHARLTON H. BONHAM, Director

Letter
 3



November 4, 2019

Renée DeVere-Oki
 Sacramento Area Council of Governments
 1415 L St. #300
 Sacramento, CA 95814

Subject: 2020 METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION PLAN/SUSTAINABLE
 COMMUNITIES STRATEGY (MTP/SCS; Project)
 DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT (DEIR)
 SCH# 2019049139

Dear Ms. DeVere-Oki:

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) received and reviewed the Notice of Availability of a DEIR from the Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) for the MTP/SCS pursuant the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) statute and guidelines.¹

3-1

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments and recommendations regarding those activities involved in the Project that may affect California fish, wildlife, native plants, and their habitat. Likewise, we appreciate the opportunity to provide comments regarding those aspects of the Project that CDFW, by law, may need to exercise its own regulatory authority under the Fish and Game Code.

CDFW ROLE

CDFW is California's **Trustee Agency** for fish and wildlife resources and holds those resources in trust by statute for all the people of the State (Fish & G. Code, §§ 711.7, subd. (a) & 1802; Pub. Resources Code, § 21070; CEQA Guidelines § 15386, subd. (a)). CDFW, in its trustee capacity, has jurisdiction over the conservation, protection, and management of fish, wildlife, native plants, and habitat necessary for biologically sustainable populations of those species (*Id.*, § 1802.). Similarly, for purposes of CEQA, CDFW provides, as available, biological expertise during public agency environmental review efforts, focusing specifically on projects and related activities that have the potential to adversely affect fish and wildlife resources.

3-2

CDFW is also submitting comments as a **Responsible Agency** under CEQA (Pub. Resources Code, § 21069; CEQA Guidelines, § 15381). CDFW expects that it may need to exercise regulatory authority as provided by the Fish and Game Code. As proposed, for

3-3

¹ CEQA is codified in the California Public Resources Code in section 21000 et seq. The "CEQA Guidelines" are found in Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations, commencing with section 15000.

example, some activities described in the Project may be subject to CDFW's lake and streambed alteration regulatory authority (Fish & G. Code, § 1600 *et seq.*). Likewise, to the extent implementation of the Project as proposed may result in "take" as defined by State law of any species protected under the California Endangered Species Act (CESA) (Fish & G. Code, § 2050 *et seq.*), related authorization as provided by the Fish and Game Code should be obtained. CDFW also administers the Native Plant Protection Act, Natural Community Conservation Act, and other provisions of the Fish and Game Code that afford protection to California's fish and wildlife resources.

3-3
cont.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION SUMMARY

The DEIR evaluates the environmental impacts related to the adoption and implementation of the MTP/SCS for the SACOG region, including the Counties of El Dorado, Placer, Sacramento, Sutter, Yolo, and Yuba. The MTP/SCS is a long-range comprehensive plan for the region's transportation system. It includes programmed capital and operational improvements as well as maintenance and rehabilitation activities within the region's transportation system.

3-4

COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CDFW offers the comments and recommendations below to assist SACOG in adequately identifying and, where appropriate, mitigating the Project's significant, or potentially significant, direct and indirect impacts on fish and wildlife (biological) resources.

3-5

Environmental Setting

Section 6.2.1 (Page 6-2) outlines Habitat Conservation Plans (HCP) used to compile land cover data in the MTP/SCS. This section does not include two Habitat Conservation Plans in the MTP/SCS area: the Natomas Basin Habitat Conservation Plan (NBHCP) and the Metro Air Park Habitat Conservation Plan (MAP HCP). CDFW recommends reviewing and incorporating data from these HCPs into the DEIR. If these data overlap with other HCPs, CDFW recommends at least including them in the list of sources in this section to provide a complete analysis.

3-6

Page 6-28 describes the South Sacramento Habitat Conservation Plan (SSHCP). CDFW recommends revising this description to state that all final permits for the SSHCP have been secured as of August 2019 and that the SSHCP is now in the implementation phase. This section also states that "[the] SSHCP will allow the County and cities of Sacramento, Rancho Cordova, and Galt to extend incidental take coverage to third parties." Please note the SSHCP was adopted for the Plan Partners (Sacramento County, the City of Rancho Cordova, and the City of Galt); the City of Sacramento is not a Plan Partner of the SSHCP and thus does not have any authority under the SSHCP. It should also be noted that participation in the SSHCP does not necessarily mean take coverage will be extended to third parties. The project proponent may receive incidental take coverage for a project's Covered Activities under this ITP only in accordance with the notification and approval procedure described in Sections 5.5, 5.6 and 5.7 of CDFW's ITP for the SSHCP (2081-2018-016-02). CDFW will still have to independently approve take coverage under a

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Covered Activity Authorization if it finds that all requirements and processes in ITP Sections 5.5 and 5.6 have been met.

3-9
cont.

Table 6-1 (Page 6-4) provides total acreages for land cover types by county within the MTP/SCS Plan Area. The land cover types displayed in this table for Yolo County are inconsistent with the 2018 Final Yolo Habitat Conservation Plan/Natural Community Conservation Plan (Yolo HCP/NCCP) existing land cover types. For example, Table 6-1 shows that there is no land cover acreage for rice within Yolo County, whereas the Yolo HCP/NCCP indicates that there are 35,724 acres of rice in the Yolo HCP/NCCP plan area. One source used to develop Table 6-1 is listed as being the Yolo HCP, County of Yolo 2015. CDFW recommends reviewing the land cover types in table 6-1 and data used from the 2015 Yolo HCP throughout the DEIR for accuracy and updating with information from the final Yolo HCP/NCCP, dated April 2018.

3-10

Impacts of Construction and Operation

Page 6-31 describes potential impacts associated with the MTP/SCS. CDFW has identified additional impacts associated with the projects in the MTP/SCS that may affect biological resources:

- Increase in human usage that could result in direct habitat impact or indirect habitat degradation (e.g. litter, pollution, increased mortality due to vehicle strikes, etc.)
- Operation of equipment that could result in transfer of non-native/invasive species or plant material
- Temporary disturbance due to construction noise
- Changes to distribution or movement of wildlife
- Reduction of resources available to wildlife
- Increased habitat fragmentation
- Increased barriers to wildlife movement

3-11

CDFW recommends that the DEIR include these potential impacts.

Wildlife Movement

Roads impact wildlife in a number of ways including direct mortality from vehicle strikes, habitat fragmentation, and barriers to wildlife movement (Spencer *et al.* 2010). As the population grows and traffic increases, and as roads are widened or otherwise updated to accommodate higher use, the impacts on wildlife tend to increase (Clevenger *et al.* 2001, Jaarsma *et al.* 2006). Barriers to wildlife movement are expected to cause greater impacts as climate change impacts existing habitats and changes where animals can live (Kostyack *et al.* 2011). While the DEIR's Mitigation Measure BIO-7 addresses implementing design measures in individual projects to allow fish and wildlife to pass through movement corridors, individual projects identified in the MTP/SCS may have a cumulatively significant impact on wildlife movement which may not be identified when viewing individual projects separately.

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In order to address potentially significant cumulative impacts and to help minimize the impacts of existing roads, CDFW encourages building wildlife crossing structures when

3-15

possible, in areas where wildlife movement is significantly impaired by roadways. Roads impede wildlife movement both through direct mortality from vehicle strikes and through road avoidance by animals (Forman *et al.* 2003, Fahrig and Rytwinski 2009). Therefore, some segments of roadway acting as significant barriers to wildlife movement may be identified by looking at vehicle strike data; however, it should not be assumed that a low rate of vehicle strikes is proof of a road segment's permeability to wildlife. Wildlife crossing structures allow wildlife to move over or under roadways, which increases habitat and genetic connectivity and reduces risk of injury caused by vehicle strikes both to wildlife and motorists. Wildlife movement across roads can also be improved opportunistically by including crossing-friendly design elements into maintenance and repair projects. For example, existing culverts may be replaced with larger culverts with interior shelves to allow terrestrial wildlife to pass through when water is flowing through.

3-15
cont.

Useful resources for wildlife crossing design include the Department's "*Transportation Planning Companion Plan*" associated with the State Wildlife Action Plan (CDFW 2016), the California Essential Habitat Connectivity Project (<https://www.wildlife.ca.gov/conservation/planning/connectivity/CEHC>), and Caltrans' "*Wildlife Crossings Guidance Manual*" (Caltrans 2009).

3-16

Mitigation Measure BIO-1a

Mitigation Measure BIO-1a refers to project-level biological resources assessments. CDFW recommends that the biological resource assessment consider not only direct impacts to habitat and species within the project footprint, but also indirect impacts to adjacent and nearby habitats and the species within them.

3-17

Mitigation Measure BIO-1b

Mitigation Measure BIO-1b includes avoidance and minimization measures for special-status plant species, including pre-construction surveys for special-status plants and compensatory mitigation for impacts to plant populations. Please note that some plant species may be present in the form of a persistent seed bank or dormant root structures even when above-ground plant growth is absent. For example, certain rare and endangered plant species occurring in El Dorado County including Stebbins' morning glory (*Calystegia stebbinsii*), Layne's butterweed (*Packera layneae*), and Pine Hill ceanothus (*Ceanothus roderickii*) are adapted to periodic wildfires and are disturbance dependent. They occur in chaparral openings, rely on fire or other disturbance to maintain their populations over time, and maintain persistent seedbanks or underground structures that resprout following disturbance. In this way they may survive undetected during periods of ecological succession (Gogol-Prokurat 2011). Because these plants are restricted to a small area of gabbro and serpentine soils, plant populations are often significantly adversely impacted by impacts to their habitat even if the plants themselves are not visibly present at the time of the impact. CDFW recommends that project-level biological resource assessments consider and appropriately mitigate impacts to limited and specialized habitat types such as gabbro soils, even in cases where special-status plant species are not detected during surveys.

3-18

Mitigation Measure BIO-1c

Coordination with CDFW

Mitigation Measure BIO-1c provides avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures for special-status wildlife species that have a potential to occur within the plan area. Species-specific avoidance and minimization measures are provided for various amphibians, reptiles, birds and mammals. Many of these avoidance measures include coordination with regulatory wildlife agencies. However, some of the avoidance measures only include coordination with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). This may be adequate for species that are exclusively protected under the Federal Endangered Species Act, but for species that are protected under CESA or otherwise hold a state special status, the DEIR should require coordination with CDFW.

3-19

The DEIR should also require compliance with CESA which may include avoidance or the approval of CDFW for take authorization and compensatory mitigation for CESA-listed species. For example, the avoidance and minimization measures identified for giant garter snake (*Thamnophis gigas*) include coordination with CDFW, but the compensatory mitigation only includes the purchase of credits at a USFWS-approved conservation bank. In order to fully mitigate potential impacts to CESA-listed species, CESA Incidental Take Permits (ITPs) typically require mitigation credit purchases to come from a CDFW-approved mitigation or conservation bank. Therefore, in order to avoid double mitigation for projects that may require CESA compliance, CDFW recommends that project proponents obtain CESA take authorization and consult with CDFW early in the process to verify that their proposed mitigation will be acceptable prior to making any mitigation credit purchases.

3-20

Holes and Trenches

Minimization measures for trenches and holes within the impact area are provided and require covering and daily inspections. The DEIR identifies different depths of holes or trenches that require covering or monitoring for different species. CDFW recommends these depths be consistent throughout all avoidance and minimization measures. The shallowest depth identified in the DEIR for holes and trenches requiring covering and daily monitoring is six (6) inches. CDFW recommends that this depth be applied to all projects and species covered under this DEIR.

3-21

Wildlife species not included in BIO-1c

CDFW has identified several state and/or federally listed or candidate wildlife species that may occur within the MTP/SCS area but are not included in this section, including:

- tricolored blackbird (*Agelaius tricolor*) [state threatened]
- western snowy plover (*Charadrius nivosus nivosus*) [federally threatened]
- riparian brush rabbit (*Sylvilagus bachmani riparius*) [state endangered]
- salt-marsh harvest mouse (*Reithrodontomys raviventris*) [state and federally endangered]
- longfin smelt (*Spirinchus thaleichthys*) [state threatened]
- Lahontan cutthroat trout (*Oncorhynchus clarkii henshawi*) [federally threatened]
- eulachon (*Thaleichthys pacificus*) [federally threatened]

3-22

- Crotch bumble bee (*Bombus crotchii*) [state candidate endangered]
- western bumble bee (*Bombus occidentalis*) [state candidate endangered]

3-22
cont.

Impacts to these species may be considered significant, and CDFW recommends including species-specific avoidance measures whenever possible and if impacts cannot be avoided proposing appropriate and enforceable minimization and mitigation measures.

Bats

Avoidance measures for bats include a preconstruction bat survey no more than 14 days prior to the start of construction to be performed by a qualified biologist. However, CDFW recommends that habitat assessments within the project area for potentially suitable habitat be performed by a qualified bat biologist within six (6) months prior to project-related activities. The habitat assessment should assess the entire project area and a 500-foot buffer adjacent to these areas for potential bat habitat. If suitable habitat exists within the project area, then more thorough surveys should be performed by the qualified bat biologist to determine the presence of bats and types of bat roosts present. CDFW recommends that a minimum of 3 external surveys within a 7-day time period with no detection of bats be performed by the qualified bat biologist before an internal survey is considered. If bat exclusion measures are required CDFW recommends they be implemented prior to project-related activities during the period of March 1 to April 15 (prior to formation of maternity colonies and when nighttime temperatures no longer dip below 45°F) or August 31 to October 15 (prior to hibernation when young are self-sufficiently volant and before nighttime temperatures fall below 45°F). CDFW also recommends that projects under this DEIR incorporate in-kind replacement habitat (suitable vegetation, crevice, panel, collar, capped-edge drain, bat boxes, bat houses) for bats in consultation with a qualified bat biologist with experience in designing bat habitat. If the in-kind replacement habitat cannot be implemented prior to the exclusion, CDFW recommends that alternate habitat be in-place prior to exclusion to offset temporal habitat loss.

3-23

3-24

California Tiger Salamander (CTS; *Ambystoma californiense*)

Bullet 3 of the CTS section of Mitigation Measure Bio-1c states that if CTS are found on a project site, then they will be relocated to the nearest burrow that is outside the area of impact. CDFW is concerned that this measure will be too restrictive for potential relocations since the "nearest burrow" may not serve the ecological needs of the CTS. CDFW recommends revising this measure to state that relocation will be to the nearest suitable burrow, as determined by the qualified biologist. As it relates to relocation, CDFW also recommends including a reference or outline of an established relocation methodology.

3-25

CDFW recommends strengthening bullet 5 of the CTS section of Mitigation Measure Bio-1c by describing refuge opportunities such as coverboards along the fence. Although weekly fence integrity checks may be adequate, fences should be checked daily (typically morning and evening) to minimize potential for animals to be trapped on the fence line. This also increases the potential for successful relocation by keeping migration disruption to a minimum. Typically, successful fences are at least 3-feet tall and buried at least 6-inches below ground.

3-26

Bullets 5 and 6 of the CTS section of Mitigation Measure Bio-1c describe the CTS migration season as November 1 to May 31. CDFW recommends revising this window to start at October 15 (depending on rainfall) and also recommends that timing of project activities consider the metamorph dispersal period (typically May-August with a peak in June).

3-27

CDFW recommends including the following additional avoidance and minimization measures:

- Minimize potential barriers to CTS movement such as curbs and edges greater than 3-inches in suitable CTS habitat to the extent feasible
- Minimize work in periods with the greatest potential for CTS encounters. These time periods are typically during nights with potential for rain events
- Minimize work within 820-feet of a breeding pond during the metamorph dispersal period
- Minimize small mammal control that may adversely affect burrow habitat CTS (i.e. rodenticides and collapsing of burrows)

3-28

Swainson's hawk (Buteo swainsoni)

CDFW recommends including mitigation for potential loss of foraging habitat in addition to the mitigation outlined for loss of nesting trees. Although many projects within the MTP/SCS may primarily impact nesting habitat, some may permanently impact foraging habitat as well.

3-29

Other Special-Status Raptors

Bullets 1 and 2 of the Other Special-Status Raptors section of Mitigation Measure BIO-1c refer to surveys of the area of impact and within 500 feet of the area of impact. Sensitive raptor species may be adversely impacted by construction noise and disturbance at a greater distance than 500 feet (Richardson and Miller 1997). Because project activities may impact several fully protected species (e.g. white-tailed kite [*Elanus leucurus*]), CDFW recommends using a survey radius of at least 0.25-mile in suitable habitat areas for these species.

3-30

American Badger (Taxidea taxus)

Bullet 3 of the American Badger section of Mitigation Measure BIO-1c refers to an exclusion zone around occupied American badger burrows. CDFW recommends that the exclusion zone include an active movement corridor between the exclusion zone and adjacent suitable habitat for the animal. This serves to allow the animal to leave the construction area independently.

3-31

Special-Status Fish

CDFW recommends including other special-status fish with potential to occur within the MTP/SCS area in this section. Such species include but are not limited to longfin smelt (federal candidate, state threatened) and green sturgeon (*Acipenser medirostris*) [federally threatened, California Species of Special Concern].

3-32

Some projects identified in the MTP/SCS may include pile driving, which may injure fish (Halvorsen *et al.* 2012). As such, CDFW recommends including avoidance and minimization measures for this activity in the section. Such measures can include but are not limited to soft starts, hydroacoustic monitoring, decibel restrictions, and construction timing (i.e. limiting the amount of strikes per day).

3-33

Mitigation Measure BIO-3

This mitigation measure provides for compensatory mitigation for the permanent loss of riparian and oak woodland habitat at a sufficient ratio for no net loss of habitat function or acreage through onsite or onsite restoration/creation. The DEIR requires a Stream and Riparian Mitigation and Monitoring Plan for restoring/creating in-kind habitat for projects with permanent impacts to these habitats. The DEIR includes success criteria for trees that will be planted for riparian and oak woodland habitats but does not include other plant communities that are associated with these communities (e.g. shrub and herbaceous layers). CDFW recommends including shrub and herbaceous layers associated with riparian and oak woodland habitat restoration/creation into the DEIR and requiring success criteria for their establishment success.

3-34

CDFW recommends incorporating the following information about Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreements into the DEIR:

For any activity that will substantially divert or obstruct the natural flow of or substantially change or use any material from the bed, channel or bank of any river, stream, or lake, or deposit or dispose of debris, waste, or other material containing crumbled, flaked, or ground pavement where it may pass into any river, stream, or lake, the project applicant (or "entity") must provide written notification to CDFW pursuant to section 1602 of the Fish and Game Code. Based on this notification and other information, CDFW then determines whether a Lake or Streambed Alteration (LSA) Agreement is required. The Department's issuance of an LSA Agreement is a "project" subject to CEQA (see Pub. Resources Code 21065). CDFW recommends entities notify pursuant to section 1602 of the Fish and Game Code as early as possible, as modification of the proposed project may avoid or reduce impacts to fish and wildlife resources. To obtain a Lake or Streambed Alteration notification package, please go to <https://www.wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/LSA/Forms>.

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The following information will be required for the processing of a Notification of Lake or Streambed Alteration:

- 1) Identification and mapping of any perennial, intermittent, and ephemeral rivers, streams, and lakes within the project footprint and any associated fish and wildlife habitats (e.g., riparian habitat, wetlands, floodplains, etc.) that will be temporarily and/or permanently impacted by the proposed project. An estimate of the area of impact to each habitat type should be included
- 2) A proposal of mitigation measures to avoid, minimize, and mitigate impacts to fish and wildlife resources

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CDFW's evaluation of streams, lakes, rivers, and wetlands differs from that of other agencies such as the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) or the Regional Water Quality

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Control Board and may be more expansive than other agencies' definitions. All perennial, intermittent, and ephemeral rivers, streams, and lakes, including ponds and drainages, in the state, and any habitats supported by these features such as wetlands and riparian habitats should be identified and mapped separately from the methods that the USACE uses to determine waters of the U.S. and the ordinary high water mark. Project-related activities that may result in temporary, permanent, direct, indirect, and/or cumulative impacts to the above-mentioned features and associated biological resources/habitats may require Notification under section 1602 of the Fish and Game Code.

3-37
cont.

Mitigation Measure BIO-7

CDFW recommends coordination with the implementing entity (e.g. South Sacramento Conservation Agency) for the SSHCP when potential MTP/SCS projects may impact wildlife movement corridors or otherwise impact preserve strategies.

3-38

ENVIRONMENTAL DATA

CEQA requires that information developed in environmental impact reports and negative declarations be incorporated into a database which may be used to make subsequent or supplemental environmental determinations (Pub. Resources Code, § 21003, subd. (e)). Accordingly, please report any special-status species and natural communities detected during Project surveys to the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB). The CNDDDB field survey form can be found at the following link:

<https://www.wildlife.ca.gov/Data/CNDDDB/Submitting-Data>. The completed form can be submitted online or mailed electronically to CNDDDB at the following email address: CNDDDB@wildlife.ca.gov.

3-39

FILING FEES

The Project, as proposed, would have an impact on fish and/or wildlife, and assessment of filing fees is necessary. Fees are payable upon filing of the Notice of Determination by the Lead Agency and serve to help defray the cost of environmental review by CDFW. Payment of the fee is required for the underlying project approval to be operative, vested, and final. (Cal. Code Regs, tit. 14, § 753.5; Fish & G. Code, § 711.4; Pub. Resources Code, § 21089.)

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CONCLUSION

Pursuant to Public Resources Code § 21092 and § 21092.2, CDFW requests written notification of proposed actions and pending decisions regarding the proposed project. Written notifications shall be directed to: California Department of Fish and Wildlife North Central Region, 1701 Nimbus Road, Rancho Cordova, CA 95670 or emailed to R2CEQA@wildlife.ca.gov.

3-41

CDFW appreciates the opportunity to comment on the DEIR to assist in identifying and mitigating Project impacts on biological resources. CDFW personnel are available for

3-42

consultation regarding biological resources and strategies to minimize and/or mitigate impacts. Questions regarding this letter or further coordination should be directed to Gabriele Quillman, Environmental Scientist at (916) 358-2955 or gabriele.quillman@wildlife.ca.gov.

3-42
cont.

Sincerely,



Kevin Thomas
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Department of Fish and Wildlife

Office of Planning and Research, State Clearinghouse, Sacramento

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3-43

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3-43
cont.

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE RESPONSES

Comment 3-1

The comment outlines the regulatory authority of California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW). Thank you for your review and comments on the Draft MTP/SCS EIR.

Comment 3-2

The comment outlines the regulatory authority of California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW). Comment noted.

Comment 3-3

The comment outlines the regulatory authority of California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW). Comment noted.

Comment 3-4

The comment summarizes the context of the draft MTP/SCS EIR. Comment noted.

Comment 3-5

The comment is an introductory to CDFW comments. Comment noted.

Comment 3-6

The comment recommends that Section 6.2.1 of Chapter 6 – Biological Resources include land cover data from the Natomas Basin Habitat Conservation Plan (NBHCP) and the Metro Air Park Habitat Conservation Plan (MAP HCP). Section 6.2.1 describes the data sources used to describe existing land cover types in the plan area, including the areas covered by the NBHCP and MAP HCP. These sources include more recent data on existing land cover conditions than the NBHCP and MAP HCP, which were adopted in 1997 and 2001, respectively. Specifically, California Vegetation Maps for the North Sierra (2014) and Central Valley (2016) ecological zones were used to characterize existing land cover types within the NBHCP and MAP HCP plan areas. As a result, the older land cover data from the NBHCP and MAP HCP were not used to characterize existing land cover types in the plan area.

A description of the NBHCP is included in Section 6.3.3 on page 6-26 of the Draft EIR. In the third paragraph on page 6-26, the Draft EIR explains that the NBHCP was adopted in 1997 and last revised in 2003. The MAP HCP was not discussed in the Draft EIR. It is located in the Natomas Basin in the Sacramento Valley, which is located in the northern portion of Sacramento County and the southern portion of Sutter County. The MAP HCP covers the 1,892-acre MAP Special Planning Area (MAP SPA) and 123 acres of lands outside the MAP SPA. It covers 14 sensitive species which were included in the Draft EIR in Appendix BIO-1. The Natomas Basin Conservancy adopted the Metro Air Park HCP (MAP HCP) in July 2001.

The text of the Draft EIR has been amended on page 6-26 following paragraph 2 and preceding paragraph 3 to describe the MAP HCP:

Metro Air Park Habitat Conservation Plan

The Natomas Basin Conservancy adopted the Metro Air Park HCP (MAP HCP) in July 2001. The MAP HCP is located in the Natomas Basin in the Sacramento Valley, which is located in the northern portion of Sacramento County and the southern portion of Sutter County. The plan covers the 1,892-acre MAP Special Planning Area (MAP SPA) and 123 acres of lands outside the MAP SPA. The MAP HCP was prepared in

conjunction with the Natomas Basin HCP (discussed below). The MAP HCP covers 14 sensitive species which are included in Appendix BIO-1 (Natomas Basin Conservancy 2001).

The edits above do not alter the significance determinations of the Draft EIR. No further response is required to Comment 3-6.

Comment 3-7

The comment suggests that the description of the Draft EIR on page 6-28 be revised to state that all final permits for the South Sacramento HCP (SSHCP) have been secured as of August 2019 and that the SSHCP is now in the implementation phase. In response to Comment 3-7, the text of the Draft EIR has been amended on page 6-28 in paragraph one as shown below (note that the text below also reflects edits made in response to Comment 3-8):

South Sacramento Habitat Conservation Plan

Pursuant to Section 10(a)(1)(B) of the ESA, the South Sacramento Habitat Conservation Plan (SSHCP) presents a regional approach to preserve Federal and state endangered and threatened species and to streamline the existing development-permitting process in areas under development. The SSHCP, which was approved by Sacramento County in 2018, is a large-scale consolidated effort to protect and enhance wetlands (primarily vernal pools), aquatic, and upland habitats to provide ecologically viable conservation areas (County of Sacramento et al. 2010). Permits for the SSHCP are being drafted but have not yet been issued as of May 2019. The SSHCP covers 372,000-acres of south Sacramento County and Rancho Cordova, California. It will preserve natural lands in Sacramento County and protect habitat for 28 special-status plant and animal species, including 10 state and federally listed species, which are included in Appendix BIO-1. The boundary of the SSHCP was defined using political and ecological factors. The geographical boundaries are U.S. Highway 50 to the north, the Sacramento River levee and County Road J11 to the west, the Sacramento County line with El Dorado and Amador counties to the east, and the San Joaquin County line to the south. The SSHCP will allow the County and cities of Sacramento, Rancho Cordova, and Galt to extend incidental take coverage to third parties. As of August 2019, all final permits under the SSHCP have been secured and the SSHCP is now in its implementation phase.

The edits above do not alter the significance determinations of the Draft EIR. No further response is required to Comment 3-7.

Comment 3-8

The comment correctly notes that the SSHCP was adopted for the Plan Partners (unincorporated Sacramento County, the City of Rancho Cordova, and the City of Galt) and indicates that the City of Sacramento is not a Plan Partner under the SSHCP. In response to Comment 3-8, the text of the Draft EIR has been amended on page 6-28 in paragraph one as shown above in the response to Comment 3-7. These edits do not alter the significance determinations of the Draft EIR. No further response is required to Comment 3-8.

Comment 3-9

The comment summarizes the California Department of Fish and Wildlife's (CDFW's) procedural role in the approval of incidental take coverage under the SSHCP. The comment indicates that CDFW would only issue a Covered Activity Authorization to a project proponent if it finds that all requirements and processes have been met. The comment does not address the adequacy of the analysis contained in the Draft EIR. No edits to the Draft EIR are required in response to Comment 3-9.

Comment 3-10

The comment asserts that there is a discrepancy between the land cover acreages in Table 6-1 of the Draft EIR and the acreages included in the 2018 Final Yolo HCP/NCCP, and as an example, references the rice land cover types. Table 6-1 of the Draft EIR indicates that the number of acres of rice land cover type in Yolo County is zero, but the Yolo HCP/NCCP indicates that there 35,724 acres of rice land cover type.

This discrepancy is a result of the different data sources used to characterize existing land cover conditions in the Draft EIR, and the different conventions for labeling and categorizing land cover types used in each data source. When compiling multiple data sources into a single data set for the plan area, in some cases SACOG included land cover types under a different label or category, or aggregated more fine-grained categories of land cover into a single cover type. Because the different data sources use different categories and conventions for describing land cover types it was not possible for the Draft EIR to present land cover data in the exact same manner as each data source. With respect to the rice land cover type in Yolo County, the Yolo County HCP/NCCP includes rice not as its own land cover type but as a subset of the "Cultivated Lands" land cover type. Table 6-1 of the Draft EIR includes these "Cultivated Lands" (rice and other subcategories) as "Row and Field Crops" under "Agriculture Land Cover" category for Yolo County. The land cover data of the Draft EIR include the land cover data from the Yolo County HCP/NCCP.

In response to Comment 3-10, the following footnote has been added to Table 6-1 of the Draft EIR for clarification:

Table 6-1
Land Cover Types and Acreages by County in the Proposed MTP/SCS Plan Area

Land Cover Type	El Dorado	Placer	Sacramento	Sutter	Yolo	Yuba	TOTAL
WILDLAND LAND COVER							
Grasslands	93,838	64,832	174,450	34,277	80,911	55,621	503,929
Chaparral	74,822	58,722	37	0	44,709	2,477	180,767
Scrub	327	2,105	11	0	312	0	2,755
Valley Oak Woodland/ Savanna	3,477	11,430	1,135	5,094	181	1,215	22,532
Foothill Woodland	55,612	50,234	17,370	305	109,667	49,834	283,022
Montane Forest	691,547	476,261	449	0	3,299	131,368	1,302,924
Riparian	1,457	9,399	12,092	14,659	12,565	7,982	58,154
Barren	34,700	18,797	1,564	95	2,346	5,234	62,736
Mine Tailings	0	0	2,465	0	0	0	2,465
Rock Outcrops/Cliffs	0	499	0	0	0	0	499
Serpentine	0	0	0	0	247	0	247
TOTAL WILDLAND	955,780	692,279	209,573	54,430	254,237	253,731	2,420,030
AQUATIC LAND COVER							
Wetlands	8,984	30,654	54,167	17,010	26,608	21,785	159,208
Open Water/Lakes and Reservoirs/Rivers	17,037	12,508	23,240	237	13,493	8,543	75,058
TOTAL AQUATIC	26,021	43,162	77,407	17,247	40,101	30,328	234,266
AGRICULTURE LAND COVER							
Orchards and Vineyards	694	2,895	35,544	67,319	61,901	34,593	202,946
Pasture	3	7,866	43,180	1,719	141	308	53,217
Rice	0	20,250	8,680	132,497	0 ¹	38,135	199,562
Row and Field Crops	4,373	14,431	70,047	97,199	281,263	32,493	499,806
TOTAL AGRICULTURE	5,070	45,442	157,451	298,734	343,305	105,529	955,531
DEVELOPED/DISTURBED LAND COVER							
Developed	16,381	80,385	185,275	18,408	45,492	21,997	367,938

Land Cover Type	El Dorado	Placer	Sacramento	Sutter	Yolo	Yuba	TOTAL
Disturbed	0	1,580	7,278	0	0	0	8,858
Nonnative Vegetation	37	61	6	0	369	0	473
TOTAL DEVELOPED/ DISTURBED	16,418	82,026	192,559	18,408	45,861	21,997	377,269
TOTAL LAND COVER	1,003,289	862,910	636,990	388,819	683,504	411,585	3,987,096

Note: Totals may not sum due to rounding.

¹ The rice land cover type is included as a subset of “Cultivated Lands” in the Yolo County HCP/NCCP. “Cultivated Lands” are included as “Row and Field Crops” in the Draft EIR. As a result, total acreage for rice land cover in Yolo County is shown as zero. The acreage totals for row and field crops in Yolo County include the rice land cover acreage from the Yolo County HCP/NCCP.

Source: Land Cover data was compiled by Ascent in 2019 to create the land cover dataset that was analyzed in this chapter using data from U.S. Forest Service (USDA 2014, 2016), California Aquatic Resources Inventory (SFEI 2017), Placer County Conservation Plan (County of Placer 2016), South Sacramento HCP (County of Sacramento et al. 2014), Sutter-Yuba landcover (SACOG 2012), and Yolo HCP (County of Yolo 2015).

Also, in response to Comment 3-10, the following text has been added to page 6-13 of the Draft EIR for clarification:

Rice

Areas mapped as rice, primarily in the valley regions of the plan area of the proposed MTP/SCS, include both flooded and fallow rice fields. Rice fields commonly include irrigation features, such as berms, ditches, canals, and water control structures. Rice is grown as a monoculture, using tillage or herbicides to eliminate unwanted vegetation; remaining vegetation is generally confined to the berms, ditches, and canals between and around fields, and is dominated by wetland plants, both native and nonnative. Special-status wildlife species associated with rice fields include giant garter snake, snowy plover, burrowing owl, greater sandhill crane, Swainson’s hawk, loggerhead shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus*), tricolored blackbird, greater sandhill crane, western spadefoot, western pond turtle, coast horned lizard, and numerous bat species. With respect to the rice land cover type in Yolo County, the Yolo County HCP/NCCP includes rice as a subset of the “Cultivated Lands” land cover type. This Draft EIR incorporates the rice land cover type within the “Row and Field Crops” land cover type (see below).

Impacts to special-status species were analyzed at the programmatic level in the Draft EIR and impacts to land cover types were analyzed for the following land cover categories: wildland, aquatic, and agricultural habitats. Both the rice and row and field crop land cover types are included in the agricultural land cover category. Therefore, impacts to special-status species that could occur within the rice land cover type (e.g., giant garter snake) were encompassed within impacts to overall agricultural habitat identified in the Draft EIR. These edits do not alter the significance determinations of the Draft EIR. No further response is required to Comment 3-10.

Comment 3-11

Pages 6-30 and 6-31 of the Draft EIR provide a list of types of operational and construction activities that could occur under implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS and that could result in direct or indirect impacts to biological resources. The comment recommends that the Draft EIR include the following additional types of activities that could result in impacts to biological resources: (1) increased human usage resulting in direct and indirect habitat degradation (e.g., litter, pollution, increased mortality due to vehicle strikes), (2) operation of equipment resulting in transfer of invasive species, (3) temporary disturbance due to construction noise, (4) changes to distribution or movement of wildlife, (5) reduction of resources available to wildlife, (6) increased habitat fragmentation, and (7) increased barriers to wildlife movement. The Draft EIR addresses changes to the distribution or movement and barriers to wildlife movement in Impact BIO-4 (pages 6-73 to 6-82). The Draft EIR discusses potential impacts related to habitat fragmentation under Impact BIO-1 on page 6-34 in paragraph 2 and in the last paragraph on page 6-41. While the Draft EIR does not explicitly list the other additional types of activities, the potential impacts to biological resources associated with these activities are already analyzed as part of the programmatic analysis of direct and indirect impacts to biological resources included in the Draft EIR. The additional types of activities listed in this

comment would not result in new or more severe impacts to biological resources beyond what was analyzed in the Draft EIR. For clarification, the text of the Draft EIR has been amended on page 6-31 to list these additional types of activities:

This impact analysis recognizes that biological resources could be indirectly or directly affected by construction and maintenance activities associated with potential projects in the plan area of the proposed MTP/SCS. Biological resources could be directly or indirectly disturbed by the following activities:

Operational Impacts:

- ▶ projected changes in land use, where wildland or agricultural areas are converted;
- ▶ indirect changes in biological resources due to land use, such as changes in hydrology and runoff due to increased impervious surfaces (see Chapter 11 – Hydrology and Water Quality for a discussion of water runoff and water quality degradation and associated mitigation measures);
- ▶ direct loss of habitat associated with roadway widening, new transportation facilities, or interchange, rail, and bikeway improvements;
- ▶ increased human usage resulting in direct and indirect habitat degradation (e.g., litter, pollution, increased mortality due to vehicle strikes);
- ▶ reduction of resources available to wildlife;
- ▶ herbicide application and removal of vegetation as part of landscaping and road maintenance; and
- ▶ degradation of water quality in wetlands and waterways, resulting from road runoff containing petroleum products.

Construction Impacts:

- ▶ stream dewatering or installation of temporary water-diversion structures during construction of new growth, bridges and other transportation facilities over riverine systems;
- ▶ temporary stockpiling of soil or construction materials and sidelaying of soil and other construction wastes;
- ▶ temporary removal of riparian vegetation along waterways during construction of new land uses and bridges;
- ▶ removal of vegetation during construction of temporary staging areas and access roads;
- ▶ ground disturbance;
- ▶ operation of equipment resulting in transfer of invasive species;
- ▶ temporary disturbance due to construction noise;
- ▶ soil compaction in temporarily disturbed areas and generation of dust by construction equipment; and
- ▶ water runoff from the construction area.

The edits above do not alter the significance determinations of the Draft EIR. No further response is required to Comment 3-11.

Comment 3-12

The comment describes ways in which roads can result in impacts to wildlife by vehicle strikes, habitat fragmentation, and barriers to wildlife movement. The direct and indirect biological resources impacts of implementation of the projected land use pattern and planned transportation improvements of the proposed MTP/SCS, which includes new or expanded roadway and highway projects, are analyzed throughout Chapter 6 – Biological Resources. This comment does not address the adequacy of the Draft EIR. No further response is required to Comment 3-12.

Comment 3-13

The comment states that barriers to wildlife movement are expected to cause greater impacts as climate change impacts existing habitats and changes where animals can live. As discussed in the response to Comment 3-11, the Draft EIR analyzes impacts to wildlife movement from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS in Impact BIO-4 (pages 6-73 to 6-82). Mitigation Measures BIO-6 and BIO-7 require implementing agencies to identify and reduce impacts to wildlife movement corridors by incorporating various features into project design. For the reasons provided below, the proposed MTP/SCS would not result in greater impacts to wildlife movement than those analyzed in the Draft EIR because of climate change.

Long-term climate trends and associated ecological vulnerabilities in response to these stresses may directly threaten sensitive habitats and species, including wildlife movement. The degree of vulnerability of California's wildlife to climate change will vary considerably depending on many factors, such as the intrinsic sensitivity of a given species and/or its habitat to climate exposure and related stresses, the adaptive capacity of species and habitat to these effects, and other existing environmental stresses unrelated to climate change.

Factors contributing to a species' vulnerability to climate change are difficult to forecast. However, regardless of this existing and future condition, Mitigation Measures BIO-6 and BIO-7 in the Draft EIR would require implementing agencies to identify wildlife movement corridors as defined by Caltrans and CDFW (Spencer et al. 2010), to avoid or substantially lessen impacts to these corridors and to other sensitive habitats that may function as wildlife movement corridors (e.g., riparian corridors), and to consult with CDFW to determine appropriate measures to minimize impacts if significant impacts to movement corridors are expected. Required consultation with CDFW at the project-level would allow for projects to address future changes to modeled wildlife movement corridors as a result of climate change that may be identified by CDFW during the horizon of the proposed MTP/SCS.

In addition to Mitigation Measures BIO-6 and BIO-7, all projects under the proposed MTP/SCS are required to comply with applicable habitat conservation plans (HCP) or natural community conservation plans (NCCP), if the project is within the plan area. One aspect of these plans is establishment of a system of preserves with the goal of providing habitat connectivity for wildlife. Design of these preserve systems incorporates a range of environmental gradients and high habitat diversity to provide for shifting species distributions in response to changing circumstances, including climate change. The comment does not raise an issue that requires any additional analysis or further mitigation in the EIR.

Comment 3-14

The comment references Mitigation Measure BIO-7, which includes measures to avoid or substantially lessen impacts to wildlife movement and asserts that individual projects identified in the proposed MTP/SCS may have a cumulatively significant impact on wildlife movement. Cumulative biological resources impacts that could result from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS are analyzed in Chapter 19 – Other CEQA (pages 19-20 to 19-21). The Draft EIR concludes that the contribution of the proposed MTP/SCS to cumulative biological resources impacts, including wildlife movement impacts, would be cumulatively considerable. It further explains that the biological resources mitigation measures identified in the Draft EIR would reduce the contribution of the proposed MTP/SCS to cumulatively significant biological resources impacts, but acknowledges that at this program-level of analysis the mitigation measures may not be sufficient to reduce impacts to less than significant in all cases. No further response is required.

Comment 3-15

The comment encourages the building of wildlife crossing structures to address potentially significant cumulative impacts to wildlife movement and to help minimize the impacts of existing roads. The Draft EIR does not address how existing roads affect wildlife movement; identifying measures to improve existing environmental conditions is not appropriate or required under CEQA. The Draft EIR evaluates the potentially significant impacts of implementation of the planned transportation projects of the proposed MTP/SCS, including on wildlife movement. The Draft EIR analyzes the potentially significant wildlife movement impacts of the proposed MTP/SCS in Chapter 6 and potentially significant cumulative impacts to wildlife movement in Chapter 19. Mitigation Measure BIO-7 in the Draft EIR

identifies measures to avoid or substantially lessen impacts to wildlife movement, including the use wildlife crossing structures such as overpasses, underpasses, bridges, and/or culverts as suggested in this comment. This measure would also substantially lessen the contribution of the proposed MTP/SCS to cumulatively significant impacts to wildlife movement. No further response is required.

Comment 3-16

The comment provides resources for wildlife crossing design. In response to Comment 3-16, the text of the Draft EIR has been amended in the second sub-bullet under the first bullet in Mitigation Measure BIO-7 (page 6-81) of the Draft EIR:

Mitigation Measure BIO-7: Avoid, Minimize, and Mitigate Impacts on Wildlife Movement Corridors or Native Wildlife Nursery Sites.

If the qualified biologist, after implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-6, determines that wildlife movement corridors or native wildlife nursery sites are present within the area of impact and could be adversely affected by construction activities, then the following measures shall be implemented:

- ▶ Implementing agencies shall design projects such that they avoid and minimize direct and indirect impacts on wildlife movement corridors and/or native wildlife nursery sites. Design considerations may include but would not be limited to the following:
 - constructing wildlife friendly overpasses, underpasses, bridges and/or culverts that are integrated with appropriate roadside fencing that maintains animals off the road and direct them towards crossing structures;
 - implementing agencies shall consider agency guidance in designing wildlife crossings, including the guidance of CDFW or other applicable wildlife agencies;
 - using wildlife friendly fencing;
 - limiting wildland conversions in identified wildlife corridors or native wildlife nursery sites;
 - retaining wildlife friendly vegetation in and around developments; and
 - avoid the nursery season for common wildlife during construction.
- ▶ For projects that cannot avoid significant impacts on wildlife movement corridors or native wildlife nursery areas, implementing agencies shall consult with CDFW to determine appropriate measures to minimize direct and indirect impacts that could occur as a result of implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS and shall implement measures to mitigate impacts on wildlife corridors or native wildlife nursery sites.
- ▶ For projects that require the placement of stream culverts in a fish spawning stream, the implementing agencies shall follow the USACE, NOAA Fisheries, USFWS, and CDFW permit conditions and design requirements to allow fish passage through the culverts.
- ▶ For projects in or adjacent to riparian corridors, project design shall maximize distance of lighting from riparian corridors and direct light sources away from the riparian corridor. Night lighting of trails along riparian corridors should be avoided.

Comment 3-17

The comment recommends that Mitigation Measure BIO-1a include language to specify that biological resource assessments consider indirect impacts to adjacent and nearby habitats and the species within them. The second bullet on page 6-45 directs a qualified biologist to review not only a project site but "the land within and in the vicinity of the area of an impact." Nevertheless, for clarity, Mitigation Measure BIO-1a has been amended to explain

that the scope of the biological resources assessment includes direct impacts to habitat and species within the area of impact and also indirect impacts to adjacent and nearby habitats and the species within them.

Mitigation Measure BIO-1a: Conduct a Biological Resources Assessment.

- ▶ Prior to initiation of construction activities under the proposed MTP/SCS, the implementing agency shall require a qualified biologist to conduct a data review, land cover mapping (including aquatic habitats such as wetlands), and a reconnaissance-level survey and habitat assessment of the area of impact to identify whether any special-status plant or wildlife species habitat, riparian or other sensitive habitats, sensitive natural communities, wetlands, wildlife movement corridors, or wildlife nursery sites could be affected by construction activities. Additionally, the biologist will determine whether any local policies or ordinances intended to protect biological resources (e.g., tree removal policies) would apply, and whether construction activities would result in conflicts with these policies or ordinances. The data reviewed shall include the Biological Resources setting of this EIR (See Section 6.2 “Environmental Setting”), and the best available current data for the area, including vegetation mapping data, species distribution information, CNDDDB, CNPS Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants of California, and relevant general plans, HCPs, and NCCPs. The biological resources assessment shall be completed at a time of year that is appropriate for identifying habitat and no more than one year prior to initiation of construction activities. The scope of the biological resources assessment shall include direct impacts to habitat and species within the area of impact and also indirect impacts to adjacent and nearby habitats and the species within them.
- ▶ If the qualified biologist determines that: the land within and in the vicinity of the area of impact does not contain suitable habitat for special-status plant or animal species, riparian or other sensitive habitats, sensitive natural communities, wetlands, wildlife movement corridors, or native wildlife nursery sites; construction activities would not result in adverse effects on these resources and/or that project implementation would not result in conflict with a local policy or ordinance or an adopted HCP or NCCP, the biologist will document the findings in a letter report to the implementing agency, and no further mitigation is required.

Comment 3-18

The comment references Mitigation Measure BIO-1b and recommends that project-level biological resources assessments consider and appropriately mitigate impacts to limited and specialized habitat types such as gabbro and serpentine soils, even in cases where special-status plant species are not detected during surveys. Serpentine soils and their potential to exist within the plan area of the proposed MTP/SCS are discussed in the first two paragraphs on page 6-10 in Chapter 6 – Biological Resources of the Draft EIR. Draft EIR Mitigation Measure BIO-1a requires, in part, that a biological resources assessment be performed to identify whether any sensitive plant or wildlife habitat could be affected by project-level construction activities. Mitigation Measure BIO-1b requires, in part, that when suitable habitat is present (such as gabbro or serpentine habitats) that surveys be performed prior to project initiation and during the appropriate blooming period. This would include the types of special-status plant species that may be present in gabbro and serpentine habitat types. If detected, avoidance or mitigation measures would be required and determined in consultation with USFWS and/or CDFW. No further mitigation is required.

Comment 3-19

The comment recommends that language be added to Mitigation Measure BIO-1c to indicate when coordination with CDFW in addition to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) is required.

In response to Comment 3-19, the text of the Draft EIR has been amended in the third bullet point on page 6-48 of the Draft EIR:

- For work conducted during the California red-legged frog migration season (November 1 to May 31), exclusionary fencing will be erected around the area of impact during ground-disturbing activities after hand excavation of burrows has been completed. A qualified biologist will visit the site weekly to ensure that the fencing is in good working condition. Fencing material and design will be subject to the approval of USFWS and CDFW. If exclusionary fencing is not used, a qualified biological

monitor will be on-site during all ground disturbance activities. Exclusion fencing will also be placed around all spoils and stockpiles.

In response to Comment 3-19, the text of the Draft EIR has been amended in the eighth bullet point on page 6-49 of the Draft EIR:

- For work conducted during the California tiger salamander migration season (November 1 to May 31), exclusionary fencing will be erected around the area of impact during ground-disturbing activities after hand excavation of burrows has been completed. A qualified biologist will visit the site weekly to ensure that the fencing is in good working condition. Fencing material and design will be subject to the approval of USFWS and CDFW. If exclusionary fencing is not used, a qualified biological monitor will be on-site during all ground disturbance activities. Exclusion fencing will also be placed around all spoils and stockpiles.

In response to Comment 3-19, the text of the Draft EIR has been amended in the eighth bullet point on page 6-50 of the Draft EIR:

- The implementing agency shall secure any necessary take authorization prior to project construction through formal consultation with CDFW and USFWS pursuant to Section 2081 of the California Fish and Game code and Section 7 of the ESA, respectively.

In response to Comment 3-19, the text of the Draft EIR has been amended in the last bullet point on page 6-52 of the Draft EIR:

- Prior to construction, CDFW shall be consulted pursuant to CESA and USFWS shall be consulted pursuant to Section 7 of the ESA. The activities may qualify to use the *Programmatic Formal Consultation for U.S. Army Corps of Engineers 404 Permitted Projects with Relatively Small Effects on the Giant Garter Snake within Butte, Colusa, Glenn, Fresno, Merced, Sacramento, San Joaquin, Solano, Stanislaus, Sutter and Yolo Counties, California* (USFWS 1999). The Habitat Replacement & Restoration Guidelines (Appendix A), Items Necessary for Formal Consultation (Appendix B), Avoidance & Minimization Measures During Construction (Appendix C), and Monitoring Requirements (Appendix D) shall be followed.

In response to Comment 3-19, the text of the Draft EIR has been amended in the first bullet point on page 6-58 of the Draft EIR:

- If nests are detected, direct impacts and indirect impacts (e.g., noise, presence of construction crews) shall be avoided by establishing appropriate buffers around active nest sites. Factors to be considered for determining buffer size will include the presence of natural buffers provided by vegetation or topography; nest height; locations of foraging territory; and baseline levels of noise and human activity. Buffer size may be adjusted if the qualified biologist, in consultation with CDFW or USFWS, determines that such an adjustment would not be likely to adversely affect the nest. The buffer areas shall be protected with construction fencing, and no activity shall occur within the buffer areas until the qualified biologist has determined, in coordination with CDFW or USFWS, that the young have fledged, the nest is no longer active, or reducing the buffer would not likely result in nest abandonment. Monitoring of the nest by a qualified biologist during and after construction activities will be required if the activity has potential to adversely affect the nest.

The edits above do not alter the significance determinations of the Draft EIR. No further response is required to Comment 3-19.

Comment 3-20

The comment states that the Draft EIR, in Mitigation Measure BIO-1c, should require compliance with CESA, which may include avoidance, CDFW approval for take authorization, and CDFW approval of mitigation. The edits made to

the Draft EIR provided above in the response to Comment 3-19 amend the existing language of Mitigation Measure BIO-1c to describe existing requirements for project proponents to comply with CESA and consult with CDFW. No further response is required to Comment 3-20.

Comment 3-21

The comment recommends that the Draft EIR, in Mitigation Measure BIO-1c, require that all holes or trenches at least six inches deep be subject to requirements for covering and daily monitoring. The Draft EIR provides a programmatic evaluation of environmental impacts that could occur as a result of implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS and identifies mitigation measures that could reduce impacts to less-than-significant levels if implemented at the project level by a lead agency. Project-specific information such as landscapes and habitat characteristics would differ on a project-by-project basis and is unknown at this time. At this program-level of analysis, there is not sufficient information available about all future activities to establish a uniform requirement for covering and monitoring of holes and trenches for all future land use and transportation projects that could occur with implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS. Draft EIR Mitigation Measures BIO-1a through BIO-1c already require the implementation of project- and species-specific avoidance and minimization measures at the project level. This would include the identification of appropriate project-specific requirements for covering and monitoring of holes and trenches based on project-specific activities, site-specific conditions, and other factors.

To clarify this point, the text of the Draft EIR has been amended to include the following clarification in the first paragraph under the heading Mitigation Measure BIO-1c: Identify Special-Status Wildlife, and Avoid, Minimize, and Mitigate Impacts, on page 6-46 of the Draft EIR:

If the qualified biologist, after implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-1a, determines that suitable habitat for special-status wildlife is present within the area of impact and could be adversely affected by construction activities, then the ~~following~~ measures listed below shall be implemented. Additional or more specific Avoidance and Minimization Measures may be required at the project level based on project-specific activities, site-specific conditions, and other factors in order to avoid or substantially lessen adverse impacts. Additional Avoidance and Minimization Measures shall be developed in coordination with CDFW or USFWS, as appropriate. Measures include, but are not limited to, the following:

The edits above do not alter the significance determinations of the Draft EIR. No further response is required to Comment 3-21.

Comment 3-22

The comment states that there are nine state and/or federally listed or candidate wildlife species that may occur in the plan area but are not included in Mitigation Measure BIO-1c. However, some of these species were included, such as the riparian brush rabbit (refer to the Avoidance and Minimization Measures for Special-Status Rabbits and Sierra Nevada Mountain Beaver on page 6-62) and the longfin smelt, Lahontan cutthroat trout, and eulachon (which are addressed by the Avoidance and Minimization Measures for special-status fish on page 6-63 in the Draft EIR). The Draft EIR already includes Avoidance and Minimization Measures for special-status birds (pages 6-57 and 6-58) but does not specifically name all species. For clarity, the text of the Avoidance and Minimization Measures for special-status birds has been amended in the sixth bullet point on page 6-57 of the Draft EIR to list the tricolored blackbird and western snowy plover:

- If suitable habitat for other special-status nesting birds (e.g., bank swallow [*Riparia riparia*], black swift [*Cypseloides niger*], grasshopper sparrow [*Ammodramus savannarum*], loggerhead shrike, tricolored blackbird, and western snowy plover) or other native nesting birds protected under sections 3503 and 3503.5 of the California Fish and Game Code is identified within the area of impact or within 500 feet of the area of impact, all tree removal activities and construction activities shall occur during the nonbreeding season (September 1–January 31), if feasible. If tree removal or other construction activities must occur between February 1 and August 31, the implementing agency shall retain a qualified biologist to conduct protocol-level nest surveys within 500 feet of the area of impact no more than 7 days prior to initiation of construction.

Salt-marsh harvest mouse is also addressed in the Draft EIR (refer to Appendix BIO-1) and would be subject to the Draft EIR mitigation measures for biological resources including BIO-1a to BIO-1c. The Draft EIR has been amended on page 6-62 to include Avoidance and Minimization Measures for salt-marsh harvest mouse:

Salt Marsh Harvest Mouse

- ▶ The only suitable habitat and portion of the species range for salt marsh harvest mouse within the plan area of the proposed MTP/SCS is on Sherman Island in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta.
- ▶ Take of fully protected mammal species (i.e., salt marsh harvest mouse) is prohibited, and disturbance, injury, or mortality of this species shall be avoided.

The California Fish and Game Commission determined that a petition to list Crotch bumble bee (*Bombus crotchii*) western bumble bee (*Bombus occidentalis occidentalis*), and two additional bumble bee species as endangered under CESA was warranted on June 12, 2019. This determination was made after the April 25, 2019 publication of the Notice of Preparation (NOP) for this Draft EIR. Due to the timing of this determination occurring after publication of the NOP and after commencement of the Draft EIR, the two bumble bee species that have historic ranges that overlap with the plan area of the proposed MTP/SCS (Crotch bumble bee and western bumble bee) were not included in the list of special-status species in the Draft EIR (Appendix BIO-1).

While these species were not listed in Appendix BIO-1 of the Draft EIR, Mitigation Measure BIO-1a requires implementing agencies to conduct a data review and reconnaissance-level survey and habitat assessment at the project level to determine whether special-status wildlife species habitat is present within the project site. This mitigation framework requires consideration of all species that meet the special-status definition at the time of the individual project's environmental review. In addition, Mitigation Measure BIO-1c would require identification of any special-status wildlife at the project level, and avoidance and minimization measures to reduce impacts to these species, and consultation with CDFW or other applicable wildlife agencies.

See also the response to Comment 3-21, which included edits to the Draft EIR that provide clarity that additional or more specific Avoidance and Minimization Measures may be required under Mitigation Measure BIO-1c at the project level based on project-specific activities, site-specific conditions, and other factors in order to avoid or substantially lessen adverse impacts and that these measures shall be developed in coordination with CDFW or USFWS, as appropriate.

Comment 3-23

The comment recommends various avoidance and mitigation measures for bats. The Draft EIR provides a programmatic evaluation of environmental impacts that could occur as a result of implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS and provides potential mitigation that could reduce impacts to less-than-significant levels if implemented at the project level by a lead agency. The Draft EIR (pages 6-60 to 6-61) includes Avoidance and Minimization Measures for bats, including requirements for preconstruction surveys, submittal of a Bat Exclusion Plan to CDFW for approval, and submittal of a mitigation plan to CDFW for approval if a winter roost, maternity roost, or any roost of a special-status bat species is found. At this program-level of analysis, there is not sufficient information available about all future project-level activities to establish more detailed requirements as recommended in this comment for all future land use and transportation projects that could occur with implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS. Draft EIR Mitigation Measures BIO-1a through BIO-1c already require the implementation of project- and species-specific avoidance and minimization measures at the project level. This would include, where appropriate, the identification of more detailed project-specific requirements based on project-specific activities, site-specific conditions, and other factors.

To clarify this point, the text of the Draft EIR has been amended in the first paragraph under the heading Mitigation Measure BIO-1c: Identify Special-Status Wildlife, and Avoid, Minimize, and Mitigate Impacts, on page 6-46 of the Draft EIR as described in the response to Comment 3-21.

Comment 3-24

The comment offers additional mitigation strategies to minimize impacts to special-status bats such as incorporation of in-kind replacement habitat (e.g., suitable vegetation, crevice, panel, color, capped-edge brain, bat boxes, and bat houses). Because Mitigation Measure BIO-1c already requires preparation of a Bat Exclusion Plan to be developed in consultation with CDFW prior to its implementation, additional mitigation strategies may be incorporated into the Bat Exclusion Plan, as appropriate based on project- and site-specific considerations that cannot be known at this time. Please see the response to Comment 3-23 for additional discussion of why the recommendations raised in this comment are not included in the programmatic analysis of this Draft EIR.

Comment 3-25

The comment states that the third bullet of the California Tiger Salamander (CTS) section of Mitigation Measure BIO-1 should be corrected to specify that CTS would be relocated to the nearest burrow suitable to support CTS populations.

In response to Comment 3-25, the text of the Draft EIR has been amended in the third bullet point on page 6-49 of the Draft EIR:

- All suitable burrows directly affected by construction will be hand excavated under the supervision of a qualified wildlife biologist. If California tiger salamanders are found, the biologist will relocate individuals to the nearest suitable burrow that is outside of the area of impact.

The edits above do not alter the significance determinations of the Draft EIR. No further response is required to Comment 3-25.

Comment 3-26

The comment recommends strengthening the language of the fifth bullet of the CTS section of Mitigation Measure BIO-1c to specify that fences constructed as mitigation be checked daily. The Draft EIR provides a programmatic evaluation of environmental impacts that could occur as a result of implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS and provides potential mitigation that could reduce impacts to less-than-significant levels if implemented at the project level by a lead agency. At this program-level of analysis, there is not sufficient information available about all future activities to establish detailed requirements for the frequency of checking fencing as recommended in this comment for all future land use and transportation projects that could occur with implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS. Draft EIR Mitigation Measures BIO-1a through BIO-1c already require the implementation of project- and species-specific avoidance and minimization measures at the project level that would be developed and implemented in coordination with CDFW. This would include, where appropriate, the identification of more detailed project-specific requirements based on project-specific activities, site-specific conditions, and other factors.

To clarify this point, the text of the Draft EIR has been amended in the first paragraph under the heading Mitigation Measure BIO-1c: Identify Special-Status Wildlife, and Avoid, Minimize, and Mitigate Impacts, on page 6-46 of the Draft EIR as described in the response to Comment 3-21.

Comment 3-27

The comment recommends that the language of bullets 5 and 6 under the CTS section of Mitigation Measure BIO-1c be amended to more accurately reflect the migration season of CTS.

In response to Comment 3-27, the text of the Draft EIR has been amended in the fifth and sixth bullet points on page 6-49 of the Draft EIR:

- For work conducted during the California tiger salamander migration season (~~November 1~~ October 15 to May 31), exclusionary fencing will be erected around the area of impact during ground-disturbing activities after hand excavation of burrows has been completed. A qualified biologist will visit the site weekly to ensure that the fencing is in good working condition. Fencing material and design will be subject to the approval of USFWS. If exclusionary fencing is not used, a qualified

biological monitor will be on-site during all ground disturbance activities. Exclusion fencing will also be placed around all spoils and stockpiles.

- For work conducted during the California tiger salamander migration season (~~November 1~~ October 15 to May 31), a qualified biologist will survey the area of impact (including access roads) in mornings following measurable precipitation events. Construction may commence once the biologist has confirmed that no California tiger salamanders are in the work area.

The edits above do not alter the significance determinations of the Draft EIR. No further response is required to Comment 3-27.

Comment 3-28

The comment provides additional mitigation measures to minimize impacts to CTS. In response to Comment 3-28, the following bullets have been added following the seventh bullet point on page 6-50 the Draft EIR:

- Potential barriers to CTS movement such as curbs and edges greater than 3 inches in suitable CTS habitat shall be minimized.
- Work activities shall be limited to periods with the least probability for CTS encounters.
- Work activities shall be limited to an 820-foot buffer for breeding ponds during the metamorphosis dispersal period of CTS.
- Measures to minimize small mammal control that could adversely affect burrow habitat of CTS shall be implemented.

The edits above do not alter the significance determinations of the Draft EIR. No further response is required to Comment 3-28.

Comment 3-29

The comment recommends that the Draft EIR include mitigation for potential loss of foraging habitat in addition to the mitigation outlined for loss of nesting trees.

In response to Comment 3-29, the following bullet has been added following the first bullet point on page 6-55 of the Draft EIR:

- If Swainson's hawk foraging habitat would be lost during construction activities, mitigation for loss of this habitat shall be required.

The edits above do not alter the significance determinations of the Draft EIR. No further response is required to Comment 3-29.

Comment 3-30

The comment suggests that bullets 1 and 2 under the Other Special-Status Raptors section of Mitigation Measure BIO-1c be edited to specify that sensitive raptor species may be adversely affected by construction noise at distances greater than 500 feet.

In response to Comment 3-30, the text of the Draft EIR has been amended in the first and second bullet points on page 6-55 of the Draft EIR:

- If suitable habitat for other nesting special-status raptors (e.g., ferruginous hawk [*Buteo regalis*], golden eagle, bald eagle, northern harrier) or common raptors protected under California Fish and Game Code (e.g., red-tailed hawk, red-shouldered hawk) is identified within the area of impact or within 500 feet of the area of impact or a larger buffer as recommended by CDFW (e.g., 0.25 mile for white-tailed kite), all tree removal activities and construction activities shall occur during the nonbreeding season (September 1–January 31), if feasible.

- If tree removal or other construction activities must occur between February 1 and August 31, the implementing agency shall retain a qualified biologist to conduct a preconstruction survey for nesting raptors within 500 feet of the area of impact or a larger buffer as recommended by CDFW (e.g., 0.25 mile for white-tailed kite) no more than 7 days prior to initiation of construction.

The edits above do not alter the significance determinations of the Draft EIR. No further response is required to Comment 3-30.

Comment 3-31

The comment recommends strengthening the language of the third bullet of the American Badger section of Mitigation Measure BIO-1c to include an active movement corridor between exclusion zones and adjacent suitable habitat. The Draft EIR provides a programmatic evaluation of environmental impacts that could occur as a result of implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS and provides potential mitigation that could reduce impacts to less-than-significant levels if implemented at the project level by a lead agency. At this program-level of analysis, there is not sufficient information available about all future activities to establish more detailed requirements as recommended in this comment for all future land use and transportation projects that could occur with implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS. Draft EIR Mitigation Measures BIO-1a through BIO-1c already require the implementation of project- and species-specific avoidance and minimization measures at the project level. This would, where appropriate, include the identification of more detailed project-specific requirements based on project-specific activities, site-specific conditions, and other factors.

To clarify this point, the text of the Draft EIR has been amended in the first paragraph under the heading Mitigation Measure BIO-1c: Identify Special-Status Wildlife, and Avoid, Minimize, and Mitigate Impacts, on page 6-46 of the Draft EIR as described in the response to Comment 3-21.

Comment 3-32

The comment recommends the addition of other special-status fish such as longfin smelt and green sturgeon. The Draft EIR already includes an analysis of impacts to special-status fish species, and mitigation measures to avoid or substantially lessen potential impacts, including Avoidance and Minimization Measures specific to special-status fish species. For clarity, the two species identified in this comment have been added to the listing of special-status species with potential to occur in the plan area in Draft EIR Appendix BIO-1. These additions do not alter the significance determinations of the Draft EIR. No further response is required to Comment 3-32.

Comment 3-33

The comment recommends additional avoidance and minimization measures related to pile driving and its effects on special-status fish.

In response to Comment 3-33, the following bullet has been added following the fifth bullet point under the heading Special-Status Fish, on page 6-63 the Draft EIR:

- For projects that entail the use of construction-related pile drivers, minimization measures such as soft starts, hydroacoustic monitoring, decibel restrictions, and limited construction timing (i.e., limiting the amount of strikes per day) shall be enforced.

The edits above do not alter the significance determinations of the Draft EIR. No further response is required to Comment 3-33.

Comment 3-34

The comment recommends including shrub and herbaceous layers associated with riparian and oak woodland habitat restoration/creation into Mitigation Measure BIO-3. The Draft EIR provides a programmatic evaluation of environmental impacts that could occur as a result of implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS and provides potential mitigation that could reduce impacts to less-than-significant levels if implemented at the project level by a lead agency. At this program-level of analysis, there is not sufficient information available about all future activities to establish more detailed requirements as recommended in this comment for all future land use and transportation

projects that could occur with implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS. Draft EIR Mitigation Measures BIO-1a through BIO-1c already require the implementation of project- and species-specific avoidance and minimization measures at the project level that would be developed in consultation with CDFW to address project- and site-specific conditions. No changes to the Draft EIR are required.

Comment 3-35

The comment recommends that additional language be added to Mitigation Measure BIO-3 describing the existing regulatory requirements of section 1602 of the Fish and Game Code and the preparation of a Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement. The second bullet on page 6-68 states “[i]f adverse effects on riparian habitat or other sensitive natural communities associated with the bed, bank, or channel of streams or lakes cannot be avoided, the implementing agency shall comply with Section 1602 of the California Fish and Game Code by submitting a Streambed Alteration Notification to CDFW, pursuant to Section 1600 et seq. of the California Fish and Game Code,” to address regulatory compliance with Fish and Game Code section 1602 which requires the preparation of a Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement. Because the Draft EIR already addresses compliance with Fish and Game Code section 1602, no changes to the Draft EIR are required in response to Comment 3-35.

Comment 3-36

The comment summarizes the components of a Lake or Streambed Alteration Agreement. The comment does not address the adequacy of the EIR. No changes to the Draft EIR are required in response to Comment 3-36.

Comment 3-37

The comment summarizes CDFW’s role in evaluating streams, lakes, rivers, and wetlands as compared to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers or the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board. The comment does not address the adequacy of the EIR. No changes to the Draft EIR are required in response to Comment 3-37.

Comment 3-38

The comment recommends that projects coordinate with implementing entities for HCPs (such as the South Sacramento Conservation Agency) when potential MTP/SCS projects would affect wildlife corridors. The potential to conflict with HCPs, including coordination with implementing entities, is discussed under Impact BIO-6. As stated in the last paragraph of page 6-84, “[i]f permitting through an adopted HCP or NCCP is pursued, the applicant would be required to meet the permit conditions and other requirements established in the plan’s Implementing Agreement, which may include (depending on the plan) submitting a complete application package, paying required fees, fulfilling any appropriate survey requirements, and complying with all applicable conservation measures.” Thus, in cases where projects would be located within the boundaries of an HCP or NCCP, project proponents would be statutorily required to coordinate with the applicable implementing entity, as well as to comply with the permitting requirements of an HCP. No changes to the Draft EIR are required in response to Comment 3-38.

Comment 3-39

The comment requests any special-status species and natural resource communities detected during project surveys to be reported. No biological surveys were completed as part of this programmatic EIR.

Comment 3-40

The comment explains the filing fees required upon the filing of the Notice of Determination. Comment noted.

Comment 3-41

The comment requests written notification of proposed actions and pending decisions regarding the project. Please be advised that certification of the MTP/SCS Final EIR and approval of the MTP/SCS is scheduled for November 18, 2019, at 10 a.m.

Comment 3-42

The comment is a conclusion of the comment letter. Comment noted.

Comment 3-43

The comment is a list of references.



Oscar Villegas, Chair
Yolo County Board of
Supervisors

Don Nottoli, Vice Chair
Sacramento County Board of
Supervisors

Chuck Winn
San Joaquin County Board of
Supervisors

Diane Burgis
Contra Costa County Board of
Supervisors

Skip Thomson
Solano County Board of
Supervisors

Ronald Kott
Cities of Contra Costa and
Solano Counties

Christopher Cabaldon
Cities of Sacramento and
Yolo Counties

Alan Nakanishi
Cities of San Joaquin County

George Biagi, Jr.
Central Delta Reclamation
Districts

Justin van Loben Sels
North Delta Reclamation
Districts

Nick Mussi
South Delta Reclamation
Districts

David Kim
CA State Transportation
Agency

Karen Ross
CA Department of Food and
Agriculture

Wade Crowfoot
CA Natural Resources Agency

Brian Bugsch
CA State Lands Commission

Ex Officio Members

**Honorable Susan Talamantes
Eggman**
California State Assembly

Honorable Cathleen Galgiani
California State Senate

November 7, 2019

Renée DeVere-Oki
Sacramento Area Council of Governments
1415 L Street, Suite 300
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: 2020 Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy
Draft Environmental Impact Report (SCH# 2019049139)

Dear Ms. DeVere-Oki:

Thank you for providing the Delta Protection Commission (Commission) the opportunity to review the Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the 2020 Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (MTP/SCS). The MTP/SCS is a long-range, integrated land use and transportation strategy for the Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) region.

4-1

The Commission is a State agency charged with ensuring orderly, balanced conservation and development of Delta land resources and improved flood protection. Proposed local government projects within the Primary Zone of the Legal Delta must be consistent with the Commission's Land Use and Resource Management Plan (LURMP). Portions of Sacramento and Yolo counties are in the Primary Zone. For those portions of Sacramento and Yolo counties that are in the Secondary Zone and outside of the Legal Delta, we submit comments under Public Resource Code Sections 29770(d) and 5852-5855 (The Great California Delta Trail Act). These sections state that the Commission may comment on projects in the Secondary Zone that impact the Primary Zone and direct the Commission to develop and adopt a plan and implementation program for a continuous regional recreational corridor extending throughout the five Delta counties linking to the San Francisco Bay Trail and Sacramento River Trail.

4-2

We appreciate SACOG's thorough assessment of the MTP/SCS's effect on Commission programs and policies, including consistency with the LURMP goals and policies (particularly in Impact LU-3) and discussion of the Delta Trail, the newly designated Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta National Heritage Area, and Commission involvement in SACOG's Rural Urban Connection Strategies program. The Commission is supportive of projects that promote improved transportation and recreation infrastructure within the Delta while preserving agriculture as a

4-3

critical part of the region's economy. The MTP/SCS would direct growth into existing urbanized areas, moderate the amount of farmland converted to urban uses through mitigation measures, and support alternative modes of transportation.

4-3
cont.

Proposed improvements in MTP/SCS Appendix A, such as bridge construction, rehabilitation, and replacement, Interstate 5 improvements, pavement rehabilitation, new trails such as Clarksburg Branch Line Trail and Sycamore Trail, and improvements to South River Road, would benefit Delta communities and the Primary Zone. However, the Kammerer Road Extension (Connector Segment and Connector Segment A) identified on Appendix A page 46 could have a negative impact on the Primary Zone without mitigation.

4-4

The Commission previously commented on the Capital SouthEast Connector Joint Powers Authority's Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration for the A1/A2 Kammerer Road Project (SCH # 2018022061), stating that the extension of Kammerer Road between Bruceville Road and the Interstate 5/Hood-Franklin Road interchange could increase visitor and through traffic for the Stone Lakes National Wildlife Refuge, the unincorporated community of Hood, and larger Delta region. Hood and other Delta communities have already experienced increased levels of traffic on Highway 160, Hood-Franklin Road, and Twin Cities Road from commuters traveling between the Sacramento region and the San Francisco Bay Area. This project could exacerbate the problem.

4-5

The Draft EIR provides a mostly accurate and up-to-date description of the Commission, the Delta Trail, and the LURMP. There are several instances where corrections and updates are needed:

4-6

- On pp. 4-13 and 4-14, the text indicates that the "city of Sacramento is located directly adjacent to the Secondary Zone." As noted elsewhere in the Draft EIR, portions of the city of Sacramento are located within the Secondary Zone.
- On p. 12-49, the list of Delta legacy communities in Sacramento and Yolo counties should also include Freeport.
- On pp. 12-49 and 15-26, the text states that the Commission is currently finishing the *Great California Delta Trail Eastern Blueprint Report for Sacramento, Yolo, and San Joaquin Counties* and will probably publish the *Great California Delta Trail Master Plan* in June 2020. The *Eastern Blueprint* is already complete. The Commission anticipates that the *Delta Trail Master Plan* will be completed in late 2020.
- On p. 15-25, the text reads, "In 2018, a majority of land use projects recommended by DPC under the LURMP were within Sacramento County (35 percent) and Yolo County (24 percent) (DPC 2018)." Commission staff provided comment on the land use projects, rather than recommending these projects.

4-7

4-8

4-9

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input. Please contact Blake Roberts, Senior Environmental Planner, at (916) 375-4237 for any questions regarding the comments provided.

4-10

Sincerely,



Erik Vink
Executive Director

cc: Oscar Villegas, Yolo County Board of Supervisors and Commission Chair
Don Nottoli, Sacramento County Board of Supervisors and Commission Vice Chair
Christopher Cabaldon, City of West Sacramento Mayor and Commission Member

DELTA PROTECTION COMMISSION

Comment 4-1

Thank you for reviewing and providing comments on the Draft 2020 Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (MTP/SCS) and Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

Comment 4-2

The comment summarizes the Commission's role in reviewing plans and projects. Comment noted.

Comment 4-3

The comment summarizes the Commission's support for projects that improve transportation and recreation infrastructure within the Delta while preserving agriculture. Comment noted.

Comment 4-4

The comment notes several proposed improvements in the MTP/SCS project list, Appendix A, that would benefit Delta Communities. The comment notes one project, the Kammerer Road Extension, as potentially having a negative impact on the Primary Zone without mitigation. Thank you for the comment. Please note that the MTP/SCS Draft EIR analyzes the six-county transportation and land use plan, including the projects listed in Appendix A, at a programmatic level. Individual project level analysis under CEQA is beyond the scope of the Draft EIR, but such individual project-level analysis is required for the transportation improvements identified in the plan at the time those individual projects are ready to be implemented to address the issues identified in the comment.

Comment 4-5

The comment discusses the potential project-specific traffic impacts that the Kammerer Road project could have in the Delta. Please see response to Comment 4-4.

Comment 4-6

The comment suggests a revision to the EIR for clarification purposes. The text of the Draft EIR has been amended on page 4-13, continuing onto page 4-14, as follows:

"Additionally, a portion of the city of Sacramento is located ~~directly adjacent to~~ within the Secondary Zone."

The edits above do not alter the significance determinations of the Draft EIR.

Comment 4-7

The comment suggests a revision to the EIR for clarification purposes. The text of the Draft EIR has been amended on page 12-49 as follows:

"One of the primary ways that the LURMP promotes recreational use of the Delta is by providing alternative transportation choices allowing urban residents in the Secondary Zone and Delta Legacy Communities (i.e., Freeport, Clarksburg, Hood, Courtland, Ryde, Walnut Grove, Locke, and Isleton) to visit the Primary Zone for recreation or tourism."

The edits above do not alter the significance determinations of the Draft EIR.

Comment 4-8

The comment suggests a revision to the EIR for clarification purposes. The text of the Draft EIR has been amended on page 12-49 and page 15-26 as follows:

"The ~~Great~~ California Delta Trail Master Plan is anticipated to be published in ~~June~~ 2020 and would include routes for bicycling and hiking that connect to other trails, park and recreational facilities, and public transportation. DPC has prepared a draft ~~Delta Blueprint Report for the Eastern region~~ Great California Delta Trail Eastern Blueprint Report for Sacramento, Yolo, and San Joaquin Counties, which includes Sacramento and Yolo counties. Adopted Delta trail segments within the plan area of the proposed MTP/SCS to date include the West Sacramento River Walk, the Sacramento River Parkway, and the Clarksburg Branch Line Trail (DPC 2019). The draft Delta Blueprint Report for the Eastern region is available on the DPC website as of August 2019. DPC staff indicate that the Blueprint is now final. Neither the draft nor final versions of the Report were available prior to the Notice of Preparation for this EIR. Therefore, neither the draft nor final versions of the Report were analyzed for consistency with the proposed MTP/SCS.

The edits above do not alter the significance determinations of the Draft EIR.

Comment 4-9

The comment suggests a revision to the EIR for clarification purposes. The text of the Draft EIR has been amended on page 15-25 as follows:

"In 2018, a majority of land use projects ~~recommended~~ commented on by DPC under the LURMP were within Sacramento County (35 percent) and Yolo County (24 percent) (DPC 2018)."

The edits above do not alter the significance determinations of the Draft EIR.

Comment 4-10

Thank you again for your comments.



11/7/2019

VIA EMAIL
eircomments@sacog.org

Renee Devere-Oki
Sacramento Area Council of Governments
1415 L Street, Suite 300
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: 2020 Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy
(SCH# 2019049139)**

Dear Ms. Devere-Oki:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the 2020 Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (MTP/SCS) (SCH# 2019049139).

Impact TRN-4: Cause interference with existing or planned bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

The DEIR asserts that if the proposed MTP/SCS were to significantly interfere with bicycle and pedestrian facilities, there would be a decrease in the bicycle and walk trips per capita in the region. Subsequently, the DEIR states that the proposed MTP/SCS expansion of the network of Class I and II bicycle facilities would improve overall connectivity, and the overall improvements in land use patterns and street patterns would make walking a more attractive option. The DEIR then concludes the impacts to the connectivity of the region's bicycle and pedestrian system is considered less than significant for Impact TRN-4. However, this conclusion is erroneous as the stated criteria for the impact is "cause interference with the existing or planned bicycle and pedestrian facilities," not that the connectivity of the system is decreased.

5-1

In discussing local impacts, the DEIR makes a contention similar to that in the discussion of regional impacts, i.e. a significant impact would occur if trips per capita declined, but because the combined walk, bike and transit mode share increases and connectivity is improved, the impacts to the connectivity of the region's bicycle and pedestrian system are less than significant for Impact TRN-4. We believe this conclusion is also erroneous.

5-2

The DEIR also contends the impacts in High Frequency Transit Areas are less than significant for Impact TRN-4 for the nearly the same reasons given in the regional and local impacts discussion. We believe that, similar to the regional and local impacts, the conclusion of less than significant impacts is erroneous.

5-3

The discussion of regional impacts lists five potential ways in which the proposed MTP/SCS may interfere with the existing or planned bicycle and pedestrian system. The first and third in the list, and of greatest consequences to public health in the region, are "roadway improvement projects or the projected land use pattern which result in higher vehicle volumes or speeds adjacent to bike facilities" and "projects that make pedestrian or bicycle traffic crossing roadways more difficult by increasing roadway width or resulting in higher volumes of vehicles." Higher vehicle speeds contribute to more fatalities and greater severity of injuries in both bicycle and pedestrian collisions.

5-4

The potential ways that roadway projects may interfere with the regional system may also be applicable to local community type areas and high transit frequency areas, perhaps to a greater extent because of the greater non-automotive mode shares in those areas. The DEIR identifies five ways roadway projects may interfere with the existing or planned bicycle or pedestrian system, so there is potential for impacts as characterized by Impact TRN-4. Although SACOG has not identified a performance measure to determine interference with the system, it should be clear whether a proposed roadway project has one or more of the five listed interferences. Any roadway project – capacity or maintenance – that interferes in one of the listed ways should not be included in the proposed or any future project list.

5-5

WALKSacramento is working to support increased physical activity such as walking and bicycling in local neighborhoods as well as helping to create community environments that support walking and bicycling. The benefits include improved physical fitness, better air quality, and a stronger sense of cohesion and safety in local neighborhoods.

5-6

Sincerely,

Chris Holm
Project Manager

WALK SACRAMENTO

Comment 5-1

The comment suggests that the analysis and significance conclusions regarding bicycle and pedestrian impacts in Impact TRN-4 are inconsistent with the identified threshold of significance which is "cause interference with exiting or planned bicycle and pedestrian facilities."

While planned projects throughout the region may individually result in short-term and/or site-specific effects on bicycle and pedestrian facilities, this effect is not significant based on the metric used in the EIR to determine whether such interference would be significant – whether there would be a decrease in bicycle and pedestrian mode share. As stated in the Methods and Assumptions section of Chapter 16, the key performance measure for assessing the transportation impacts of the plan on bicycle and walking trips is whether there would be an increase in bike, walk, and transit trips per capita, which would indicate that the land use and planned transportation improvements in the proposed MTP/SCS are effectively working together to improve the mode share on non-auto travel. (DEIR, pp. 16-43 to 16-44.)

The fact that land use patterns and street patterns will improve conditions for these travel modes, and the fact that mode share for both forms of travel will be significantly increased as a result of the plan, both bolster the conclusion in the EIR that any potential interference will have less than significant impacts. Additionally, the narrow interpretation of the threshold as suggested by the comment is not consistent with the programmatic view of the EIR or the regional focus of the MTP/SCS.

See also response to Comment 6-90 regarding policies and programs in the MTP/SCS aimed at removing barriers to greater reliance on walking and bicycling.

Comment 5-2

The comment suggests that the analysis of local impacts under TRN-4 and the significance conclusion for those community types is also inconsistent with the threshold. See response to Comment 5-1 above.

Comment 5-3

The comment suggests that the analysis of impacts in HFTAs under TRN-4 and the significance conclusion for that community type is also inconsistent with the threshold. See response to Comment 5-1 above.

Comment 5-4

The comment summarizes the discussion of regional impacts in the Draft EIR, which discloses potential ways that projects in the MTP/SCS may interfere with existing or planned bicycle and pedestrian systems. Comment noted. Please see response to Comment 5-1.

Comment 5-5

See response to Comment 5-1 above.

Comment 5-6

The comment provides a summary of ways in which the commenter is working to support increased physical activity in local neighborhoods. Thank you for your comment.

CCEC

California Clean Energy Committee

California Clean Energy Committee | 503 Del Oro Avenue, Davis, CA 95616-0420

Voice: 530-756-6141 | Facsimile: 530-756-5930

<http://www.californiacleanenergy.org>

November 7, 2019

SACOG
1415 L St. #300
Sacramento CA, 95814

Attention: MTP/SCS Comments or EIR Comments

Re: Comments on Draft Environmental Impact Report
2020 Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy
SCH No. 2019049139

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter will constitute comments by the California Clean Energy Committee (CCEC) on the Draft Environmental Impact Report for the for the 2020 Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy, issued September 23, 2019.

6-1

The Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) is a federally-designated metropolitan planning organization (MPO) and a state-designated regional transportation planning agency (RTPA). The project discussed in the EIR consists of the 2020 Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (MTP/SCS) for the Sacramento region. The MTP/SCS is a long-range plan for the region's multimodal transportation system. The plan must be updated every four years if the region is to receive federal transportation funding. Pursuant to the Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act (SB 375), SACOG is required to include a sustainable communities strategy element in its update.

6-2

The plan area consists of El Dorado, Placer, Sacramento, Sutter, Yolo and Yuba counties, exclusive of the Tahoe Basin. The plan area is expected to grow by 620,500 people over the 20-year lifetime of the plan, and implementation of the proposed plan will convert

6-3

approximately 46,400 acres of undeveloped land over existing conditions. The location and pattern of this growth will influence travel behavior.

6-3
cont.

The growth pattern projected by the plan would be implemented through local agency plans and individual development projects. The plan includes 1,250 new lane miles of highways, arterials, and expressways. The plan also provides maintenance funding on 33,100 lane miles constituting the road and highway network.

6-4

One of the goals of the proposed MTP/SCS is to allow projects that are consistent with the SCS to receive various exemptions from CEQA review. SACOG's proposed plan would not achieve the 25 percent reduction in GHG emissions from the transportation sector necessary to do its part under the 2017 Scoping Plan, but it would still provide a streamlining exemption to projects from CEQA review for climate impacts. CEQA streamlining should not be available under a sustainable communities strategy that is not compliant with the 2017 Scoping Plan.

6-5

The California Clean Energy Committee (CCEC) is a California non-profit corporation located in Davis, California, which advocates on behalf of the general public throughout California for energy conservation, reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, sustainable transportation, the development of clean-energy resources, and related environmental concerns. CCEC actively supports the application of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) to energy conservation. Since 2008 the Committee has supported communities across California seeking to protect and conserve valuable environmental resources.

6-6

The degree to which the identified project alternatives do not meet the project goals is artificial. The alternatives analysis should be revised so that it reflects a flexible and good faith effort to utilize the full spectrum of transportation options available to meet demand.

6-7

At the end of this letter is a list of documents submitted in support of the points made in this letter. A copy of each document is saved on the enclosed USB drive. The documents have been saved under their corresponding number in the list. If there is any difficulty in viewing the documents, please contact the undersigned.

6-8

All notices regarding this project should be sent to 503 Del Oro Avenue, Davis, California 95616-7531. Please feel free to contact the undersigned for additional information.

We urge the SACOG Board to reject the project as designed. As noted below, there remain a number of areas where the environmental impacts should be more carefully evaluated and feasible mitigation measures should be adopted. The EIR should be revised and re-circulated for the reasons discussed below.

6-9

1. Project Description

The proposed MTP/SCS and the DEIR propose to be the basis for future projects that could obtain the benefits of CEQA streamlining based upon compliance with the MTP/SCS. (DEIR 2-7.) However, the draft EIR does not identify what would be required of a proposed project that would render it consistent with the MTP/SCS. (DEIR 2-51 – 2-54.) As a result the project description contained in the EIR is uncertain and varying. It is not known what would comply with the proposed MTP/SCS so the extent to which the proposed MTP/SCS would provide CEQA streamlining is undefined. The nature of the streamlining cannot be determined and the impact of the project cannot be determined. No maps or other descriptive material has been provided in the EIR or referenced in the EIR to demonstrate what would constitute compliance with the MTP/SCS.

6-10

The project being evaluated in the EIR does not include a land use plan. The MTP/SCS and the EIR make it clear that no land use design was prepared and instead the land use was only projected based upon community plans prepared by implementing agencies and other data. (DEIR 2-12.) In the preparation of the MTP/SCS the agency performed an analysis on the available data to predict, but not to plan, future development. No specific land-use standards or design has been identified in the EIR. Moreover, SACOG lacks authority over land use and could not adopt a land use plan in any case. The project consists of general goals and a transportation plan. (DEIR 2-3 – 2-48.) Nevertheless, the EIR at repeatedly treats the projected land use as if it were a plan which would entitle a development to be built. This is an uncertain and varying project description which should be stabilized so that impacts can be accurately evaluated.

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2. Greenhouse Gas Impact

The EIR should describe the physical environmental impacts of climate change in the region. Chapter 8 of the EIR contains an effort to discuss the environmental setting which is a discussion of existing conditions in the project area. It includes an explanation of the effects of climate change (DEIR 8-4) as well as a useless discussion of numerous regulations and laws dating back to the 1970s with no effort to connect them to the issues raised by the project. There is one paragraph discussing conditions in the Sacramento region, which refers to increased temperatures and changes to historical rain patterns. (DEIR 8-5.)

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There is no cumulative analysis of climate change which would inform the reader of the impact of climate change in the Sacramento region. The substantive discussion consists of a comparison between the GHG emissions expected from the project and the reductions expected by CARB pursuant to SB 375. There is no analysis of the cumulative impact on climate change within a defined geographic region. The cumulative impact is the primary environmental concern. There should be a detailed and quantified discussion of

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the anticipated cumulative impact that climate change will have on the physical environment within a geographic area designated in the analysis, e.g., the region.

6-14
cont.

The EIR adopts four thresholds of significance for GHG emissions—(i) conflict with the region's achievement of SB 375 targets, (ii) interference with the goals of CARB's 2017 Scoping Plan, (iii) interference with local GHG reduction plan goals, and (iv) increases GHG impacts from construction in a manner that would be inconsistent with the state's climate goals. (DEIR, 8-20.) The EIR should instead analyze the impact on the physical environment.

6-15

Pursuant to SB 375 CARB has established targets for per capita GHG emission from cars and light trucks in the region. The SB 375 compliance analysis describes the regional impact of the projected land use pattern, planned transportation improvements, and other strategies in the MTP/SCS as they relate to the regional targets. The proposed plan would meet the assigned SB 375 targets and so the EIR concludes there would be no impact under that threshold. While the proposed plan may comply with the SB 375 targets, as discussed below, complying with SB 375 does not mitigate the project's contribution to global climate change which would remain significant. In addition SB 375 is not a regulation or requirement. It is not a plan but rather a target.

6-16

The EIR analyzes the proposed plan for consistency with the goals in CARB's 2017 Scoping Plan. The EIR states that SB 375 is a "necessary component" of the scoping plan goal to achieve GHG reductions of 40 percent below 1990 emission levels by 2030 under SB 32. The CARB target under SB 375 for the region is to achieve 19% below the 2005 GHG emission levels by 2035. The EIR reports, however, that a 25% reduction below the 2005 emission level would be required to comply with SB 32 according to the scoping plan. The comparison to the 2017 Scoping Plan is not sufficient. The scoping plan is not a set of regulations or requirements that would mitigate the project's impact to global climate change. It is not a plan but rather a statement of policies and objectives.

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The EIR should evaluate the impact to climate change based upon the extent to which the project may increase GHG emissions compared to the existing environment. A finding that a project will have a significant impact or that it will make a significant contribution to a cumulative impact does not mean that a project cannot go forward or is prohibited. Rather it simply means that feasible mitigation and alternatives should be considered.

6-18

The analysis of the climate impacts of the proposed plan relies upon a comparison of the emissions from light cars and trucks in 2005 and 2035, stating that per capita GHG emissions from cars and light trucks would decrease by 19 percent over that time period. (DEIR, 8-21 – 8-22.) 2005 is not an appropriate baseline for the comparison because it does not reasonably reflect conditions at the time the notice of preparation was published.

6-19

SB 375 analysis addresses the GHG effect of the plan based upon targets for per capita emissions from cars and light trucks. A considerable amount of the GHG emissions from the proposed transportation plan will be the result of trucking goods to and from the region or through the region on the proposed roads and freeways. The EIR should include an analysis of the impacts on GHG emissions from increased trucking that will use the proposed transportation system and that will serve the land uses identified in the plan.

6-20

The MTP/SCS is intended to plan through 2040. According to Table 8-1 of the EIR, mobile source emissions essentially remain the same from 2030 to 2040. (DEIR, 8-17.) As a result the plan as proposed does not continue to reduce GHG emissions during that decade. The EIR should identify the failure to reduce emissions in the 2030 to 2040 time period as a significant impact and explain why there is no progress during that decade. This is inconsistent with the 2017 Scoping Plan and should be analyzed as such.

6-21

The EIR presents an inadequate explanation of how GHG emissions were modeled, of how the proposed project would impact GHG emissions in the region, and of how the conclusions regarding GHG emissions are being reached. The EIR references three different computer models that were involved—EMFAC2014, CalEEMod, and SACSIM. The draft EIR reports that transportation activities were estimated using SACOG's current travel demand model, SACSIM. GHG emissions from mobile sources were estimated using EMFAC2014, which was CARB's vehicle emissions model but has now been superseded by a more up-to-date model.

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No explanation has been provided of what the changes are in EMFAC2017, of why an outdated model is being used, or of why an outdated model should be considered to be reliable. The EIR should explain why the categories by which the emissions were classified were aligned with CalEEMod. (DEIR, 8-16 – 8-18.)

6-23

The application of these models is not explained or supported. SACOG should provide a clear and supported explanation of the modeling process which underlies the DEIR and of the impact on GHG emissions. After all, the agency spends many pages reciting regulatory and statutory history that is readily available elsewhere and that is of little practical importance to anyone considering the planning and review process.

6-24

The GHG impact analysis simply restates the data in Table 8-1 of the Methods and Assumptions section and concludes that the impact is potentially significant. (DEIR, 8-24 – 8-25.) Further information should be provided concerning how GHG emissions were calculated, how the proposed project will impact GHG emissions, what the agency's conclusion was, and how the agency reached its conclusion.

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The EIR relies to an unspecified degree on modeling under CalEEMod to establish both current impacts and future impacts. The EIR should explain and support the model in language that the public can understand. CalEEMod makes numerous assumptions.

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CalEEMod allows users to change the assumptions, and the EIR should explain what changes have been made in the CalEEMod default values, what the basis for those changes is, and why they have been made. The EIR should explain the default assumptions by CalEEMod that were accepted during the analysis and what basis there is for that data. The EIR should explain how CalEEMod has been applied.

6-26
cont.

The EIR concludes that the plan would have a significant potential to interfere with the goals contained in the 2017 Scoping Plan related to transportation, passenger-vehicle sector, energy, solid waste, other mobile sources, water, wastewater treatment, and construction emissions. (DEIR 8-25.) The plan does not provide adequate support or analysis for this conclusion. The EIR does not explain how or to what extent the proposed transportation plan would impact the goals of the scoping plan in these sectors.

6-27

The EIR references an earlier discussion of emissions from passenger vehicles and compliance with the SB 375 target of reducing those emissions to 19% below 2005 levels and discusses how meeting the goals set forth in the 2017 Scoping Plan would require a 25% reduction over that time period. (DEIR, 8-22.) It asserts that it will take collaboration to identify further VMT reductions. There is no support for the conclusion that it would take collaboration to identify further VMT reductions. It notes that SACOG lacks land use authority and cites a number of SACOG incentive programs.

6-28

The EIR projects that regional GHG emissions from the combined sectors of transportation, electricity consumption, natural gas combustion, area, solid waste and water consumption and wastewater generation would for unexplained reasons would decline according to the EIR. It notes that these sectors could reduce over time but that SACOG lacks authority to implement GHG reductions in these other sectors. The EIR notes that Title 24 would apply to new construction and that new construction emissions would be temporary.

6-29

The discussion lacks a clear definition of what impacts are considered to be the result of the proposed plan and as a result connects impacts to the plan that apparently are not a result of the plan. For example, it references agriculture and solid wastewater impacts but there is no discussion of how or to what extent a proposed transportation plan would impact those sectors.

6-30

There is no support for the estimated GHG emissions that would result from the project. Table 8-1 identifies eight sectors or categories of GHG emissions. (DEIR 8-17.) It estimates the GHG emissions in each sector for 2016, 2030, 2040 and 2050. There is no discussion or support demonstrating the method or the assumptions made to reach those numbers. The EIR should contain a complete discussion of how the calculation was done and the assumptions made and the basis for those assumptions.

6-31

Current information demonstrates that vehicle miles travelled (VMT) is not declining as required and that transit usage is falling in many cities. The EIR relies upon data from

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the SACSIM regional transportation modeling system to project current and future VMT and relies upon various policies and tools might affect VMT. These policies and tools have been deployed previously and have not been entirely effective. The EIR should take a critical look at the performance of the policies that are intended to reduce VMT and discuss what has proven effective and what has not.

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cont.

The estimates of mileage from SACSIM are inaccurate and unsupported because they rely on the assumption that various land use policies incorporated into the new plan will reduce vehicle travel, but as noted in the EIR those policies have been adopted in previous versions of the RTP and VMT has continued to increase. In light of the history of these policies, it can no longer be assumed that they are as effective as had been hoped. Consequently, the VMT and trip predictions are not supported.

6-33

The SACSIM transportation analysis model is also unreliable because it has been used to determine current baseline conditions, rather than using real world data reflecting actual travel behavior that is currently reported. The same method was used to determine total existing GHG emissions for the baseline year as was used to project total emissions for 2027, 2035 and 2040. (DEIR 8-16.) Baseline conditions should be determined on observed travel behavior and used to evaluate the effectiveness of policies that have been applied.

6-34

According to the EIR total GHG emissions for the plan area were measured using EMFAC2014. (DEIR, 8-17.) EMFAC2014 is invalid because the federal government has revoked California's exemption to the Clean Air Act which is required for California to regulate automobile mileage standards. EMFAC2014 projects emissions based upon the assumption that vehicles in California will achieve California-specific higher mileage standards which is no longer the case.

6-35

The modeling process for GHG emissions takes into account the average miles per gallon which vehicles operating in the region are expected to achieve, which has been determined based upon the anticipated compliance with vehicle manufacturers' standards adopted by California under the exemption provided by the federal government. That exemption has now been revoked by the federal government. Hence the level of GHG emissions projected under the proposed land use and transportation plan is invalid.

6-36

The draft EIR reports that the GHG emissions projections used for measuring compliance with the SB 375 target do not take into account the benefits of programs identified in the 2017 Scoping Plan that improve vehicle efficiency. (DEIR, 8-21.) Nevertheless, other vehicle efficiency programs adopted earlier under the now revoked California exemption are being relied upon to estimate GHG emissions. Moreover, Table 8-1 is not an SB 375 analysis and would not involve using the SB 375 constraints on EMFAC.

6-37

Mitigation Measure TRN-1, which also serves as Mitigation Measure GHG-1, states that additional actions and funding programs must be initiated by the state government to

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further reduce VMT and that the form of those programs must be worked out in collaboration with MPOs and local agencies. (DEIR, 8-29, 16-54.) The mitigation measure provides that SACOG shall be an active participant in that process and that the implementing agencies shall comply with state guidance on VMT reductions.

6-38
cont.

TRN-1 goes on to state that implementing agencies shall require project modification during the design and environmental review of projects to reduce VMT impacts in a manner consistent with state guidance on VMT reduction. It then lists a variety of project modifications that could be adopted for that purpose.

6-39

The EIR concludes that these measures would be sufficient to reduce the impact to less than significant but that additional state policy actions and funding would be required to close the gap at the state level. The EIR asserts that the strategies identified would need to be refined at the local level in any subsequent environmental analysis. This is vague and unenforceable.

6-40

The EIR should formulate the programs to produce further emissions reductions and recommend or require their adoption as mitigation as a prerequisite to funding. The formulation of mitigation should not be deferred until a future time. The operation of the mitigation should not be contingent upon the development of state guidance on VMT reduction. Such state guidance may not be developed. Where determination of the exact content of a mitigation measure is deferred, the EIR should identify a performance standard which will be achieved and the means by which that standard can be achieved.

6-41

Mitigation measure TRN-1 states that implementing agencies shall require transportation demand management (TDM) programs, impact fee programs, mitigation banks, in-lieu fees, or other land use conditions that reduce VMT in a manner consistent with state guidance. State guidance does not exist and SACOG lacks authority to implement such a requirement.

6-42

Mitigation measure TRN-1 should be broken down and revised so that it provides specific and feasible mitigation measures that can be implemented by local agencies or by SACOG. The assertion that specific mitigation measures cannot be developed at the regional level and then adopted or recommended in the EIR is unsupported. SACOG should formulate the mitigation.

6-43

The draft EIR should be changed so that the mitigation for transportation impacts is effective and enforceable. Mitigation measure TRN-1 provides various strategies to reduce VMT from existing and proposed land uses that would be sufficient to reduce the impact to less than significant. The EIR states that the SACOG cannot require local agencies to adopt those measures and that the impact remains significant and unavoidable as a result. (DEIR, 16-56.) SACOG should adopt mitigation itself and recommend that local agencies adopt mitigation.

6-44

As mitigation SACOG should provide support to implementing agencies for the review of their capital improvement programs that are supported by developer fees pursuant to nexus studies. Many of these capital improvement programs were developed before the more recent focus by SACOG on reduced VMT and increased reliance on multi-modal systems. As a result the projects anticipated in these budgets are often not aligned with the goals of the RTP/SCS, thereby stranding funds that could be applied to sustainable multimodal solutions and holding them for projects that may in fact not be supported by SACOG or Caltrans or even feasible. Local agencies lack the funds and expert analysis to revise these programs. Among other things, agencies that have opportunities to use more sustainable modes such as transit to off-set development impacts should be provided support to accomplish that in order to mitigate GHG impacts.

6-45

GHG impacts can also be reduced by accelerating the transition to renewable generation. In particular, the development of commercial and industrial projects without the implementation of rooftop and parking lot solar photovoltaic generation is a missed opportunity for GHG mitigation and an inefficient energy practice which should be analyzed as such. Solar PV is cost-effective for many such projects and local agencies can require the evaluation of solar PV on commercial and industrial projects and the implementation of it to the extent that it would be cost-effective. SACOG should recommend that mitigation for agencies to adopt and provide technical support for it.

6-46

3. Air Quality

The EIR points out that by 2040 the proposed MTP/SCS would result in a land use pattern and transportation network that is different from existing conditions. It evaluates the adverse air quality impacts based on the projected land use pattern and planned transportation network relative to existing sources of air pollution. It states that a change from existing conditions can have a negative impact if the project results in increased levels of congestion, a decrease in transit ridership or an increase in truck traffic. (DEIR 5-41 – 5-42.)

6-47

The SACSIM19 model was used to estimate daily VMT and trip generation for 2027, 2035 and 2040. The emission of criteria pollutants was then estimated using CARB's EMFAC2014 model, which was the most recent, EPA-approved model at the time SACOG released its conformity assumptions. EMFAC2017 was approved on August 15, 2019, by the EPA.

6-48

The EMFAC model represents CARB's most up-to-date understanding of motor vehicle activities and their associated emission levels and is subject to periodic update. Daily VMT and total trips from each milestone year are used as inputs to the vehicle-emissions forecasting model to develop emission forecasts. A determination of conformity, or conformance with the SIP, is realized when the forecasted emissions are within budgets identified in the SIP or pass the interim emissions test.

6-49

As discussed, the EMFAC model is invalid due to the revocation of the California waiver and it cannot be used to analyze the air quality impacts of the RTP/SCS. Any waivers or extensions that may have taken place at CARB do not affect the agency's responsibility to produce an accurate EIR.

6-50

4. Energy

With respect to the energy impacts of the proposed plan, the draft EIR is unquantified and uninformative. Common-sense observations about energy, such as the observation that energy would be consumed during construction and operation of the improvements identified in the proposed plan, are not informative and do not constitute an analysis. The reader misses the range and particularity of content but even more misses the articulation whereby distinctions are securely determined and ordered. For this reason the report lacks intelligibility.

6-51

Using data from state and local sources, the EIR estimated total energy usage in the plan area for the baseline year of 2016, including both the residential and commercial sectors. The EIR then applied unsupported reductions to the 2016 energy usage (DEIR, 8-19) and concluded that per capita energy consumption would be lower in the plan area in 2040. (DEIR, 8-33.) The energy analysis should be based upon verifiable quantitative information and the assumptions made in the analysis of energy should be disclosed.

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The draft EIR states that per capita consumption of electricity, natural gas, gasoline, and diesel fuel in the SACOG region is expected to decrease between 2016 and 2040 as a result of an increase in the number of more energy efficient systems under state regulations and local policies. (DEIR, 8-33.) Based upon that the EIR concludes that the impact to energy would be less than significant. The conclusion that per capita energy consumption in the region would fall is unsupported and not sufficient to conclude that wasteful, inefficient or unnecessary energy consumption would not take place under the proposed plan. What the EIR presents is an analysis of total regional energy usage for residential and commercial usages which does not address the impact of the proposed transportation plan.

6-53

The EIR should discuss the baseline energy usage of the regional transportation system, compare that with the energy profile of the regional transportation system proposed under the plan, and determine whether the impact of the plan would be significant. Analyzing regional energy usage does not address the impact of the proposed plan. The description and definition of the proposed project is uncertain and inconsistent.

6-54

The EIR should discuss the daily vehicle trips and vehicle miles travelled that will result from implementation of the project for each mode of travel and identify the additional energy consumed per trip for each mode. The analysis of energy impacts should address transportation energy usage. It should determine that energy usage will be inefficient due

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to the roll back of the California exemption under the Clean Air Act. California's ZEV mandate and the Advanced Clean Car program demonstrate that a more efficient transportation system is possible and that a system that proceeds without those programs is inefficient.

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cont.

The EIR should address how the project will impact baseline energy conditions. Baseline conditions can include current as well as future baseline conditions when justified. A per capita analysis should present a comparison between future conditions with and without the project. Where a per capita analysis compares existing per capita energy usage with future per capita energy usage, the change in energy usage could be the result of many different factors that affect per capita energy usage over time. The analysis does not reflect the impact of the proposed project on energy.

6-56

The EIR concludes that the energy consumption that would occur as a result of the implementation of the plan would not constitute the wasteful, inefficient or unnecessary use of energy. (DEIR, 8-33.) The decrease in per capita energy consumption between 2016 and 2040 does not demonstrate that a project is energy efficient. The decrease may be the result of a variety of factors that are not a part of the project because the analysis of energy addresses all energy consumption in the region. Based upon the assertion that the plan proposes greater efficiency, it has to be assumed that current per capita energy usage in the plan area is inefficient.

6-57

The EIR evaluates the energy and climate impacts resulting from the implementation the projected land use plan pattern and the transportation network for the SACOG region relative to existing conditions. (DEIR, 8-16.) The project evaluated in the EIR should not include the development projects and land use plans that do not exist in local jurisdictions. SACOG lacks the authority to change local land use plans. Projects complying with SACOG's expectations are by and large hypothetical and not proposed. The extent to which implementing agencies in the region will implement the changes anticipated or developers will build according to SACOG projections is unclear. The extent of the project being evaluated cannot be accurately determined.

6-58

The energy impacts of local housing developments apart from their transportation energy impact should not be part of the project evaluated in the EIR. SACOG does not have authority over building design or building energy efficiency and its recommendations to other agencies should not be treated as elements of the project. The analysis is entirely speculative and unbounded.

6-59

The EIR should disclose the impact of the transportation proposals that the lead agency has the authority to implement. Land use changes should be recommended for implementation by local agencies which have authority to do so as mitigation or as a part of their community planning, project approval processes, and sustainability initiatives. The EIR should identify land use policies and mitigation for local agencies to adopt, rather than assuming that those policies are approved as a part of the proposed plan. The poli-

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cies that SACOG proposes may not be adopted or effectively implemented by local agencies with authority to do so for a variety of reasons and treating them as part of the SACOG plan is misleading.

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cont.

The energy analysis concludes that construction activities would occur over the duration of the proposed project, which would last until 2040, but it states that construction energy would be short term in nature. (DEIR, 8-32.) The assertion that construction activity over the roughly 20 year duration of the project would be short term is inaccurate. Construction energy can be expected every year as a product of the transportation maintenance and development proposed in the plan. It should be considered a significant impact and evaluated.

6-61

The EIR adopts a threshold of energy impact significance which it describes as the wasteful, inefficient or unnecessary use of energy. The EIR should define and quantify what this standard means. Without quantification or definition, the standard is subjective, unsupported, and arbitrary. As such it provides no meaningful disclosure to decisionmakers or to the public.

6-62

The energy analysis states that the EIR does not attempt to characterize or predict how adoption of the Safer Affordable Fuel Efficient (SAFE) Vehicle Rule or revocation of California's waiver will affect GHG emissions. (DEIR, 8-19.) This EIR should contain a discussion of the impact of SAFE Rule on GHG emissions, energy conservation, air quality emissions. The EIR should reflect the date of the rule's adoption and discuss its impact on energy usage, air quality, and GHG emissions.

6-63

The SAFE rule would hold the national fuel efficiency standard at the 2020 levels, and it would repeal California's higher fuel efficiency standards resulting in lower energy efficiency and greater air quality and GHG emissions in the region. The rule would revoke California's authority to implement Advanced Clean Cars and ZEV mandates with similar effect.

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SACOG has relied on a computer model (called "EMFAC") to estimate the air quality and GHG emissions of the proposed RTP/SCS. The current version of EMFAC assumes that Advanced Clean Cars (I and II) and the ZEV mandate will continue to operate in California—resulting in lower air quality and GHG emissions. As a result of the SAFE rule, these programs have been repealed and using EMFAC at this time to forecast air quality emissions or GHG emissions in the region is misleading. The analyses of air quality and GHG emissions are unsupported. CARB has no authority to grant SACOG an exemption from the requirement to evaluate air quality and GHG impacts in the EIR.

6-65

With respect to energy impacts, the previous implementation of the ACC and the ZEV mandate demonstrates that more energy efficient vehicles would be technically and economically feasible in California. Since these more efficient vehicles will no longer be required, as a result of the SAFE Rule, the EIR should identify and analyze a significant

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adverse impact to energy. In addition, revocation of ACC and the ZEV mandate will result in increased health risks in the region due to worse air quality which should be evaluated.

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cont.

The EIR should contain an analysis of the adverse health impacts of the proposed plan in light of the SAFE rule. As a result of the significant impacts, SACOG is required to identify and evaluate feasible measures and alternatives to mitigate the project's significant adverse impact to energy conservation, health impacts, and air quality. Further the GHG analysis should be revised to reflect the SAFE rule.

6-67

The agency should discuss what steps will be taken to evaluate, monitor and verify the effect of the energy policies that would be adopted. Without evaluation, monitoring and verification, the energy policies and technologies may not be effective.

6-68

The total cost of ownership for an electric car is typically lower than the total cost of ownership for a gasoline or a diesel powered car. As a result it is energy inefficient to operate a gasoline powered car. The car which relies on fossil fuel consumption is more expensive. The EIR should identify and analyze the development of transportation systems under the proposed plan using gasoline and diesel-powered cars over the duration of the proposed plan as a significant adverse impact to energy. The significant impact should be addressed by mitigation or by a statement of overriding considerations. The EIR should address the project's cost-effectiveness in terms of its energy requirements over the project lifetime with attention to how various modes and systems contribute to those requirements.

6-69

The analysis concludes that the proposed plan would not conflict with state or local plans for renewable energy or energy efficiency. (DEIR, 8-34.) The EIR should identify the statewide energy plans which are the basis for this conclusion and discuss why the proposed plan would not conflict with the policies in them.

6-70

According to the EIR annual gasoline consumption would decline from 400 gallons per capita in 2016 to 380 gallons per capita in 2040. This amounts to a 5 percent decrease. (DEIR 8-33.) This is not consistent with public policy which calls for widespread transportation electrification under the 2017 Scoping Plan, SB 350 and other authorities.

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California plans to rapidly increase the number of electric vehicles operating in the state. The increased operation of electric cars and trucks will impose significant additional demand on electric generation facilities, electric transmission infrastructure, energy storage systems, and electric distribution facilities serving the project area.

6-72

The EIR should identify and quantify the additional electrical demand of millions of new electric vehicles. It should discuss the energy resources available for serving that demand and whether they will be sufficient.

6-73

The analysis should recognize that the increase in electric demand from the transportation sector has the potential to adversely impact peak electric demand if electric vehicles are using the grid for charging at the time when the grid is under peak demand. The EIR should discuss the significant impact on electric demand that will be created by the transportation systems identified in the plan and the potential to mitigate those impacts.

6-74

The EIR should recognize the impact under SB 32 of transitioning the electric grid to 50 percent renewable power by 2030 and 100 percent renewable power by 2045 while simultaneously vastly increase electric demand by transitioning the entire transportation fleet to electric power. The discussion should discuss how the proposed plan would be supplied with energy and how the energy demand from the project may increase electric demand and outstrip the available renewable resources leading to extended reliance on fossil fuels.

6-75

The development of vehicle-to-grid (V2G) charging systems, where electric vehicles communicate with the power grid to sell demand response services by returning electricity to the grid when needed, by throttling their demand as needed, or by absorbing excess energy production, should be discussed as mitigation for grid impacts.

6-76

The EIR should present an analysis of the project's impact on current conditions in addition to a per capita analysis because the per capita analysis does not disclose the impact on the local region of the increased energy usage including impacts on overall energy demand in the region, the impact on peak load, the additional generation resources required to serve increased demand, the additional transmission and distribution infrastructure that may be required, and the extent to which fossil fuels usage may be increased or decreased as a result of increased overall electricity demand.

6-77

The energy discussion should determine the extent to which the design options and policies contained in the proposed plan can be expected to increase reliance upon renewable energy resources, compare that to current conditions, set a threshold, and determine the extent to which continued reliance on fossil fuel resources for transportation purposes is an inefficient energy practice.

6-78

The discussion should address the path forward for each sector of the transportation fleet, e.g., light rail, automobile, long-haul freight, freight rail, delivery trucks, etc., toward operating on 100 percent renewable energy. That discussion should consider the fuel types and quantities required, the apparent obstacles to reliance on renewable resources, the efficiency of using renewable energy, and the points at which SACOG and the implementing agencies have influence over or will adversely affect the transition to renewable energy. To the extent that policies have not been employed to reduce reliance by the transportation system on fossil fuels, the EIR should identify an energy inefficiency and address the opportunity to mitigate the significant GHG impacts by implementing an appropriate policy.

6-79

The EIR should discuss design options and policies for increased reliance on renewable energy that have not been adopted, or that have been scaled back, and explain the reasons why they were not adopted or were scaled back. 6-80

There should be a discussion of how the development of solar canopies on parking facilities can offset increasing electricity demand that will result from the electrification of the transportation sector and of the policies which could facilitate, or hinder, the development of solar canopies to meet energy demand. The EIR should set forth mitigation for GHG impacts consisting of a program to assist implementing agencies with determining the most cost-effective opportunities to implement renewable generation and to provide technical support for the implementation of renewable energy. It should include a program by SACOG to facilitate the development of renewable energy to offset GHG impacts. 6-81

The energy discussion should address the extent to which the Sacramento RT light rail system can be transitioned to 100 percent renewable energy and whether that would be efficient and feasible. The discussion should include the extent to which Sacramento RT may have suitable space available for the development of solar photovoltaic systems or could otherwise procure sufficient renewable power. The EIR should established a target date for transitioning RT with assistance from SACOG to 100 percent renewable energy as mitigation to reduce GHG impacts. 6-82

With respect to trucking, the EIR should consider the extent to which electric, hybrid and fuel cell trucks may be introduced into the regional transportation system over the life of the plan and what facilities for recharging or hydrogen fueling will be required to ensure the rapid and widespread adoption of electric and fuel-cell freight hauling. For example, at the present time there are no hydrogen truck fueling facilities in Sacramento region. The lack of sufficient refueling infrastructure for zero-emission trucking under the plan constitutes an adverse impact on the energy efficiency of the project. The EIR should propose providing renewable fueling infrastructure for trucks to mitigate the project's GHG impacts. 6-83

The discussion should address the current availability of convenient charging and refueling facilities for each mode of transportation including the identification of the fuel resources required such as electric charging and hydrogen fueling for cars and light trucks. Recharging facilities for electric bicycles should also be discussed. 6-84

This information should be compared with the demand for charging and hydrogen fueling facilities that would be generated by the transportation system as proposed under the plan and required by state policy for both heavy-duty and light-duty vehicles. There should be an analysis of the extent to which charging and fueling facilities will be sufficient and reliable enough to meet demand or alternatively will hinder the transition to zero-emission vehicles in the plan area. Significant impacts should be identified and mitigated to the extent feasible. 6-85

The plan should consider the extent to which it will be implemented with insufficient charging facilities at apartments and condominiums to serve the anticipated number of electric vehicles that would be deployed under the plan and the extent to which the plan is unable to meet state targets due to the lack of sufficient charging infrastructure. The EIR should mitigate the adverse impacts of the project with a program to ensure greater deployment of EV charging facilities.

6-86

Energy efficiency entails using improved technology to provide the same or better level of energy service while using less energy. The EIR reflects that energy savings is a goal of the proposed transportation plan, but it does not identify and discuss potentially achievable, cost-effective energy efficiency savings within the scope of the plan.

6-87

The EIR should discuss and quantify the impacts of energy policies and technologies that it adopts that would reduce energy consumption. It should also discuss energy efficiency policies and technologies that were considered but that will not be implemented under the proposed plan because they were not deemed cost-effective or feasible. The justification for not adopting additional efficiency policies and technologies should be explained and supported. The impact discussion should not be limited to discussing design features and policies that were adopted to increase efficiency and statewide trends.

6-88

The EIR should compare the energy efficiency the various modes of transportation that will be implemented including existing and new light rail systems, roads and freeways for single-occupant vehicles, freight transportation systems including truck and rail, and alternative modes such as car pooling, transit, and cycling.

6-89

There should be a discussion of the barriers to greater reliance on more efficient modes. For example greater use of cycling as an energy-efficient and healthy mode of commuting should be discussed. The document should address noise, safe-routing, convenience, bicycle parking, and air quality as barriers and also address what the obstacles are to reducing those barriers and increasing cycling mode share. The EIR should discuss whether greater funding for cycling would result in a more energy-efficient transportation system or whether it would mitigate the GHG impacts of the project.

6-90

There should be a discussion of the energy intensiveness and cost-effectiveness of developing and operating freeway and surface streets systems under the proposed plan as opposed to developing and operating other modes such as transit systems and transportation demand management programs. The considerable reliance which the plan would place on expanding streets and highways should be identified and analyzed as an energy inefficient practice. Whatever the merits of travelling by private car may be for the public, cars use vastly more energy per mile of travel than other modes. Private cars are not an energy efficient mode, and the decision to develop large and costly transportation facilities which facilitate travel by private car is not an energy efficient design. This is an adverse impact which should be identified and discussed.

6-91

There should be an identification and discussion of the significant impact to transportation energy efficiency of allowing unlimited numbers of vehicles to routinely access freeway lanes simultaneously at rush hour thereby jamming traffic on the freeway, separately from the toll lanes. This practice leaves vehicles idling in traffic jams, accelerating and stopping, and generally operating in an energy inefficient manner.

6-92

Whatever the justification or necessity of this practice may be, it is plainly not an energy efficient practice (not to mention being a highly inefficient use of public infrastructure investment). This inefficiency should be disclosed to the public and to decisionmakers and discussed so that the public is aware of the inefficient system operating practices and does not erroneously believe that costly freeway widening is necessarily required to accommodate traffic.

6-93

The EIR should analyze an alternative project design which, rather than expanding freeway capacity in areas such as the I-80 corridor, additional freeway capacity would be achieved by ensuring that the number of vehicles on the freeway does not exceed the maximum amount that can be handled without degrading the flow rate.

6-94

Mitigation for this impact should be discussed including regulating freeway access to the extent necessary to ensure that freeways operate at maximum feasible throughput at rush hour, to ensure that the travelling public can make the most efficient use of publicly-funded infrastructure, and to ensure that vehicles typically can operate at energy-efficient, not traffic-jammed speeds. Obviously the agency retains the authority to adopt a statement of over-riding considerations in appropriate circumstances.

6-95

The energy efficiency of transportation demand management (TDM) systems should be discussed and policies adopted to ensure that TDM policies are in place, are being monitored, and are performing prior to the allocation of funds to capacity projects. TDM includes policies that provide incentives and marketing to support alternatives to drive-alone commuting that are attractive to commuters. There should be a discussion of the economic feasibility of increased transit and bicycle mode share as opposed to drive-alone commuting to reduce energy consumption.

6-96

In particular, the EIR should identify and discuss SACOG implementing as mitigation for GHG impacts a program to provide transportation demand management services to implementing agencies in the region in order to mitigate project impacts. Local agencies or employers should not need to each separately develop TDM programs when they could be developed more efficiently and deployed by a regional agency.

6-97

There should be a discussion of how free-parking induces more commuters to drive and thereby results in greater VMT and greater energy consumption. This should include a discussion of policies such as parking cash-out, shared parking, and unbundling parking from residential leases and purchase arrangements which are tools that can reduce the incentives that favor owning and driving cars. These measures should be broken out as

6-98

mitigation that is recommended to local agencies along with providing technical support for local implementation.

6-98
cont.

The land use discussion should address the amount of land that will be required for parking lots for the vehicles that will be driving. The EIR discusses the amount of land that will be required for roadway and freeway development under the plan, but it omits the amount of land that will be required for parking lots and parking structures. (DEIR 2-3 – 2-4.) The significant amount of land used for parking the cars and trucks that will drive on the regional roads and highways constitutes a significant adverse impact of the project.

6-99

5. Transportation

Freight transport accounts for a considerable portion of total energy used, roadway congestion, miles traveled, and GHG emissions in large urban environments such as the plan area. There should be a discussion of medium and heavy duty trucking in the plan area. Energy use and GHG emissions from freight transport are expected to increase significantly in the next 25 years. The EIR should evaluate the proposed plan's impacts to vehicle miles travelled (VMT) by medium and heavy duty trucks within the region. The EIR fails to take into account and evaluate the impact of the land use pattern and the proposed transportation plan on medium and heavy duty trucking in the plan area.

6-100

The proposed transportation plan will serve an increased volume of freight as the region grows. The EIR should identify and discuss the efficiency of the existing freight hauling system in the region and compare that with the efficiency of the freight transportation system that would develop under the plan as proposed. Opportunities to develop more efficient systems for freight transportation should be identified and discussed. The EIR should evaluate how the proposed plan will affect freight hauling efficiency. Consistency with the statewide goals for freight efficiency should be evaluated.

6-101

The EIR should identify the types of freight operations in the plan area including local freight delivery, freight trips with only one trip end in the area, and freight that is only passing through the region. There should be a discussion of the routes and modes by which freight travels and the extent to which the routes and modes will be energy-efficient and renewably-powered under the proposed plan.

6-102

The EIR should discuss and compare the energy typically used by various freight modes and consider industry trends toward greater efficiency and reduced reliance on fossil fuels. For example, freight rail over medium to long distances is considerably more energy efficient and results in lower GHG emissions than trucking. The EIR should consider whether the plan implements efficient freight transportation systems.

6-103

The locations in the region where warehouse facilities and online fulfillment centers are established over the life of the plan will influence the distances that trucks are required to

6-104

travel to deliver goods to commercial sites and to consumers within the region. Optimizing the location of warehousing requires long-term planning that locates warehouse zoning where it reduces the distance which freight must be shipped by truck. Reducing shipping distances is vital to reducing emissions from the freight sector. The EIR should address how the proposed land use and transportation plan will affect shipping distances.

6-104
cont.

The plan is energy inefficient because it fails to plan warehouse locations. Without affirmative land use and transportation planning, new warehouses and fulfillment centers will be pushed to locate on the urban periphery where large parcels and lower land prices will be available. This tendency, commonly referred to as logistics sprawl, over time results in an over-extended and inefficient freight transportation network where goods must be hauled greater distances. It results in a freight network that is not efficiently interconnected with other freight modes such as freight rail and air, resulting in greater truck miles travelled, greater traffic congestion, and a less efficient transportation system.

6-105

In the same way that residential sprawl becomes part of the built landscape, warehouses and freight shipping patterns developing over the life of the plan will become part of the built environment and will no longer be amenable to change.

Warehouse locations should be discussed and recommended for the implementing agencies so that the plan embodies an efficient freight delivery system and also to mitigate adverse impacts to GHG and air quality emissions. Regional planning for efficient goods delivery helps to divert warehouse development from areas that would lead to unnecessary hauling distances by truck. The EIR should include a map with an overlay of the freight corridors showing the location of rail terminal facilities, warehouse facilities, logistics centers, and air freight facilities. The planning process should take into account adjacent land uses, access to freeways, access to efficient shipping such a freight rail, and likely impacts related to traffic congestion.

6-106

Maps should be provided showing where warehouse facilities would be most usefully located in view of the congestion, energy, air quality, and VMT impacts. This kind of discussion should be included in the discussion of transportation and GHG impacts, and it should form the basis for mitigating impacts by facilitating the development of more efficient freight systems.

6-107

The proposed plan is inconsistent with the 2017 Scoping Plan and with the California Sustainable Freight Action Plan, which call for planning of modern freight corridors, reduced air quality emissions, and an accelerated transition to a more efficient and less polluting transportation system.

6-108

Logistic parks are intermodal freight hubs that anchor distribution centers and allow freight rail and trucking companies to partner and provide streamlined and efficient supply chain solutions. Warehouses located in logistic parks substantially lower trans-

6-109

portation costs as well as reducing fuel costs, VMT, congestion, and carbon emissions. The EIR should identify efficient sites to be zoned for logistic parks in the region to mitigate project impacts and to facilitate shipping by more efficient, more economic, less polluting, and less congesting modes. Shipping goods either into or out of the region by freight rail reduces the project's contribution to VMT and GHG emissions.

6-109
cont.

The EIR should discuss what kinds of freight rail services are available in the region, what purposes they serve, and how additional freight could be channeled through rail facilities. The mitigation discussion should address the Sierra Northern Railway, its connection to the Port of Sacramento as well as the kinds of freight that could be diverted there but that may rely on less efficient modes such as trucking at the present time.

6-110

The EIR reports that 23% of the goods shipped to or from the district are shipped other than by truck, but it fails to discuss the types of goods or the factors that make them amenable to being shipped other than by truck. To understand freight impacts, the EIR should discuss the kinds of goods that can be delivered to the region or shipped from the region without the use of trucks, such as shipments by freight rail including by containerized cargo and trailer on flat car. (DEIR, 16-20.) Expanding freeway capacity without looking at how existing rail capacity can be used to reduce truck traffic is uneconomic, inefficient, and polluting.

6-111

6. Economic Factors

The EIR should provide for fare free transit passes or reduced fare transit passes to mitigate the significant impacts to transportation and to GHG emissions. Reducing or eliminating transit fares on portions of the RT system will increase transit mode share, reduce VMT, and mitigate GHG impacts. Funding for fare free or reduced fare transit passes should be generated by employer contributions to a transportation management association.

6-112

The EIR should discuss increased funding for programs of the Sacramento Transportation Management Association as mitigation for the impacts. It appears that agency and the potential use of it on a regional basis to fund and implement TDM programs has bit been discussed in the EIR as mitigation.

6-113

There should be a discussion of the other economic incentives that are in place that hinder more efficient modes and support inefficient modes such as trucking. That discussion should address how incentives affect the efficiency of the transportation system and in particular consider how the funds that are channeled through SACOG to improve the transportation system can be allocated to relieve economic burdens on energy efficient modes.

6-114

Subsidizing transit passes, realistic parking fees, and congestion charges are examples of tools available to reduce the impacts of the project. The use of sales tax revenues and general funds to support streets and highways should be identified and discuss as subsidies that interfere with the price signal to the consumer and thereby encourage reliance on inefficient modes. The EIR should evaluate the extent to which economic incentives would be in place and would drive either a less energy-efficient or a more energy-efficient transportation system.

6-115

7. Noncompliance

Implementing agencies may elect not to adopt the design proposed in the MTP and instead elect to use a less efficient design for a variety of reasons that cannot be anticipated. SACOG has no authority to require that implementing agencies comply with the proposed plan. Noncompliance would in many cases result in a less efficient design and increase the impacts result from development. The risk of noncompliance should be identified as a potentially significant adverse impact of the proposed plan and evaluated. Further there are many policies in the RTP/SCS that may or may not be as effective as SACOG would like. That is also a risk and should be identified as a potentially significant impact.

6-116

8. Amtrak

The agency should discuss increased use of Amtrak as mitigation for project impacts including transportation GHG emissions. Amtrak has an upgraded station facility in Sacramento which provides service west to Davis and to the Bay Area. There is also service south into the San Joaquin Valley and east throughout Placer County. The EIR should discuss collaborating with Caltrans on programs to increase the convenience and ridership of Amtrak. There is congested traffic frequently on I-80 between Davis and Sacramento and those conditions will become worse with population growth over the timeframe projected in the proposed plan. These conditions could potentially be alleviated through increased use of Amtrak service along that route.

6-117

Please note that the Davis Amtrak Access and Connections Study is scheduled to be heard by the City of Davis Planning Commission on December 11, 2019. This provides a good example of the kinds of efficient transportation solutions that should be undertaken with respect to Amtrak.

6-118

During winter a considerable number of trips originate in the Bay Area and in the Sacramento region that are destined to take travelers to Lake Tahoe Ski resorts such as Squaw Valley. These trips result in a great deal of travel on freeways in the SACOG region, jam the roads around Truckee, account for a considerable amount of congestion on I-80 west of Sacramento, and result in air quality and GHG emissions. This demand could alternatively be served by Amtrak, rather than expanding freeway capacity. We recommend that the list of projects be amended to include working with the Tahoe, Placer County and

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Caltrans to implement winter sports train service to Truckee by extending Capitol Corridor service beyond Auburn. The resorts have shuttles that could handle the trip to and from the Truckee station. This service could function on weekends during the season and be marketed through the Tahoe Visitors Association and the resorts. Many people would no doubt rather relax on the train than deal with mountain driving in inclement weather.

6-119
cont.

Respectfully submitted,



Eugene S. Wilson
California Clean Energy Committee

APPENDICES

- Appendix 1 Capital Region Climate Readiness Collaborative, "How Will Climate Change Affect Our Natural Environments?"
- Appendix 2 Capital Region Climate Readiness Collaborative, "How Will Climate Change Affect Our Safety?"
- Appendix 3 Capital Region Climate Readiness Collaborative, "How Will Climate Change Affect Our Economy?"
- Appendix 4 Capital Region Climate Readiness Collaborative, "How Will Climate Change Affect Our Infrastructure?"
- Appendix 5 Capital Region Climate Readiness Collaborative, "How Will Climate Change Affect Our Health and Well-Being?"
- Appendix 6 Capital Region Climate Readiness Collaborative, "Climate Impacts in the Capital Region."
- Appendix 7 Sacramento Area Council of Governments, "Goods Movement/Freight Planning."
- Appendix 8 U.S. EPA, "Fast Facts: U.S. Transportation Sector Greenhouse Gas Emissions 1990-2017."
- Appendix 9 California Air Pollution Control Officers Association, "CalEEMod User's Guide" (Nov. 2017).
- Appendix 10 "2019 California Green Innovation Index."
- Appendix 11 Sacramento Bee, "How California's Car Culture Hurts the State's Fight Against Climate Change" (Aug. 25, 2017).
- Appendix 12 Utility Dive, "California May Be a Climate Leader, But It Could Be a Century Behind on Its Carbon Goals: Study" (Oct. 29, 2019).
- Appendix 13 Utility Dive, "California, New England Will Miss 2050 Carbon Targets at Current Pace, Report Finds" (Oct. 10, 2019).
- Appendix 14 California Air Resources Board, California Greenhouse Gas Emissions for 2000 to 2017."

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- Appendix 15 New York Times, "Greenhouse Gas Emissions Accelerate Like a 'Speeding Freight Train' in 2018" (Dec. 5, 2018).
- Appendix 16 UC Davis Institute of Transportation Studies, "Automakers and Policymakers May Be on a Path to Electric Vehicles; Consumers Aren't."
- Appendix 17 Federal Register, the Safer Affordable Fuel-Efficient (SAFE) Vehicles Rule Part One: One National Program (Sept. 27, 2019).
- Appendix 18 California Air Resources Board, "Pollution Standards Authorized by the California Waiver: A Crucial Tool for Fighting Air Pollution Now and in the Future" (Sept. 17, 2019).
- Appendix 19 California Association of Councils of Government, "Policy Tracker: Safe Affordable Fuel Efficient Vehicle Rule."
- Appendix 20 California Air Resources Board, "Fact Sheet: The Zero Emission Vehicle (ZEV) Regulation."
- Appendix 21 Sunrun, "Solar Power Cost vs. Regular Electricity Costs."
- Appendix 22 Wall Street Journal, "California Takes Big Step to Require Solar on New Homes (May 9, 2018).
- Appendix 23 Wall Street Journal, "Global Investment in Wind and Solar Energy Is Outshining Fossil Fuels (Jun. 11, 2018).
- Appendix 24 REI Coop, "REI's New Distribution Center Designed to be Net Zero Energy and LEED Platinum (Sept. 28, 2016).
- Appendix 25 California Air Resources Board, "California's 2017 Climate Change Scoping Plan" (Nov. 2017).
- Appendix 26 Utility Dive, "Electric Revolution: As EV Demand Increases, Can Utilities and Cities Keep Up?" (Oct. 16, 2019).
- Appendix 27 Microgrid Knowledge, "It Wouldn't Take a Lot of Electric Vehicles to Shift Residential Peak Demand: Study" (Oct. 28, 2019).
- Appendix 28 Greentech Media, "Bay Area Rapid Transit Will Run Trains on 100% Renewable Energy" (May 5, 2017).

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cont.

- Appendix 29 California Air Resources Board, "Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Infrastructure: Multifamily Building Standards."
- Appendix 30 City of Fremont, Chapter 18.183: Parking, Loading Areas and Vehicle Storage."
- Appendix 31 City of Fremont, "'EV Readiness' Requirement."
- Appendix 32 Los Angeles County, "Resource Management Development Plan & Spineflower Conservation Plan."
- Appendix 33 L. Fulton & M. Miller, "Strategies for Transitioning to Low-Carbon Emission Trucks in the United States" (Jun., 2015).
- Appendix 34 Governor's Interagency Working Group on Zero-Emission Vehicles, "2018 ZEV Action Plan Priorities Update" (Sept., 2018).
- Appendix 35 Governor's Interagency Working Group on Zero-Emission Vehicles, "2016 ZEV Action Plan."
- Appendix 36 Governor's Office of Planning and Research, "Zero-Emission Vehicles in California: Community Readiness Guidebook."
- Appendix 37 U.S. EPA, "Guidebook for Energy Efficiency Evaluation, Measurement, and Verification" (June, 2019).
- Appendix 38 American Public Transportation Association, "Public Transportation Reduces Greenhouse Gases and Conserves Energy."
- Appendix 39 ACCESS Magazine, "The Access Almanac: Traffic Congestion Is Counter-Intuitive, and Fixable" (Spring, 2017).
- Appendix 40 Los Angeles Times, "There's Only One Way to Fix L.A.'s Traffic, and It Isn't Elon Musk's Tunnels. We Need Tolls—Lots of Them" (Mar. 3, 2017).
- Appendix 41 G. Pierce & D. Shoup, "Getting the Prices Right: An Evaluation of Pricing Parking Demand in San Francisco" (May 9, 2013).
- Appendix 42 American Association of Railroads, "Freight Railroads Help Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions" (Apr., 2019).
- Appendix 43 L. Dablanc & D. Rakotonarivo, "The Impacts of Logistics Sprawl: How Does the Location of Parcel Transport Terminals Affect the Energy Efficiency of Goods' Movements in Paris and What Can We Do About It?"

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cont.

- Appendix 44 BNSF, "Fuel Efficiency."
- Appendix 45 BNSF, "Highway Congestion."
- Appendix 46 BNSF, "Carbon Estimator."
- Appendix 47 BNSF, "Co-Location: Get Closer, Move Faster, Reduce Costs."
- Appendix 48 BNSF, "BNSF and the Environment."
- Appendix 49 BNSF, "Logistics Parks."
- Appendix 50 BNSF, "Intermodal Facility Stockton."
- Appendix 51 Caltrans, "2018 California State Rail Plan."
- Appendix 52 American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, "AASHTO Freight Rail Study Support Services" (Aug., 2018).
- Appendix 53 H. Frey & P. Kuo, "Assessment of Potential Reduction in Greenhouse Gas (GHGP) Emissions in Freight Transportation."
- Appendix 54 Metropolitan Transportation Commission, "Northern California Megaregion Goods Movement Study" (Jun., 2019).
- Appendix 55 National Cooperative Freight Research Program, "Improving Freight System Performance in Metropolitan Areas: A Planning Guide."
- Appendix 56 National Cooperative Freight Research Program, "Smart Growth and Urban Goods Movement."
- Appendix 57 Victoria Transport Policy Institute, "Freight Transport Movement: Increasing Commercial Vehicle Transport Efficiency."
- Appendix 58 National Cooperative Highway Research Program, "Rail Freight Solutions to Roadway Congestion—Final Report and Guidebook."
- Appendix 59 "California Sustainable Freight Action Plan" (Jul., 2016).
- Appendix 60 National Cooperative Highway Research Program, "Freight Trip Generation and Land Use."
- Appendix 61 Southern California Association of Governments, "Industrial Space in Southern California."

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cont.

- Appendix 62 K. Ruamsook & E. Thomchick, "Sustainable Freight Transportation: a Review of Strategies."
- Appendix 63 California Air Resources Board, "Sustainable Freight: Pathways to Zero and Near-Zero Emissions."
- Appendix 64 Memphis Business Journal, "Study: Freight Rail Can Reduce Traffic Congestion" (Jun. 1, 2008).
- Appendix 65 New York Times, "The Pizza-and-Beer Train: New York City's Hidden Railroad" (Apr. 7, 2019).
- Appendix 66 Transit Cooperative Research Program, "Implementation and Outcomes of Free-Free Transit Systems."
- Appendix 67 Progressive Railroading, "Rail News: Passenger Rail Metrolink Lowers Fares to Boost Ridership" (May 19, 2016).
- Appendix 68 Mountain Line, "Zero-Fare Project Continues to Break Ridership Records."
- Appendix 69 Washington Post, "Group of Corporate Heavyweights Pushes for Regional Toll Network" (May 21, 2018).
- Appendix 70 Congressional Budget Office, "Pricing Freight Transport to Account for External Costs: Working Paper 2015-03" (Mar. 30, 2015).
- Appendix 71 New York Times, "The Streets Were Never Free. Congestion Pricing Finally Makes that Plain" (Apr. 4, 2019).
- Appendix 72 Amtrak, "Amtrak Sustainability Report."
- Appendix 73 Governor's Office of Planning and Research, "Proposed Updates to the CEQA Guidelines" (Nov. 2017).
- Appendix 74 Governor's Office of Planning and Research, "Discussion Draft: CEQA and Climate Change Advisory" (Dec., 2018).
- Appendix 75 California Air Pollution Control Officers Association, "Model Policies for Greenhouse Gases in General Plans."
- Appendix 76 California Air Pollution Control Officers Association, "Quantifying Greenhouse Gas Mitigation Measures" (Aug. 2010).
- Appendix 77 California Air Pollution Control Officers Association, "CEQA and Climate Change" (Jan. 2008).

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cont.

Appendix 78 Governor's Office of Planning and Research, "CEQA and Climate Change: Addressing Climate Change Through California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Review" (Jun. 19, 2008).

Appendix 79 California Energy Commission, "Energy Aware Planning Guide."

Appendix 80 International Energy Agency, "A Tale of Renewed Cities."

Appendix 81 Victoria Transport Policy Institute, "Transportation Agency Actions for Efficient Transportation" (May 22, 2014).

Appendix 82 Victoria Transport Policy Institute, "Smart Congestion Relief" (Sept. 11, 2019).

Appendix 83 California Transportation Commission, "2017 Regional Transportation Plan Guidelines for Metropolitan Planning Organizations."

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cont.

CALIFORNIA CLEAN ENERGY COMMITTEE COMMENT LETTER

Comment 6-1

Thank you for your comment.

Comment 6-2

The comment summarizes the context of the MTP/SCS. Comment noted.

Comment 6-3

The comment summarizes information about the MTP/SCS location and forecasted growth. Comment noted.

Comment 6-4

The comment summarizes components of the MTP/SCS. Comment noted.

Comment 6-5

The comment asserts that, because the MTP/SCS would not achieve a 25 percent reduction in GHG emissions from the transportation sector, CEQA streamlining for climate impacts should not be available to projects that are consistent with the MTP/SCS.

The availability of CEQA streamlining comes from the statutory provisions of SB 375, and not the MTP/SCS itself. Under SB 375, if the MTP/SCS achieves the GHG emissions reduction targets set by CARB, then a project that is consistent with the land use designation, density, building intensity, and applicable policies specified for the project area in the MTP/SCS, and incorporates all feasible mitigation measures set forth in prior applicable EIRs, is eligible for the CEQA streamlining benefits set forth in Public Resources Code sections 21155, 21155.2, and 21159.28. For this MTP/SCS, the regional GHG emission target set by CARB is a 19% reduction below 2005 levels by 2035. (Draft EIR, p. 8-21.) As discussed in the EIR, the MTP/SCS achieves this goal; thus, under the statutory provisions of SB 375, streamlining benefits are available to projects that are consistent with the MTP/SCS and meet all other statutory requirements.

The comment refers to a statement made by ARB during the SB 375 target resetting that, in total, the revised SB 375 GHG emissions reduction targets for all of the state's MPOs would result in a statewide reduction of 19 percent (compared to 18 percent from the prior targets), but that a 25 percent reduction was needed to fully meet the state's GHG emissions reduction goals, as set forth in the 2017 Scoping Plan. (DEIR, p. 8-10.) However, ARB did not revise the regional targets to assign additional reductions to each MPO; rather, it acknowledged that additional state action was needed to close the gap. The analysis of impacts in the Draft EIR acknowledges these statements from ARB. (DEIR, pp. 8-10 to 8-11, 8-22, 16-29 to 16-30, 16-47 to 49.) No edits are required in response to Comment 6-5.

Comment 6-6

The comment provides information about the commenter. Comment noted.

Comment 6-7

The comment asserts that the degree to which the identified project alternatives do not meet the project goals is artificial, and states that the alternatives analysis should be revised to utilize the full spectrum of transportation options available to meet demand.

The comment does not provide any specific suggestion for additional alternatives to consider. CEQA does not require evaluation of every possible alternative, but requires evaluation of a reasonable range of alternatives to the proposed project that could feasibly attain most of the basic project objectives and that would avoid or substantially lessen significant environmental impacts. In addition, CEQA requires assessment of the likely foreseeable future condition if the proposed project were not implemented; the No Project alternative.

As stated in the Draft EIR, the No Project alternative assumes the projected land use pattern and planned transportation improvements would be consistent with those set forth in the 2016 MTP/SCS. The two other alternatives were designed to allow for analysis of truly distinct alternatives within the bounds of the projected land use pattern and planned transportation improvements that could realistically be expected to occur over the MTP/SCS planning period, as required by federal and state law. In essence, all three alternatives reflect different growth patterns and different investment decisions for the transportation system. (DEIR, p. 18-4.) All three alternatives assume the same regional employment, population, and housing growth projections and roughly the same overall transportation budget. Land use and transportation assumptions vary as described in the Draft EIR. (DEIR, pp. 18-5 to 18-7.)

The fundamental objective of the CEQA alternatives is to avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant environmental impacts of the MTP/SCS. The manner in which these impacts could be avoided or lessened were determined by variations in the alternatives' land use growth and transportation project footprints, as well as the influence of each alternative on transportation system supply. The alternatives evaluated in Chapter 18 of the draft EIR clearly demonstrate variations in the geographic distribution of projected levels of household and job growth, the size of the land use growth and transportation project footprints, and the modal supply of the transportation system, and how those variations result in differing levels of environmental impact, representing a reasonable range of alternatives. No edits are required in response to Comment 6-7.

Comment 6-8

The comment states that supporting documents have been provided with the comment letter, and provides an address for sending all notices regarding the 2020 MTP/SCS.

Comment noted. Commenter has been added to SACOG's notice list for the 2020 MTP/SCS.

Comment 6-9

The comment summarizes the letter and asserts that the EIR should be revised and re-circulated, but raises no specific arguments.

Please see responses to individual comments below.

Comment 6-10

The comment asserts that the Draft EIR does not identify what would be required of a proposed project to find it consistent with the MTP/SCS and eligible for CEQA streamlining. (DEIR 2-51 - 2- 54.) The comment further states that no maps or other descriptive material have been provided to demonstrate what would constitute compliance with the MTP/SCS.

SB 375 provides the definition of consistency with the MTP/SCS for purposes of streamlining; a project that is consistent with the land use designation, density, building intensity, and applicable policies specified for the project area in the MTP/SCS is eligible for CEQA streamlining. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21155, 21155.2, 21159.28.) The MTP/SCS forecasts a land use scenario that identifies uses, densities and building intensities, and identifies applicable policies for areas of the region where development is assumed. In preparing the MTP/SCS, SACOG first developed a growth forecast for the region and a projection for where that growth would occur in each of the region's 28-member jurisdictions within the timeframe of the plan. SACOG then identified and mapped the existing transit network and high-frequency transit lines in the region, as well as major areas of employment. Using that as the base, SACOG then created five community types: Center and Corridor Communities, Established Communities, Developing Communities, Rural Residential Communities, and Lands Not Identified For Development in the MTP/SCS Planning Period. (Draft EIR, pp. 2-16 to 2-19.) Each community type was assigned an array of land uses, generally with the least intensive uses occurring in the rural areas not identified for urban development, gradually increasing to the most intensive land uses in the Center and Corridor Communities. The more intensive land uses were assigned to those geographic areas with the most reliable transit options because transit is most efficient where there are higher densities, while those areas without transit were identified for less intensive land uses. Using the growth projections, and taking into consideration reasonably foreseeable patterns of growth, SACOG then assigned a specific number of

new housing units and jobs to each land use type within all 28-member jurisdictions. These land use allocations, when viewed in tandem with the plan's community type map, identify the appropriate densities and intensities of development, consistent with the SCS requirements. (Draft EIR, pp. 2-19 to 2-24; MTP/SCS, pp. 28-30.) The maps and descriptive material are included throughout the EIR and are provided in the MTP/SCS. (See e.g., DEIR Figure 2-2; MTP/SCS, Figure 3.5, Appendices C, D.) No edits are required in response to Comment 6-10.

Comment 6-11

The comment asserts that the project being evaluated in the EIR does not include a land use plan and instead the land use was only projected based upon community plans prepared by implementing agencies and other data. (DEIR 2-12.) The comment further asserts that, in the preparation of the MTP/SCS the agency performed an analysis on the available data to predict, but not to plan, future development. According to the commenter, no specific land-use standards or design has been identified in the EIR.

The land use pattern forecasted in the MTP/SCS is based in part on plans of implementing agencies, but also considers many other factors, including market and economic considerations, demographic trends, and performance of the growth pattern on the plan's ability to achieve the GHG reduction targets. (Draft EIR, p. 2-13; MTP/SCS Appendix D.)

The comment misunderstands the role of the MTP/SCS. The MTP/SCS does not regulate land use, nor may it. (See Gov. Code, § 65080, subd. (b)(2)(K).) "[A] sustainable communities strategy does not regulate land use and is not subject to state approval other than as prescribed. Nothing in a sustainable communities strategy is to 'be interpreted as superseding the exercise of the land use authority of cities and counties within the region,' nor shall anything 'require a city's or county's land use policies and regulations, including its general plan, to be consistent with the regional transportation plan.' ([Gov. Code,] § 65080, subd. (b)(2)(K).)" (*Bay Area Citizens v. Association of Bay Area Governments* (2016) 248 Cal.App.4th 966, 982.)

The purpose of the MTP/SCS is to "establish a regional pattern of development, not a site-specific zoning ordinance." (*Sacramentans for Fair Planning v. City of Sacramento* (2019) 37 Cal.App.5th 698, 723.) It is "a forecasted development pattern for the region" which, if implemented by SACOG's member governments, will reduce greenhouse gas emissions from automobiles and light trucks that would otherwise result from new development. (Gov. Code, § 65080, subd. (b)(2)(B).) In order to meet regional greenhouse gas emission reduction targets, the strategy is required to identify "the general location of uses, residential densities, and building intensities within the region," identify areas within the region sufficient to house the region's projected population, identify a transportation network to service that regional population, and using the best scientific information available and in light of state housing policies, forecast a development pattern that will reduce greenhouse gas emissions. (Gov. Code, § 65080, subd. (b)(2)(B).)

As stated in the recent *Sacramentans for Fair Planning* decision cited above, which upheld reliance on SACOG's 2016 MTP/SCS for CEQA streamlining by a consistent project, nothing in SB 375 requires the MTP/SCS to establish building intensity standards any more specific than those established in the 2016 MTP/SCS, which have been updated in the 2020 MTP/SCS. (37 Cal.App.5th at p. 724.) No edits are required in response to Comment 6-11.

Comment 6-12

The comment further states that, because SACOG lacks authority over land use and could not adopt a land use plan, but the EIR repeatedly treats the projected land use as if it were a plan which would entitle a development to be built, the project description is uncertain.

The EIR states throughout that SACOG lacks land use authority and the plan can only be effective to the extent local jurisdictions implement it. (See e.g., DEIR, pp. 1-4, 2-2, 2-51.) The EIR provides mitigation measures that a consistent project could incorporate to show consistency with the plan, as required under SB 375. The fact that it will take additional action on the part of local jurisdictions to approve projects consistent with the MTP/SCS does not make the project description uncertain.

SACOG also attempts to incentivize and encourage development consistent with the land use pattern and growth footprint in the MTP/SCS by preparing an EIR that other public agencies may use as a first-tier environmental document under CEQA to support second-tier environmental documents for transportation projects consistent with the SCS and residential or mixed-use projects and transit priority projects consistent with the SCS. (DEIR, p. 2-49.) The MTP/SCS also includes programs and policies to incentivize and encourage consistent development in the region. Specifically, Policy 1 of the MTP/SCS is to provide incentives, information, tools, technical assistance, and encouragement to support implementation of the Sacramento region's Sustainable Communities Strategy through:

- Development in communities where services, amenities, and transportation infrastructure already exist;
- The economic viability of rural lands and conservation of open space and agricultural resources;
- Revitalization of urban, suburban, and rural centers and corridors;
- Coordinated and phased greenfield growth that prioritizes walking and bicycling in scale and design while incorporating new urbanist design principles;
- Higher density housing options such as small-lot or attached single-family products, accessory dwelling units, and multi-family housing options where appropriate;
- A diversity of housing to provide options for all residents;
- Complete communities that include a balance of homes, jobs, services, amenities, and diverse transportation options;
- Transit-oriented development including more housing and jobs in high frequency transit areas;
- Complete streets that provide safe, comfortable, and equitable facilities for people of all ages and abilities to walk, bike, and ride transit.

Policy 2 of the MTP/SCS is to pursue funding opportunities that support the infrastructure improvements needed to support new housing and employment opportunities in existing urban, suburban, and rural communities, and includes the following actions: Development in communities where services, amenities, and transportation infrastructure already exist;

- Secure funding and implement the Green Means Go Pilot Program to encourage infill development and revitalization of commercial corridors.
- Develop a Regional Housing Needs Plan with action steps and incentives that put member agencies in a better position to accelerate infill and affordable housing production.
- Secure funding to allow the region's jurisdictions and stakeholders to revisit and update the Blueprint.
- Continue to provide tools and project support to grow regional jobs and housing, including tools for preventing displacement. Examples include the TOD Toolkit, Rural-Urban Connections Strategy, Economic Prosperity Strategy, Housing Policy Toolkit, SB 375 and SB 743 CEQA streamlining.
- Continue to provide technical assistance to support urban, suburban, and rural community revitalization without displacement. Examples include Civic Lab Year 2, Rural Main Streets Technical Assistance, Rural-Urban Connections Strategy, data and tools for SB 743 implementation, and the Transit-Oriented Development Action Plan.
- Provide data, research, analysis, incentives, and other support to housing-rich communities actively trying to promote walkable, higher density job centers, and jobs-rich communities to promote housing growth.

No edits are required in response to Comment 6-12.

Comment 6-13

The commenter indicates that the EIR should describe the physical environmental impacts on climate change in the region.

See response to Comment 6-12. SACOG has no land use approval authority. The SCS component of the Plan is a strategy that seeks to improve land use patterns in order to better manage specific regional outcomes including VMT and GHG emissions regionally through programs and policies that include, among other things, technical assistance and education, strategic infrastructure investment, and financial tools and incentives. Within the confines of SACOG's authority, the SCS over time has successfully reduced these in total or minimally reduced the rate of increase over time for each metric. The role of the EIR is to examine the potential for environmental impacts from this improved outcome.

Section 15126.2(a) of the CEQA Guidelines states that the lead agency should "normally" limit its examination to changes in physical conditions, giving due consideration to both short- and long-term effects, as well as many other relevant considerations. In compliance with this direction, the Draft EIR describes throughout the document the physical changes related to climate change that could result from implementation of the MTC/SCS, including but not limited to, the following:

- Temperature increases of 2.7 to 8.8° F by 2100 (DEIR, p. 8-4).
- Decreased snowpack in the Sierra Nevada (DEIR, p. 8-4)
- Increasingly large and severe wildfires (DEIR, p. 8-4 to 8-5)
- Increased flooding (DEIR, p. 8-5)
- Increased insect pest populations (such as mosquitos and ticks) and related health effects (West Nile virus and Lyme disease) (DEIR, p. 8-5)
- Resulting threats to transportation and energy infrastructure, crop production, forest and rangeland, and public health (DEIR, p. 8-5)
- Resulting physical damage to communities (DEIR, p. 8-5)

Page 8-5 the Draft EIR summarizes SACOG's Sacramento Region Climate Adaptation Plan (<https://www.sacog.org/sites/main/files/file-attachments/fullplanwithappendices.pdf>, adopted in August of 2015) which analyzes climate effects in the SACOG region specifically and is incorporated by reference into the Draft EIR. Relevant to the MTP/SCS, this plan identifies the following threats and risks particular to the SACOG region:

- increased temperatures
- changes to historical precipitation patterns
- wildfire
- localized and regional flooding
- landslides
- deterioration of roadways
- erosion and blockage/delay of railways
- erosion, increased maintenance, decreased safety of bridges
- decreased comfort associated with walking and bicycling
- clogged/overrun drainage systems
- congested/closed access routes

More generally, impacts to agriculture and forestry over the 20-year horizon of the Plan are addressed in DEIR Chapter 4, air quality impacts are addressed in DEIR Chapter 5, impacts to biological resources are addressed in Chapter 6, wildlife is addressed in Chapter 10, and hydrology and flooding are addressed in Chapter 11, among other topics and analyses throughout the DEIR. No edits are required in response to Comment 6-13.

Comment 6-14

The comment asserts there is no cumulative analysis of climate change and its impacts in the Sacramento region. The commenter requests the addition of a “detailed and quantified” discussion of cumulative physical climate change impacts within the region.

As described in Response to Comment 6-13, the EIR contains a complete description of the potential physical effects that might result from climate change impacts associated with implementation of the MTP/SCS. The analysis addresses global, statewide, and regional concerns and is cumulative by nature. The MTP/SCS is a regional plan and the EIR is programmatic. The level of specificity of an EIR is determined by the nature of the project (Section 15145, CEQA Guidelines). The cumulative analysis approach is guided by Section 15064(h) (1 and 2) of the CEQA Guidelines and examines the incremental contribution of the MTP/SCS to expected future cumulative conditions. No edits are required in response to Comment 6-14.

Comment 6-15

The comment lists the four thresholds included in the EIR to analyze GHG emissions — (i) conflict with the region's achievement of SB 375 targets, (ii) interference with the goals of CARB's 2017 Scoping Plan, (iii) interference with local GHG reduction plan goals, and (iv) increases GHG impacts from construction in a manner that would be inconsistent with the state's climate goals — and asserts that the EIR should instead analyze the impact of climate change on the physical environment.

As documented in Response to Comment 6-13, the EIR does analyze physical effects. The comment suggests that the analysis and the thresholds are interchangeable but they are different. The analysis identifies the adverse outcomes of the particular concern – in this case GHG emissions. The threshold is the measurement of what level of emissions would be considered significant as that term is defined in CEQA. The thresholds are consistent with Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, but tailored for this plan as allowed by Section(b) (1 and 2) of the CEQA Guidelines section 15064. As noted in response to Comment 6-14, the analytical approach is fully compliant with Section 15064(h) (1 and 2) of the CEQA Guidelines. No edits are required in response to Comment 6-15.

Comment 6-16

The comment questions use of a significance threshold based on compliance with the SB 375 targets, stating that compliance with SB 375 does not mitigate the project's contribution to global climate change. The comment further asserts that SB 375 is a target, but not a regulation, requirement, or plan.

SB 375 refers to statutory requirements adopted by the Legislature in the Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act of 2008, commonly known as Senate Bill No. 375 (2007–2008 Reg. Sess.) (SB 375), and reflected in Government Code section 65080, et seq. and Public Resources Code sections 21155, 21155.2, 21159.28. The target set by ARB pursuant to SB 375 for the SACOG region requires a reduction in GHG emissions from cars and light duty trucks of 19% below 2005 emissions by 2035.

Based on the statutory requirements in SB 375 and the target set by ARB, the Draft EIR includes a threshold to consider whether the MTP/SCS would achieve the target set for the region to reduce GHG emissions. Impact GHG-1 is only intended to consider whether the MTP/SCS meets the GHG target set pursuant to SB 375, and is but one of four thresholds the EIR uses to analyze GHG impacts.

Because the MTP/SCS, if implemented, would reduce GHG emissions from cars and light duty trucks by 19 percent per capita below 2005 levels by 2035, which is the amount established for SACOG by the state agency with responsibility for implementation of the state's overall climate strategies, the impact under that threshold is less than significant. That does not indicate that the plan would have no GHG impacts. The three other GHG thresholds in the Draft EIR consider the plan's impacts on overall emissions as they relate to Scoping Plan goals, local GHG reduction plan goals, and construction activities. The analysis under GHG-1 does not negate the analysis under these other thresholds, but rather provides additional information on how the Plan would impact efforts to reduce GHG emissions. No edits are required in response to Comment 6-16.

Comment 6-17

The comment asserts that the analysis of the MTP/SCS's performance compared to the 2017 Scoping Plan is not sufficient, but does not specify in what way. The comment further asserts that the State's Scoping Plan is not a set of regulations or requirements that would mitigate the project's impact to global climate change, but rather a statement of policies and objectives.

In September 2006, California enacted AB 32, the Global Warming Solutions Act (Health and Safety Code section 38500 et seq.), establishing the greenhouse gas emissions reduction goal of achieving 1990 levels of emissions by the year 2020. AB 32 also directs CARB to develop and implement regulations to reduce statewide greenhouse gas emissions from stationary sources and address greenhouse gas emissions from vehicles. (Health & Saf. Code, §§ 38560, 38561.) In response to AB 32, and with SB 375 in mind, CARB adopted its Climate Change Scoping Plan ("Scoping Plan") in 2008 as a roadmap to achieve the required statewide greenhouse gas reductions. The Scoping Plan includes "a comprehensive array of approaches and tools" to achieve emissions reductions in each of eight sectors: transportation, electricity, commercial and residential, industry, recycling and waste, high global warming potential gases, agriculture, and forest net emissions. A key element of the strategy includes establishing targets for transportation-related greenhouse gas emissions for regions throughout California pursuant to SB 375. The 2017 Scoping Plan updates the 2008 Plan and outlines the main strategies to achieve the legislated GHG target for 2030 (established by SB 32, requiring a reduction of 40 percent below 1990 levels), and substantially advance toward the state's 2050 climate goals. Reliance on interference with the Scoping Plan as a threshold of significance is consistent with the thresholds recommended in Appendix G of the CEQA Guidelines, which ask whether a project would conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases. No edits are required in response to Comment 6-17.

See also response to Comment 6-5 and Comment 6-16.

Comment 6-18

The comment states that the EIR should evaluate the impact to climate change based upon the extent to which the project may increase GHG emissions compared to the existing environment. The comment also notes a project with a significant impact must consider feasible mitigation and alternatives.

The EIR does consider the extent to which emissions under the MTP/SCS will increase as compared to the existing environment under Impact GHG-2. (DEIR, pp. 8-24 to 8-25.) As shown in Table 8-1, 2016 GHG emissions totaled 16,527,605 MTCO₂e for the region. Based on the methodology described in Section 8.4.1, estimates of emissions with plan implementation were developed for the years 2030, 2040, and 2050. Emissions for 2030 totaled 13,220,852 MTCO₂e/year (20 percent reduction from 2016), emissions for 2040 totaled 11,397,238 MTCO₂e/year (31 percent reduction from 2016), and emissions for 2050 totaled 9,541,109 MTCO₂e/year (42 percent reduction from 2016). These steady declines are largely attributable to the anticipated increase in the proportion of renewable energy sources supplying electricity to the plan area of the proposed MTP/SCS. Consistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.4, in order to evaluate the significance of these declining GHG emissions estimates, the EIR considers whether the MTP/SCS would interfere with the state's achievement of long-term climate goals as expressed in the 2017 Scoping Plan. Based on ARB's statement that additional VMT reductions will be needed to meet the state's long term GHG reduction goals, the EIR concludes that the impact under GHG-2 is significant and includes Mitigation Measures GHG-1, GHG-2, and GHG-3 to address the impact, but ultimately concludes that the impact is significant and unavoidable. No edits are required in response to Comment 6-18.

Comment 6-19

The comment asserts that 2005 is not an appropriate baseline for analyzing the impacts of emissions from cars and light duty trucks.

As described above, the threshold related to whether the MTP/SCS achieves the regional target set by ARB uses 2005 as the baseline because the target is expressed as a reduction in GHG emissions of 19 percent from 2005 levels by the year 2030. As explained in the discussion of methods and assumptions for Chapter 8, this is the only threshold for which the baseline is adjusted to a historic level. (DEIR, p. 8-16.)

The fundamental goal of an EIR is to inform decision makers and the public of any significant adverse effects a project is likely to have on the physical environment. (*Neighbors for Smart Rail v. Exposition Metro Line Construction Authority* (2013) 57 Cal.4th 439, 447.) In general, the baseline conditions must describe the physical environmental conditions in the vicinity of the project as they exist at the time the notice of preparation is published. (CEQA Guidelines, § 15125, subd. (a).) However, where necessary to provide “the most accurate picture practically possible” of the project’s impacts, a lead agency may define existing conditions by referencing historic conditions. (Ibid.) For this particular impact that looks at whether the plan would achieve the GHG target based on reductions from 2005 levels, use of a 2005 baseline was necessary to provide an accurate assessment of the plan’s ability to meet the target. As stated above under response to Comment 6-18, however, the EIR did not rely on this threshold alone to analyze GHG impacts. No edits are required in response to Comment 6-19.

Comment 6-20

The comment states that the EIR should include an analysis of the impacts on GHG emissions from increased trucking that will use the proposed transportation system and that will serve the land uses identified in the plan.

Total GHG emissions by sector for the plan area of the proposed MTP/SCS for 2016, 2030, 2040, and 2050 are provided in Draft EIR Table 8-1 (page 8-17). The table includes GHG emissions for all on-road vehicle types estimated using EMFAC2014, which includes medium- and heavy-duty trucks and other vehicle types in addition to passenger cars and light-duty trucks. These emissions are included in the Draft EIR analysis in Impact GHG-2 of whether future GHG emissions under the proposed MTP/SCS would substantially interfere with achievement of the state’s long-term climate goals as set forth in CARB’s 2017 Scoping Plan, specifically in the analysis of operational emissions from combined sectors (pages 8-24 to 8-25). No edits are required in response to Comment 6-20.

Comment 6-21

The comment states that Table 8-1 of the EIR shows mobile source emissions essentially remaining the same from 2030 to 2040. (DEIR, 8-17.) The comment asserts that the EIR should identify the failure to reduce emissions in the 2030 to 2040 time period as a significant impact and explain why there is no progress during that decade. However, contrary to this assertion, the Draft EIR does show a decrease in mobile source emissions from 2030 to 2040 as explained below.

Table 8-1 shows total GHG emissions by sector for the plan area of the proposed MTP/SCS for 2016, 2030, 2040, and 2050. One of the sectors is mobile source emissions for all vehicles, which were estimated using EMFAC2014. Mobile source emissions were estimated to be 7,862,665 MTCO₂e/year in 2030, and 7,331,384 MTCO₂e/year in 2040, which is a decrease of 531,281 MTCO₂e/year, or approximately 7 percent. Moreover, Table 8-1 also shows a decrease in mobile source emissions over the duration of the proposed MTP/SCS from 2016 to 2040. No edits are required in response to Comment 6-21.

Comment 6-22

The comment asserts that the EIR does not adequately explain how GHG emissions were modeled, how the proposed project would impact GHG emissions in the region, and how the conclusions regarding GHG emissions are being reached, citing the three computer models used to analyze impacts — EMFAC2014, CalEEMod, and SACSIM.

Chapter 5-Air Quality section 5.4 provides an explanation of CalEEMod and EMFAC.

Chapter 16-Transportation section 16.4 provides an explanation of SACSIM and its use in the modeling process. (DEIR, pp. 16-37 to 16-41). Additional detail on SACSIM is provided in the Draft 2020 MTP/SCS Appendix E (pp. 40-66). In addition, a discussion of how vehicle activities from the SACSIM model are processed to estimate mobile source GHGs using the EMFAC2014 emissions model is provided in the Draft 2020 MTP/SCS DEIR (DEIR, p. 8-17).

The process of using the SACSIM travel demand model in combination with EMFAC2014 to prepare estimates of GHG from mobile sources is similar to that used by other MPOs and RTPAs in California. The required inputs to the EMFAC2014 emissions model are VMT, split into categories or “bins” by speed, time of day, and by geography. These required EMFAC2014 inputs are referred to as the “vehicle activity files.”

SACSIM is used to prepare the vehicle activity files. SACSIM accounts for travel demand (i.e., the number of person trips by mode of travel, spatial distribution, and time of travel, etc.), transportation supply (i.e., roadway facilities, transit lines and service, bikeways, etc.), and loaded network conditions (i.e., traffic volumes on roadways, travel speeds, VMT, etc.). Demand is based on the spatial distribution of population, jobs, and other uses that generate travel (schools, hospitals, etc.), and the transportation options as represented in the model. Supply is a computer representation of collector-and-above roadways (facility type, number of lanes, etc.), transit services (lines, stops, service frequencies at different times of day). The loaded networks are generated by the model, accounting for congestion and travel speeds on roadways at different times of day and on different routes.

Data from the SACSIM loaded networks are aggregated to the vehicle activity file formats required by EMFAC2014. The SACSIM model can represent base year demand, supply, and loaded network conditions, using modeling data based on actual, observed conditions in the base year. Future year conditions are forecasted using SACSIM, based on the MTP/SCS forecasts of population, jobs, and the transportation supply expected to be in place based on the projects in the MTP/SCS. In this way, the vehicle activity files required by EMFAC2014 are the best possible representation of the MTP/SCS. For example, if a future scenario included no new roadway capacity projects, but also included significant growth in population, that future scenario would result in vehicle activities with a greater share of VMT in slower speed bins, due to higher congestion levels.

The EMFAC2014 emissions model includes data tables and factors related to the 13 vehicle classes used by EMFAC2014 to represent the range of vehicles in use, referred to as the “vehicle fleet.” The vehicle fleet in historic years are based ARB vehicle inventory developed using DMV registration data and other sources. In future years, the vehicle fleet reflects many factors: turnover of the vehicle fleet over time; the impact of market trends and consumer preferences; and the impact of state and federal policies that are expected to affect vehicle fleet over the time horizon of the MTP/SCS.

EMFAC2014 reads in the SACSIM vehicle activity data for the MTP/SCS base year and forecast years, splits the vehicle activities into vehicle classes and fuel types represented in the future year EMFAC2014 vehicle fleets. Emissions rates accounting for vehicle class, fuel type, and speed are then used to estimate the vehicle tailpipe emissions. The emissions rates in future vehicle fleets reflect the changes to both vehicle efficiency and fuel composition as a result of state and federal policies and programs. The estimates of tailpipe emissions by vehicle class and fuel type are aggregated in various ways within EMFAC2014 for use in different emissions analyses (e.g., GHG analysis for SB 375, criteria pollutant analysis required by the Clean Air Act, etc.). By representing both the present and expected future characteristics of the vehicle fleet and fuels as they change over time, EMFAC2014 provides the best possible representation of the likely tailpipe emissions.

Combining SACSIM vehicle activity forecasts with EMFAC2014 emissions modeling maximizes the strengths of each model in representing vehicle activities and emissions for the MTP/SCS. No edits are required in response to Comment 6-22.

Please see also response to Comment 6-23.

Comment 6-23

The comment asserts that the Draft EIR did not explain: the changes in EMFAC2017 or why an “outdated model” is being used and “should be considered to be reliable.” The comment also says the Draft EIR should explain “why the categories by which the emissions were classified were aligned with CalEEMod.”

Pages 5-41 and 5-42 of the Draft EIR explains that EMFAC2017 had not yet been approved at the time the Notice of Preparation was published for the proposed MTP/SCS in April 2019. The emissions of criteria air pollutants were modeled using CARB’s EMFAC2014 model, which was the most recent EPA-approved version at the time SACOG released the Conformity Assumptions for the Draft EIR analysis. On August 15, 2019, EPA approved EMFAC2017 for use; however, EPA provided a two-year grace period in which SACOG is not required to use EMFAC2017. The grace period runs through August 16, 2021. Because EMFAC2014 was the most recent EPA-approved transportation emissions model available at the time of publishing the NOP, EMFAC2014 remains an appropriate modeling tool to produce emissions estimates for use in the Draft EIR.

The California Emissions Estimator Model (CalEEMod) Version 2016.3.2 Computer Program was used to estimate emissions of air pollutants and GHG emissions from different land use categories of the proposed MTP/SCS. CalEEMod provides emissions estimates for dozens of land use types categorized by industrial, residential, commercial, and other land use types. These land use categories include subcategories such as general office building, hospital, city parks, hotels, high rise apartments, and others. The land use categories and subcategories of CalEEMod are not identical to the land use categories that make up the projected land use pattern of the proposed MTP/SCS. For purposes of the Draft EIR analysis, SACOG reviewed the land use category and subcategory definitions of CalEEMod and compared them to the land use categories of the proposed MTP/SCS. Based on the underlying land use attributes of the land use pattern of the proposed MTP/SCS, SACOG identified the most appropriate representative land use categories and subcategories within CalEEMod. This dataset, with a crosswalk of proposed MTP/SCS land use categories into CalEEMod land use categories and subcategories, were then used to perform the CalEEMod modeling of air pollutant and GHG emissions from land uses in the Draft EIR. CalEEMod default assumptions for waste, water, and area sources of emissions for these land uses were used in the analysis. Default assumptions for energy were adjusted for future years to reflect triennial updates to the California Energy Code. Assumptions for electricity emissions were based on emissions factors for the different electricity service providers in the plan area. Transportation emissions were based on vehicle miles traveled (VMT) estimates for the proposed MTP/SCS developed using the SACSIM2019 model. The CalEEMod modeling results are summarized in Draft EIR Appendix AQ/GHG-1. No edits are required in response to Comment 6-23.

Comment 6-24

The comment asserts that the application of these models is not explained or supported, and SACOG should provide a clear and supported explanation of the modeling process which underlies the DEIR and of the impact on GHG emissions.

See response to Comments 6-22 and 6-23.

Comment 6-25

The comment asserts that further information should be provided concerning how GHG emissions were calculated, how the proposed project will impact GHG emissions, what the agency's conclusion was, and how the agency reached its conclusion.

The methods and assumptions for calculating GHG emissions are described in Draft EIR Section 8.4.1. The emissions of the proposed MTP/SCS are included in Table 8-1. Refer to the response to Comment 6-18 for discussion of the impact conclusion for Impact GHG-2 and explanation of how the conclusion was reached. No edits are required in response to Comment 6-25.

See also response to Comments 6-22 and 6-23.

Comment 6-26

The comment asserts that the EIR relies to an unspecified degree on modeling under CalEEMod to establish both current impacts and future impacts. The comment states that the EIR should explain and support the model in language that the public can understand. The comment also notes that CalEEMod makes numerous assumptions, but allows users to change the assumptions, and states that the EIR should explain what changes have been made in the CalEEMod default values, what the basis for those changes is, and why they have been made. The commenter also requests that the EIR explain the default assumptions by CalEEMod that were accepted during the analysis and what basis there is for that data and how CalEEMod has been applied.

The CalEEMod Computer Program is the industry standard for estimating emissions. The model was developed by the California Air Pollution Control Officers Association (CAPCOA), the organization that represents the state's 35 air districts. Use of CalEEMod is recommended by the Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District (SMAQMD), which serves as a representative air district managing emissions within the plan area of the proposed MTP/SCS (SMAQMD 2018). CalEEMod was used to estimate criteria air pollutant emissions for the baseline year (2016) and future years out to 2040 (Draft EIR page 5-69 and Table 5-19). Please refer to the response to Comment 6-23 for

discussion of the land use assumptions used for CalEEMod modeling and description of the default and custom CalEEMod assumptions used for the Draft EIR analysis. No edits to the Draft EIR are required in response to Comment 6-26.

Comment 6-27

The comment asserts that the EIR does not explain how or to what extent the proposed transportation plan would impact the goals of the Scoping Plan related to transportation, passenger-vehicle sector, energy, solid waste, other mobile sources, water, wastewater treatment, and construction emissions.

As described in the EIR, total GHG emissions from existing and projected land use and transportation data, measured in MTCO₂e, were estimated for the baseline, the federal transportation conformity year (2027), the SB 375 target year (2035), and the project horizon year (2040) from the following sources: area sources, natural gas combustion, electricity consumption, passenger vehicles, agricultural operations, high global-warming-potential (high GWP) gases, waste generation, and water consumption and wastewater generation. (DEIR, p. 8-16.) These results were then extrapolated to conform to GHG reduction target years established by SB 32 (2030) and Executive Order S-3-05 (2050) to evaluate consistency with reduction values contained in the 2017 Scoping Plan. Table 8-1 shows the total GHG emissions for the plan area of the proposed MTP/SCS for 2016, 2030, 2040, and 2050. (DEIR, p. 8-17.) The method and calculations are described in subsequent paragraphs and in the technical appendices of the MTP/SCS. (DEIR, pp. 8-17 to 8-18; MTP/SCS Appendix E Plan Performance.)

Impact GHG-2 then considers whether the identified emissions would result in interference with achievement of the state's long-term GHG goals, as reflected in the 2017 Scoping Plan. The EIR considers the plan's contribution to emissions in the transportation sector and, based on recent progress reports on the state's climate goals that suggest that the regional 2035 GHG emissions reduction targets under SB 375 are not adequate to fully meet the goals of the 2017 Scoping Plan, concluded that impacts would be significant, even if emissions were decreasing over time. The EIR also considers GHG emissions from sectors other than the passenger vehicle mobile source sector and determines that, while those emissions could also conceivably be reduced in future years due to the implementation of statewide regulations and policy directed at reducing emissions, impacts under the MTP/SCS would be significant.

The Scoping Plan provides goals at the state level to outline a broad approach on how the State will achieve its future reduction targets. Because of this high-level perspective provided in the Scoping Plan, a direct quantified comparison to the attributes of the proposed MTP/SCS, which is regional, is not possible to conduct, so the EIR presents general discussion and analysis. No edits to the Draft EIR are required in response to Comment 6-27.

Comment 6-28

The comment questions the statement in the EIR that it will take collaboration to identify further VMT reductions.

The need for collaboration to close the gap in necessary VMT reductions to achieve the state's climate reduction goals has been stated by ARB and is reported in SACOG's EIR. As stated above in response to Comment 6-5, in setting the targets for the state's MPOs, and in subsequent publications cited in the EIR, ARB identified a gap in emissions reductions of 6 percent needed to meet the state's goals, finding that overall, MPOs would achieve a 19 percent reduction through implementation of their SCS plans consistent with the targets set by ARB, but that a 25 percent reduction would be needed. ARB did not identify SACOG's share of responsibility for that gap.

The Scoping Plan anticipated a remaining gap related to VMT growth, and states that discussions "among a broad suite of stakeholders from transportation, the building community, financial institutions, housing advocates, environmental organizations, and community groups are needed to begin the process to pursue and develop the needed set of strategies to ensure that we can achieve necessary VMT reductions, and that the associated benefits are shared by all Californians." (Scoping Plan, p. 76.) Appendix C of the Scoping Plan further details potential actions for discussion "that can be taken by State government, regional planning agencies, and local governments, to achieve a broad, statewide vision for more sustainable land use and close the VMT gap." (*Ibid.*) Thus, the EIR reports that collaboration among many stakeholders is a necessary component of reducing VMT. No edits to the Draft EIR are required in response to Comment 6-28.

Comment 6-29

The comment summarizes the EIR's discussion of GHG emissions from the combined sectors of transportation, electricity consumption, natural gas combustion, area, solid waste and water consumption and wastewater generation, and states that the reasons those emissions would decline are unexplained.

As stated in the comment, the EIR notes that emissions from these sectors could reduce over time but that SACOG lacks authority to implement GHG reductions in these other sectors. The methods and assumptions for calculating regional GHG emissions are described in Draft EIR Section 8.4.1 (page 8-16). The projected reductions are based on implementation of State and other GHG reduction measures reflected in the modeling tools and datasets used in the analysis. The GHG sectors with sizeable estimated reductions over the duration of the proposed MTP/SCS include mobile sources, electricity, and water. The EMFAC2014 model used to estimate mobile source emissions reflects the effect of the ACC and ZEV programs and was based on VMT estimates from the SACSIM2019 model that reflect the VMT and GHG benefits of the projected land use pattern and planned transportation improvements of the proposed MTP/SCS. The electricity and water sector estimates take into account state laws increasing the procurement of electricity from renewable and zero carbon resources and electricity emissions factors for the electrical utilities that serve the plan area. No edits to the Draft EIR are required in response to Comment 6-29.

Comment 6-30

The comment states that the analysis of impacts under GHG-2 lacks a clear definition of what impacts are considered to be the result of the proposed plan and includes no discussion of how or to what extent a "proposed transportation plan" would result in impacts to sectors such as agriculture and "solid wastewater."

Impact GHG-2 considered emissions from all applicable sectors identified in the 2017 Scoping Plan to determine whether implementation of the MTP/SCS would interfere with achievement of GHG reduction goals. While the MTP/SCS is intended to reduce passenger vehicle GHG emissions, the plan is a combined transportation and land use plan that accommodates forecasted growth throughout the region with the potential to effect emissions across sectors. It considers all sectors because the proposed MTP/SCS is not just a "transportation plan" but also includes the projected land use pattern and forecasted regional population, housing, and job growth for the plan area. Solid waste and water sectors are included because forecasted regional growth and the projected land use pattern would affect activity levels in these sectors, such as solid waste generated and sent to landfills, and consumption of water, which in turn would affect the level of GHG emissions in these sectors. Agriculture is included because it is a sector identified in the 2017 Scoping Plan and statewide GHG inventory and because the plan area includes agricultural activity. No edits to the Draft EIR are required in response to Comment 6-30. See also response to Comments 6-13.

Comment 6-31

The comment asserts there is no discussion or support demonstrating the method or the assumptions made to reach the GHG emissions in each sector for 2016, 2030, 2040 and 2050 shown in Table 8-1.

See response to Comment 6-27.

Comment 6-32

The comment states that VMT is not declining as required and that transit usage is falling in many cities and asserts that the policies and tools to affect VMT discussed in the EIR have not been entirely effective. The comment asserts that the EIR should take a critical look at the performance of the policies intended to reduce VMT and discuss what has proven effective and what has not.

VMT is influenced by many factors. Policy factors are discussed in the EIR on pages 16-23 and 16-33 through 16-37. Exogenous factors also have effects on VMT effect, as discussed on pages 16-23 (economic factors) and 16-20 (discussing fuel prices, number of workers, number of visitors). The lack of progress recently on a number of policy factors related to VMT or alternatives to vehicle travel are also disclosed and discussed in the EIR (see pp.16-24 to 16-25, Table 16-7 for loss of transit ridership; see bulleted text on p.16-48 for lack of progress on attached and small lot housing construction, residential land consumption and density, VMT, and transit ridership). Lack of progress on VMT does not necessarily mean the policies are ineffective—it may also mean they are not being implemented or

that the other exogenous factors beyond the control of SACOG and the MTP/SCS that are impacting VMT. The MTP/SCS itself focuses on implementation actions that it can take to influence VMT, as set forth in Chapter 4, Policies and Implementation Actions, and Appendix E Plan Performance. No edits to the Draft EIR are required in response to Comment 6-32.

Comment 6-33

The comment asserts that the estimates of mileage from SACSIM are inaccurate and unsupported because they rely on the assumption that various land use policies incorporated into the new plan will reduce vehicle travel, but as noted in the EIR those policies have been adopted in previous versions of the RTP and VMT has continued to increase. In light of the history of these policies, the comment asserts that it can no longer be assumed that the policies are effective.

See response to Comment 6-32. The lack of progress does not necessarily mean the policies are ineffective, but in addition to other exogenous factors, may not be implemented. SACOG is charged with developing a combined transportation plan and forecasted land use development pattern but does not have authority to require implementation. (Gov. Code, § 65080, subd. (b)(2)(B), (K).)

Comment 6-34

The comment asserts that SACSIM should not have been used to determine current baseline conditions, and that baseline conditions should be determined on observed travel behavior and used to evaluate the effectiveness of policies that have been applied.

The SACSIM travel demand model is rigorously validated to match observed data in the base year for this MTP/SCS (2016). The extra step of "back-cast" validation to 2005 and 2008 is also performed, and reported in MTP/SCS Appendix E. There is no accepted observed data source for the key impact measures (household-generated VMT per capita). The OPR Technical Advisory on SB 743 recommends use of household-generated VMT per capita and recommends use of validated travel demand models for base year VMT per capita estimates and future year VMT per capita estimates. No edits to the Draft EIR are required in response to Comment 6-34.

Comment 6-35

The comment asserts that use of EMFAC2014 to measure GHG emissions is invalid because the federal government has revoked California's exemption to the Clean Air Act, which is required for California to regulate automobile mileage standards and EMFAC2014 projects emissions based upon the assumption that vehicles in California will achieve California-specific higher mileage standards.

The comment appears to refer to the recently adopted One National Program Rule (revoking the exemption California has had since the 1970s to establish statewide vehicle efficiency standards different than the federal standards). That Rule is not yet effective.

As stated in the Air Quality chapter, the Draft EIR anticipated the One National Program Rule, but as of the date of writing the Draft EIR, no action had been taken on the potential Rule. The EIR therefore states that the impact of the Rule's revocation on future motor vehicle emissions is unknown; however, if the Rule is enacted, or if the federal government adopts the Safer Affordable Fuel-Efficient Vehicles Rule (SAFE Rule) with less strict standards for model years 2021 through 2026, emissions could increase. A variety of factors will determine how air quality and related GHG emissions will be affected by the federal actions, including the outcome of legal action that could affect the applicability of both Rules to fuel standards within the state, or market demand for motor vehicle fuel efficiency in California that could exceed the minimum fuel economy standards established by the SAFE Rule. Thus, the Draft EIR did not attempt to characterize or predict how the Rules would affect ambient air quality within the state or the plan area of the MTP/SCS, as doing so would be speculative. (Draft EIR, p. 5-28.) No edits to the Draft EIR are required in response to Comment 6-35.

See also response to comment 6-23 regarding use of EMFAC 2014.

Comment 6-36

The comment states that the level of GHG emissions projected under the MTP/SCS and reported in the EIR are invalid to the extent they rely on average miles per gallon (MPG) determined based upon the anticipated compliance with vehicle manufacturers' standards adopted by California under the exemption provided by the federal government since the waiver has now been revoked by the federal government.

The average MPG calculation affects the estimate of auto operating costs (AOC). AOC is a key input to the SACSIM travel demand model. EMFAC 2014 MPG for passenger vehicles is used to calculate AOC. See response to Comment 6-23 for validity of EMFAC 2014.

While the EMFAC model has not yet been updated by ARB to reflect the effect of the One National Program Rule or the SAFE Rule, it is likely that the changes under these programs will make vehicles in California less efficient, and therefore costlier to drive. Adjusting this in the AOC calculation would likely reduce VMT relative to the calculations based on EMFAC2014, and could reduce VMT somewhat compared to EMFAC 2014. However, neither the One National Program Rule nor the SAFE Rule are currently effective. No edits to the Draft EIR are required in response to Comment 6-36.

Comment 6-37

The comment states that the GHG emissions projections used for measuring compliance with the SB 375 target do not take into account the benefits of programs identified in the 2017 Scoping Plan that improve vehicle efficiency, but that other vehicle efficiency programs adopted earlier under the now revoked California exemption are relied upon to estimate GHG emissions.

The comment is correct that the emissions impact of state fleet and fuel rules (e.g., Pavley I, Pavley II, Low Carbon Fuel Standard) must be factored out of the GHG emissions rates used for calculation of the SB 375 GHG emissions reduction achievement. This is required by ARB, and ARB provides a separate set of GHG emissions rates in EMFAC for use in making these calculations. (See also *Bay Area Citizens v. Assn. of Bay Area Governments* (2016) 248 Cal.App.4th 966, 999-1000.) The EIR considers GHG emissions in relation to the SB 375 target, which isolates reductions achieved through implementation of the combined transportation plan and land use pattern of the MTP/SCS, without consideration of additional sources of emissions reduction in Impact GHG-1.

The comment is also correct that Table 8-1 does not present the SB 375 analysis, which is instead provided under Impact GHG-1 and Table 8-3. Table 8-1 is intended to quantify the actual GHG emissions from each sector, including the impact of any applicable state programs. See response to comment 6-23 for validity of EMFAC2014. See response to Comment 6-36 for impact of the One National Program Rule. No edits to the Draft EIR are required in response to Comment 6-37.

Comment 6-38

The comment summarizes the requirement of Mitigation Measure TRN-1, which states that additional actions and funding programs must be initiated by the state government to further reduce VMT and that the form of those programs must be worked out in collaboration with MPOs and local agencies. (DEIR, 8-29, 16-54.) The mitigation measure provides that SACOG shall be an active participant in that process and that the implementing agencies shall comply with state guidance on VMT reductions.

Comment noted. See response to Comment 6-28.

Comment 6-39

The comment states that TRN-1 goes on to state that implementing agencies shall require project modification during the design and environmental review of projects to reduce VMT impacts in a manner consistent with state guidance on VMT reduction, and then lists a variety of project modifications that could be adopted for that purpose.

Comment noted.

Comment 6-40

The comment states that the conclusion that TRN-1 would be sufficient to reduce the impact to less than significant but that additional state policy actions and funding would be required to close the gap at the state level, and that strategies identified would need to be refined at the local level in any subsequent environmental analysis is vague and unenforceable.

The discussion following Mitigation Measure GHG-1/TRN-1 does not conclude that the measure would be sufficient to reduce the impact to less than significant. Rather, the EIR states that Mitigation Measure GHG-1 has the potential to assist SACOG in achieving higher VMT reductions through new or expanded technologies, methods, measures, and programs; however, the efficacy or feasibility of such technologies, methods, measures, and programs are unknown at this time and beyond the scope of SACOG's authority to control. As a result, while it is possible that such technologies, methods, measures, and programs could reduce emissions as necessary to achieve the state's long-term climate change goals, reaching a conclusion to that effect would be speculative. (Draft EIR, p. 8-30.)

TRN-1 reflects statements that ARB has made about additional state policy actions and funding that would be required to close the VMT gap between what the MPOs can achieve through implementation of the SCS plans, and reductions needed to meet state goals, as acknowledged in the draft EIR. (DEIR, pp. 8-10 to 8-11, 8-22, 16-29 to 16-30, 16-47 to 49.) The EIR does, however, include a list of specific project modifications and measures that local agencies can and should implement to reduce VMT at the individual project level. (DEIR, pp. 54-56.) No edits to the Draft EIR are required in response to Comment 6-40.

Comment 6-41

The comment states that the EIR should formulate the programs to produce further emissions reductions, require their implementation, not defer mitigation, and if exact mitigation is deferred, include performance standards.

See response to comment 6-40.

Comment 6-42

The comment states that State guidance does not exist to implement the strategies listed in TRN-1, including transportation demand management (TDM) programs, impact fee programs, mitigation banks, in-lieu fees, or other land use conditions, and SACOG lacks authority to implement such a requirement.

The state guidance referred to in TRN-1 is the January 2019 ARB advisory on VMT reductions (CARB 2019) and the *Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA* (OPR 2018) discussed in the Draft EIR. (DEIR, pp. 16-30-31.) SACOG acknowledges throughout the EIR that it does not have authority to implement the requirements, but it provides measures that implementing agencies may rely on to reduce project-level impacts. (See e.g., DEIR, p. 16-54.) Because SACOG lacks authority to implement these measures, the EIR concludes the impact remains significant and unavoidable. No edits to the Draft EIR are required in response to Comment 6-42.

Comment 6-43

The comment recommends that Mitigation Measure TRN-1 be broken down and revised so that it provides specific and feasible mitigation measures that can be implemented by local agencies or by SACOG. The comment states that the assertion that specific mitigation measures cannot be developed at the regional level and then adopted or recommended in the EIR is unsupported, and concludes that SACOG should formulate the mitigation.

TRN-1 does include a list of specific measures and project modifications that can be applied at the project level to reduce VMT emissions. (DEIR, pp. 16-55 to 16-56.) The commenter acknowledges that SACOG does not have the authority to implement the measures. The comment does not include any additional measures for SACOG to consider. No edits to the Draft EIR are required in response to Comment 6-43.

Comment 6-44

The comment recommends that mitigation for transportation impacts be revised to be effective and enforceable by providing mitigation SACOG can adopt itself.

As noted by the comment, Mitigation Measure TRN-1 provides various strategies to reduce VMT from existing and proposed land uses. The EIR does not conclude that these measures would be sufficient to reduce the impact to less than significant in all cases, but rather, finds that they may be reduced in some communities, although additional state policy actions and funding would be required to close the gap at the state level. In addition, the identified strategies are programmatic, and would need to be refined and matched to local conditions in subsequent project level environmental analysis. (DEIR, 16-56.)

"The level of specificity of an EIR is determined by the nature of the project and the 'rule of reason'" (*Laurel Heights Improvement Assn. v. Regents of University of California* (1988) 47 Cal.3d 376, 407). "[W]here an EIR covers several possible projects that are diverse and geographically dispersed, the agency has discretion to evaluate the potential environmental impacts of the individual projects in general terms in the EIR, while deferring more detailed evaluation of the projects for future EIRs" (*California Oak Foundation v. Regents of University of California* (2010) 188 Cal.App.4th 227, 271, citing *In re Bay-Delta* (2008) 43 Cal.4th 1143, 1170-1171). Here, the proposed Plan is a long-term, regional-scale plan covering 22 cities and six counties over the next approximately 20 years. Accordingly, the EIR analyzes the proposed Plan at a programmatic level.

Program EIRs are commonly used in conjunction with the process of tiering, which is the "coverage of general matters in broader EIRs (such as on general plans or policy statements) with subsequent narrower EIRs or ultimately site-specific EIRs incorporating by reference the general discussions and concentrating solely on the issues specific to the EIR subsequently prepared. ..." (CEQA Guidelines, section 15385). In addressing the appropriate amount of detail required at different stages in the tiering process, the CEQA Guidelines state that "[w]here a lead agency is using the tiering process in connection with an EIR for a large-scale planning approval, such as a general plan or component thereof..., the development of detailed, site-specific information may not be feasible but can be deferred, in many instances, until such time as the lead agency prepares a future environmental document in connection with a project of a more limited geographic scale, as long as deferral does not prevent adequate identification of significant effects of the planning approval at hand" (CEQA Guidelines, section 15152, subdivision (c)). As explained by the Supreme Court, "[t]iering is properly used to defer analysis of environmental impacts and mitigation measures to later phases when the impacts or mitigation measures are not determined by the first-tier approval decision but are specific to the later phases" (*In re Bay-Delta, supra*, 43 Cal.4th at pages 1169-1170).

Consistent with these provisions of CEQA, the EIR does not evaluate subcomponents of the proposed Plan; nor does it assess project-specific impacts of individual projects, although it provides environmental analysis and mitigation that is intended to address the range of impacts and mitigation that may be associated with individual projects. This approach does not relieve local jurisdictions of responsibility for determining whether project-specific impacts require additional analysis in subsequent second-tier CEQA documents (Draft EIR, page 1.1-4). In sum, "it is proper for a lead agency to use its discretion to focus a first-tier EIR on only the...program, leaving project-specific details to subsequent EIRs when specific projects are considered" (*In re Bay-Delta, supra*, 43 Cal.4th at page 1174).

With these parameters in mind, and given SACOG's lack of land use authority, the EIR provides suggested mitigation for local agencies to implement. TRN-1 also requires that SACOG be an active participant in the state's process for identifying and funding tools and incentives necessary to go beyond the SCS in reducing VMT. The EIR also requires SACOG to implement its "Green Means Go" pilot program to pair targeted housing and transportation investments together to spur catalyst infill projects in order to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. In the program, locally-identified Green Zones create areas targeted for infill and compact development, increasing housing and transportation options and promoting shorter, fewer, and cleaner vehicle trips. (DEIR, pp. 16-54 to 16-55.)

In addition, with respect to impacts related to VMT, the EIR makes clear that the analysis of VMT impacts may not be used for tiering purposes. Implementation of mitigation measures in Chapter 16 would minimize the contribution of the proposed MTP/SCS to cumulative VMT, but would not reduce this impact to less-than-significant levels based on ARB's statements about the level of reduction needed. Until the state identifies a program for further VMT reductions, and regional planning agencies have funding and authorization to achieve the reductions, VMT impacts remain significant and unavoidable. For projects relying on the streamlining provisions of SB 375, lead agencies must comply with state guidance on VMT reduction and conduct project-level analysis to analyze whether, based on substantial

evidence in the record, the proposed mitigation would reduce VMT impacts to less than significant. (DEIR, p. 2-50.) No edits to the Draft EIR are required in response to Comment 6-44.

Comment 6-45

The comment recommends that SACOG include mitigation to provide support to implementing agencies for the review of their capital improvement programs (CIPs), which the comment asserts may not be aligned with the goals of the MTP/SCS. The comment indicates that local agencies lack the funds and expertise to revise local CIPs in the manner the commenter believes is appropriate to help mitigation GHG impacts.

SACOG started connecting the competitive distribution of funding to smart growth policies in the early 2000s following the identification of the region's smart growth vision, the Sacramento Region Blueprint. Regional competitive funding programs have long served as the primary vehicles for connecting SACOG funds to locally-driven projects demonstrating the performance outcomes supported by SACOG. Programs include the following:

- The Community Design Program has provided financial support to local agencies for projects that promote placemaking since the mid-2000s. The program funds placemaking projects that improve or enhance the livability of a community and to promote the construction of land use developments (or land use and related projects) that lead to fewer vehicle miles traveled and more walking, biking, and transit use.
- Since 2014, the Active Transportation Program has worked to provide facilities for walking and biking in urban, suburban, and rural portions of the region and to provide connections between them. The program awards funds to projects that demonstrate a current need for walking or biking facilities along with the potential to increase walking and biking if implemented, helping to realize the multimodal vision of the MTP/SCS.
- A combination of the former Regional/Local and Bicycle and Pedestrian funding programs, the Regional Program elevates projects that realize the performance benefits of the MTP/SCS, while also ensuring a minimum investment level for high quality active transportation projects. Through the Regional Program's evaluation, SACOG examines the most compelling potential performance outcomes for each competing project: reduce regional VMT per capita; reduce regional congested VMT per capita; increase multimodal travel; provide long-term economic benefit within the region; improve goods movement; improve safety and security; and demonstrate 'State of Good Repair' benefits.
- A newer program, Green Region targets investments that bring new implementing partners into the transportation sector, with the goal of expediting electrification of the region's transportation network. The program established a concentrated investment in electrification of the region's transportation fleet to demonstrate technologies and our region's interest in a zero-emission transportation future. SACOG identified five project types to advance the electrification of the transportation sector: implement more public charging programs for personal vehicles, further electric vehicle penetration of shared ride markets, incentivize electric public and private microtransit and shuttles, plan for and fund electric medium and heavy-duty fleets, and establish mobility hubs in disadvantaged communities.
- The Transportation Demand Management Program aims to reduce vehicle trips and miles traveled by implementing cost-effective and innovative programs, services, projects, strategies and policies that encourage people to change their travel behavior. The program consists of three avenues for distributing funding to project sponsors working towards those goals. The Traditional TDM program works with established regional partners, such as transportation management agencies, to continue implementing known TDM strategies and programs. TDM Mini-Grants support small events and non-infrastructure programs or projects to reduce single occupancy vehicle trips and miles traveled, and to prioritize the testing of new strategies and tactics for changing travel behavior. The TDM Innovations grant program also seeks to explore new and innovative projects and activities that implement strategies to reduce single occupant vehicle travel and produce measurable results, such as parking pricing programs, technology-based solutions, and marketing projects.

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- The SACOG Air Quality programs seek to decrease the volume of pollutants emitted in a number of ways, from increasing multimodal options to informational programs to influence the voluntary reduction of driving during poor air quality events. Originally part of the region's commitment to decrease ozone-related emissions, components of the Air Quality programs are also present in other SACOG programs, such as the evolution of the Sacramento Emergency Clean Air and Transportation program from a standalone project to being part of Green Region. Other programs, such as the Spare the Air program, are maintained as distinct programs demonstrating the region's commitment to reducing ozone precursors.

Collectively, SACOG funding programs have supported projects that reduce VMT and GHG emissions by building transportation infrastructure or campaigns/programs to incentivize infill development, connecting people to community destinations with walking and biking facilities, reducing transportation-related emissions, and exploring new options to decrease VMT. Through competitive distribution, SACOG is able to advance the projects and programs that best implement the MTP/SCS. However, the MTP/SCS is the result of coordination and collaboration among the 28 cities and counties and other private and public sector partners to identify a path for growth and development that can achieve the region's greenhouse gas reduction target while balancing the other goals that must be addressed under state and federal laws. As such, SACOG funding decisions also must balance multiple goals. Further, since SACOG controls only five to seven percent of the funding identified in the MTP/SCS, regional discretionary transportation funding must be balanced across multiple goals to address the challenges in rural, suburban, and urban contexts. These different critical factors must be weighed when evaluating projects that are necessary to maintain the livability of the region and health of the residents, and limit the feasibility of considering alternative funding decisions.

As a council of governments and metropolitan planning organization, SACOG also provides technical assistance to local governments and transit agencies for a variety of state and federal grant funding opportunities, including California Climate Investment Funds. This grants technical assistance ranges from helping local agencies to identify and scope competitive grant applications that meet both the MTP/SCS goals and the granting agency's policy goals, to joining grant applications as a grant funding or implementation partner. To affirm this important role with our member and partner agencies, SACOG included in the draft MTP/SCS the following ongoing actions: Continue to pursue grant funding to implement high-performing projects consistent with the performance goals of the MTP/SCS; Continue to pursue grant funding specified for disadvantaged communities to implement community supportive projects (Draft 2020 MTP/SCS, pg. 56.)

SACOG also pursues projects to support reliance on multi-modal systems. As part of the first year of implementation of the draft MTP/SCS, SACOG is launching the following projects, in partnership with our member and partner agencies that plan, fund, and operate transportation services in the region:

- Innovative Mobility Solutions – Continue to assist transit and local agencies in finding ways to develop, test, pilot, and scale up new mobility services such as microtransit, bike share, and micromobility. Develop and implement cost effective new employer- and residential-based transportation demand management programs.
- Next Generation Transit Initiative – Lead a collaborative effort to shape a vision of next generation transit for the region that includes strategies to integrate traditional transit services with new mobility options. Partner with cities, counties, and transit operators to identify improvements in service delivery, routing, and transit-oriented development.
- Mileage Based Pricing Pilot – Work with regional partners to develop pilots focused on innovative tolling and Pay-As-You-Go concepts. Collaborate with the state agencies, metropolitan planning organizations, and other organizations on efforts to study and advocate for a sustainable replacement to fuel taxes (e.g., Pay-As-You-Go fees).
- Sacramento Region Parks and Trails Strategic Development Plan - Identify a regional trail network that connects residents, particularly residents of disadvantaged communities, to daily destinations and recreational opportunities.

Local CIPs are required to demonstrate consistency with local general plans, which are prepared and adopted under the sole purview and authority of the respective city or county. SACOG has no authority over local land use decisions, including general plans and CIPs. Nevertheless, as demonstrated in the information provided above, SACOG has sought to use every reasonable opportunity to collaborate with its member agencies to encourage alignment with, and further the goals of the MTP/SCS. No edits to the Draft EIR are required in response to Comment 6-45.

Comment 6-46

The comment recommends additional strategies to reduce GHG impacts related to accelerating the transition to renewable generation, including requiring commercial and industrial projects to include rooftop and parking lot solar photovoltaic generation that SACOG should recommend and provide technical support for.

Mitigation Measure GHG-2 requires SACOG to coordinate and support local agencies in the manner suggested by the commenter, and allows flexibility to include the suggestions made by the commenters and others. See also response to Comment 7-7 for additional examples of how this measure will be implemented. No edits to the Draft EIR are required in response to Comment 6-46.

Comment 6-47

The comment summarizes statements on pages 5-41 to 5-42 of the Air Quality chapter of the EIR.

Comment noted.

Comment 6-48

The comment notes that the SACSIM19 model was used to estimate daily VMT and trip generation for 2027, 2035, and 2040, and the emission of criteria air pollutants was then estimated using CARB's EMFAC2014 model, which was the most recent, EPA-approved model at the time SACOG released its conformity assumptions. The comment goes on to state that EMFAC2017 was approved on August 15, 2019 by the EPA.

See response to Comment 6-23.

Comment 6-49

The comment states that the EMFAC model represents CARB's most up-to-date understanding of motor vehicle activities and their associated emission levels and is subject to periodic update and summarizes how the model is updated. The comment goes on to state that a determination of conformity, or conformance with the SIP, is realized when the forecasted emissions are within budgets identified in the SIP or pass the interim emissions test.

Comment noted.

Comment 6-50

The comment asserts that the EMFAC model is invalid due to the revocation of the California waiver and it cannot be used to analyze the air quality impacts of the RTP/SCS, and further asserts that any waivers or extensions that may have taken place at CARB do not affect the agency's responsibility to produce an accurate EIR.

See response to Comments 6-23 and 6-35.

Comment 6-51

The comment asserts that the Draft EIR analysis of energy impacts is "unquantified and uninformative."

Chapter 8 – Energy and Global Climate Change describes the construction and operational activities that would occur from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS that would use energy (refer to Impact ENE-1 starting at page 8-32). Operation of heavy-duty construction equipment and commute trips of construction workers would require the combustion of gasoline and diesel fuels. Operational activities that would require energy under the projected land use pattern and planned transportation improvements include the powering of residential and nonresidential land uses and the combustion of fuels to operate automobiles, heavy-duty trucks, diesel generators, and landscaping equipment. The discussion of these activities informs the reader of the types of activities that require energy from

electricity, natural gas, gasoline, and/or diesel fuel. The estimated total amounts of electricity, natural gas, gasoline, and diesel consumption in 2016 and in future years from construction and operation of the proposed MTP/SCS are quantified and presented in Table 8-2. No edits to the Draft EIR are required in response to Comment 6-51.

Comment 6-52

The comment asserts that lower per capita energy consumption in 2040 relative to 2016 reported in the Draft EIR is not supported.

The per capita reductions shown in the electricity, natural gas, and gasoline sectors are the result of statewide regulations and codes as described in the Draft EIR (e.g., Section 8.3 Regulatory Setting; pages 8-18 and 8-19; Impact ENE-1). For instance, the California Energy Code is updated every three years and improves its efficiency periodically through the inclusion of new data, building practices, and technologies. As stated in the second paragraph on Page 8-12 of the Draft EIR, "CEC estimates that the combination of required energy-efficiency features and mandatory solar panels in the 2019 California Energy Code will result in new residential buildings that use 53 percent less energy than those designed to meet the 2016 California Energy Code. The CEC also estimates that the 2019 California Energy Code will result in new commercial buildings that use 30 percent less energy than those designed to meet the 2016 standards, primarily through the transition to high-efficacy lighting." Additionally, gasoline consumption is anticipated to go down as the transportation sector is electrified through regulations such as the Advanced Clean Cars (ACC) and Zero-Emissions Vehicle (ZEV) Program. No edits to the Draft EIR are required in response to Comment 6-52.

Comment 6-53

The comment asserts that the less-than-significant determination for Impact ENE-1 in the Draft EIR is unsupported because it provides "analysis of total regional energy usage for residential and commercial usages" and "does not address the impact of the proposed transportation plan."

This is not an accurate characterization of the Draft EIR. The Draft EIR analysis under Impact ENE-1 analyzes energy consumption under implementation of the projected land use pattern and planned transportation improvements of the proposed MTP/SCS, including quantified estimates of changes in per capita energy consumption for electricity, natural gas, gasoline, and diesel (Draft EIR Table 8-4, page 8-33). Moreover, Draft EIR Table 8-2 provides existing and future gasoline and diesel-fuel consumption associated with projected VMT under implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS.

At the time of writing the Draft EIR, neither SACOG nor any air district or public utility has developed a numerical threshold to evaluate energy impacts against. Therefore, as the lead agency, SACOG determined that an overall decrease in per capita energy consumption as compared to baseline conditions would not represent wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy, and concluded that the proposed MTP/SCS would result in a less-than-significant energy impact under Impact ENE-1. No edits to the Draft EIR are required in response to Comment 6-53.

Comment 6-54

The comment asserts that the Draft EIR should discuss the baseline energy usage of the regional transportation system, compare it to the energy profile of the regional transportation system proposed under the plan, and determine whether the impact of the plan would be significant. It further asserts that "analyzing regional energy usage does not address the impact" of the proposed MTP/SCS and claims that "the description and definition" of the proposed MTP/SCS is "uncertain and inconsistent."

Draft EIR Chapter 8 appropriately considers and evaluates energy consumption from construction and operation of both the projected land use pattern and planned transportation improvements of the proposed MTP/SCS, consistent with Draft EIR Chapter 2 Project Description. No edits to the Draft EIR are required in response to Comment 6-54.

Comment 6-55

The comment states that the Draft EIR should provide estimates of energy consumption by travel mode and identify the additional energy consumed per trip for each mode.

This level of detail is not necessary to analyze the energy impacts of the proposed MTP/SCS, including whether it would result in the wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, or whether it would conflict or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency. The Draft EIR does provide estimates of future consumption of electricity, natural gas, gasoline, and diesel under the proposed MTP/SCS, and compares those estimates to baseline levels of energy consumption in the plan area. Providing the more detailed breakdown of energy consumption per trip for each mode of travel requested in this comment is not relevant to understanding the energy impacts of the proposed MTP/SCS and would not change the significance conclusion presented in the Draft EIR.

The comment also asserts that energy consumption will be inefficient because the ACC and ZEV Program would be affected by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's revocation of California's waiver under the Clean Air Act (CAA) and adoption of the Safer Affordable Fuel Efficient (SAFE) Rule. These actions and their implications are addressed in the response to Comments 6-35 and 6-63. No edits to the Draft EIR are required in response to Comment 6-55.

Comment 6-56

The comment states that the Draft EIR should present a comparison of per capita energy consumption between future conditions with and without the project.

Draft EIR Chapter 8 appropriately establishes the existing (2016) baseline per capita energy consumption in the plan area and compares future per capita energy consumption to the baseline levels. Draft EIR Chapter 18 – Alternatives Analysis compares the energy impacts of the proposed MTP/SCS to the No Project Alternative (future conditions without the project). No edits to the Draft EIR are required in response to Comment 6-56.

Comment 6-57

The comment asserts that the per capita energy consumption reduction between 2016 and 2040 described in the Draft EIR "does not demonstrate that a project is energy efficient."

The Draft EIR significance thresholds for energy impacts do not require analysis of whether the proposed MTP/SCS would be energy efficient. Impact ENE-1 evaluates whether the proposed MTP/SCS would result in the wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy during construction or operations. Impact ENE-2 evaluates whether the proposed MTP/SCS would conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency. The Draft EIR estimates that over time, overall per capita energy consumption would go down as compared to baseline conditions. Therefore, the Draft EIR concludes that the proposed MTP/SCS would not result in the wasteful, inefficient, and unnecessary consumption of energy. No edits to the Draft EIR are required in response to Comment 6-57. Please also refer to the response to Comment 6-53.

Comment 6-58

The comment suggests that the project evaluated in the Draft EIR "should not include the development projects and land use plans that do not exist in local jurisdictions."

As described in Draft EIR Chapter 2 – Project Description, the projected land use pattern for the plan area is one of the required components of SACOG's proposed MTP/SCS. Therefore, the Draft EIR appropriately includes the projected land use pattern of the proposed MTP/SCS in the Project Description evaluated in the Draft EIR. No edits to the Draft EIR are required in response to Comment 6-58.

Comment 6-59

The comment suggests that energy impacts of local housing developments should not be part of the project evaluated in the Draft EIR apart from their transportation energy impact because SACOG lacks land use authority.

Please refer to the response to Comment 6-58. The Draft EIR appropriately addresses future land use projects, including housing, and their energy impacts because projected land use patterns in the plan area are part of the proposed MTP/SCS. No edits to the Draft EIR are required in response to Comment 6-59.

Comment 6-60

The comment states that the Draft EIR does not evaluate and disclose the potentially significant environmental impacts of “transportation proposals” (planned transportation improvements) included in the proposed MTP/SCS and does not identify mitigation measures to avoid or substantially lessen significant impacts.

In fact, the Draft EIR does. Planned transportation improvements are part of the program of activities evaluated in the Draft EIR. The commenter also suggests that “land use changes” and “land use policies and mitigation” of the proposed MTP/SCS should be identified as mitigation measures in the Draft EIR and not included in the proposed MTP/SCS. However, the land use pattern and other land use components of the proposed MTP/SCS are appropriately included in the plan. It is not “misleading” to include the projected land use pattern and other land use policies in the proposed MTP/SCS; these are required components of the plan. No edits to the Draft EIR are required in response to Comment 6-60.

Comment 6-61

The comment states that the Draft EIR improperly states that the construction energy impacts would be short-term.

The Draft EIR acknowledges that construction activities would occur over the duration of the proposed MTP/SCS at locations throughout the plan area (page 8-32). In describing these construction activities, the Draft EIR also explains that, “construction activities, as compared to operational energy demand, would be short term in nature.” (Page 8-32) The Draft EIR does not state that “construction activity over the roughly 20-year duration of the project would be short term” as asserted by the commenter. The commenter further asserts that construction energy use should be considered a significant impact because it “can be expected every year as a product of the transportation maintenance and development proposed in the plan.” The Draft EIR in Impact ENE-1 and Impact ENE-2 analyzes whether construction and operational energy use under implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS would result in the wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy or conflict with a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency. It concludes that these impacts would be less than significant. This comment does not present any facts or evidence that would change the analysis or these significance conclusions. No edits to the Draft EIR are required in response to Comment 6-61.

Comment 6-62

The comment relates to Draft EIR threshold of significance ENE-1 and the use of the phrasing “wasteful, inefficient, and unnecessary” use of energy. The commenter asserts that the Draft EIR should “define and quantify” this threshold.

This threshold is derived from the checklist questions found in Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines. This phrasing was derived from language contained in the Warren-Alquist Act and has been included by the Governor’s Office of Planning and Research’s (OPR’s) development of the State CEQA Guidelines. OPR does not define or provide a numerical or performance metric to evaluate energy impacts under this threshold. CEQA lead agencies have the discretion and the responsibility to evaluate energy impacts based on substantial evidence. Moreover, CEQA does not require that significance thresholds be quantifiable or defined quantitatively. As shown in Table 8-4, future per capita electricity, natural gas, and gasoline consumption decrease over the course of the proposed MTP/SCS relative to baseline conditions. For this reason, the Draft EIR found that implementation of the projected land use pattern and planned transportation improvements of the proposed MTP/SCS would not result in the wasteful, inefficient, and unnecessary consumption of energy and found this impact less than significant. No edits to the Draft EIR are required in response to Comment 6-62. The comment has been noted and will be considered during the approval of proposed MTP/SCS.

Comment 6-63

The comment states that the Draft EIR does not attempt to characterize or predict how the adoption of the Safer Affordable Fuel Efficient (SAFE) Vehicle Rule or revocation of California’s EPA waiver under the Clean Air Act would affect GHG emissions, and that the Draft EIR should include the date of the SAFE Rule’s adoption and discuss its impact on energy usage, air quality, and GHG emissions.

The Draft EIR does disclose the potential for the adoption of the SAFE Rule and revocation of the CAA waiver on Page 8-7 under the Headings – CAFE Standards and – California Greenhouse Gas Waiver. At the time of publishing the Notice of Preparation (NOP) for the proposed MTP/SCS in April 2019, the SAFE Rule had not been adopted nor had EPA revoked California’s waiver to adopt more stringent fuel economy standards than the federal standards. On September 19, 2019, the U.S. Department of Transportation’s National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) issued a final action (“One National Program Rule”) to finalize critical parts of the SAFE rule. The One National Program Rule was published in the Federal Register on September 27, 2019, and would become effective 60 days later on November 26, 2019.

As discussed on Page 8-7 of the draft EIR, “The ultimate approval of the SAFE Rule, and the outcome of any pending or potential lawsuits (and how such lawsuits could delay or affect the SAFE Rule’s implementation), is unknown at this time.” Also stated on Page 8-7, “EPA is also proposing, in addition to the SAFE Rule, but as a separate action, to revoke California’s waiver that would allow the state to keep the 2021-2025 standards in place. This includes CARB’s zero emission vehicle (ZEV) programs. The ultimate revocation of California’s waiver, and the outcome of any related lawsuits (and how such lawsuits could delay or affect the rule’s implementation), is unknown at this time. Nor is it known how future motor vehicle emissions will be impacted.”

There is uncertainty surrounding the implications of the SAFE Rule and the One National Program Rule. Attempting to estimate or quantify how the Rules could affect statewide programs to reduce transportation emissions such as the Zero-Emission Vehicles (ZEV) program and Advanced Clean Cars (ACC) program is speculative at the time of writing this EIR. The future fate of the ZEV and ACC programs due to the Rules is not known at this time. As of this writing the ZEV and ACC programs remain adopted programs in California; it is therefore appropriate for the effect of these programs on GHG emissions, air quality, and energy use to be reflected in the Draft EIR analysis of the proposed MTP/SCS. The outcomes of potential or pending lawsuits against the Rules would be speculative to predict at this time. Therefore, increases in energy usage and GHG and air pollution emissions as a result of the Rules cannot be accurately quantified.

EMFAC 2014, the computer program developed by CARB to estimate transportation emissions from diesel, gasoline, and electric vehicles (EVs) for future years, was used to estimate transportation emissions. This program was selected because it was the most up-to-date version available at the time of NOP release as EMFAC 2017 had not yet been approved by EPA at the time of NOP release. Because the outcomes of approval of SAFE Rule and the One National Program Rule on GHG emissions, air quality (including health impacts), and energy usage in the plan area are speculative, the reductions from the ACC and ZEV programs are appropriate to include in the analysis of the Draft EIR. No edits to the Draft EIR are required in response to Comment 6-63. See also response to Comments 6-23, 6-35, and 6-36.

Comment 6-64

The commenter offers a description of the SAFE Rule and its implications for air quality and GHG emissions in the plan area of the proposed MTP/SCS.

This comment does not address the adequacy of the Draft EIR. No further response is required.

Comment 6-65

The comment asserts that EMFAC is not an appropriate model for estimating future air quality and GHG emissions because it assumes implementation of California’s ACC and ZEV programs.

Refer to the response to Comment 6-63 for explanation of why this model was used in the Draft EIR.

Comment 6-66

The comment asserts that the Draft EIR should identify a “significant adverse impact to energy” because of the SAFE Rule and that “increased health risks due to worse air quality...should be evaluated” because of the SAFE Rule.

Refer to the response to Comment 6-63 for a discussion of the SAFE Rule and the One National Program Rule and discussion of the relationship of these regulatory proposals to the Draft EIR analysis of GHG emissions, air quality impacts, and energy use. No further response is required.

Comment 6-67

Please refer to the response to Comment 6-63.

Comment 6-68

The comments states that SACOG should discuss the steps that “will be taken to evaluate, monitor, and verify the effect of energy policies that would be adopted.”

It is unclear from the comment what “energy policies” are being referenced. The effect of the energy-related policies contained in Chapter 4 of the proposed MTP/SCS on future energy use in the plan area were not incorporated into the model used to estimate future energy consumption; therefore, the values for future energy consumption in the plan area contained in Tables 8-2 and Table 8-4 in Chapter 8 – Energy and Global Climate Change may overestimate future energy use. Even without quantifying the energy saving benefits of the energy policies of the proposed MTP/SCS, per capita energy trends downward over the lifetime of the proposed MTP/SCS (from 2016 to 2040). No edits to the Draft EIR are required in response to Comment 6-68.

Comment 6-69

The comment asserts that, because total cost of ownership for a gasoline- or diesel-powered car is typically higher than total cost of ownership for an electric car, a gasoline car is therefore “energy inefficient.” The comment further asserts that the Draft EIR “should identify and analyze the development of transportation systems under the proposed plan using gasoline and diesel-powered cars over the duration of the proposed plan as a significant adverse impact to energy.”

The assertions presented in this comment are not the significance thresholds used to evaluate the energy impacts of the proposed MTP/SCS in the Draft EIR. Refer to the response to Comment 6-53 for summary of the Draft EIR analysis under Impact ENE-1, which evaluates whether the proposed MTP/SCS would result in the inefficient, wasteful, or unnecessary consumption of energy during construction or operational activities. Refer to response to Comment 6-70 for a summary of the Draft EIR analysis under Impact ENE-2, which evaluates whether the proposed MTP/SCS would conflict with or obstruct implementation of a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency. The analysis of both Impact ENE-1 and Impact ENE-2 reflects the fact that gasoline and diesel-powered cars would be used in the plan area during the life of the proposed MTP/SCS (2016 to 2040). The use of gasoline- and diesel-powered vehicles under implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS would not in and of itself constitute a significant adverse energy impact. No edits to the Draft EIR are required in response to Comment 6-69.

Comment 6-70

The comment states that the Draft EIR should identify the statewide energy plans included in the analysis of Impact ENE-2 and discuss why the proposed MTP/SCS would not conflict with the policies in these plans.

The Draft EIR does this. For example, Page 8-34 of the Draft EIR provides an analysis of potential conflicts with State plans and regulations for renewable energy and energy efficiency including the Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS), SB 100, SB 350, and Title 24 Part Six of the California Building Code (California Energy Code). No edits to the Draft EIR are required in response to Comment 6-70.

Comment 6-71

The comment asserts that the 5 percent reduction in per capita gasoline consumption from 2016 levels by 2040 is inconsistent with the 2017 Scoping Plan, SB 350, and other authorities. SB 350 is a component of the 2017 Scoping Plan; therefore, consistency with the regulation would demonstrate consistency with the 2017 Scoping Plan.

The 2017 Scoping Plan and SB 350 do not establish per capita gasoline consumption reduction requirements for SACOG. Rather, SB 350, among other things, acknowledges the GHG, air quality, and other benefits of widespread

transportation electrification, and calls on the California Public Utilities Commission to direct electrical corporations to file applications for programs and investments to accelerate widespread transportation electrification. A consistency analysis with SB 350 would not be an appropriate analysis for the proposed MTP/SCS as the deployment of SB 350 is beyond the purview of SACOG. Achievement of the widespread transportation electrification as described in SB 350 in the plan area of the proposed MTP/SCS would be implemented by electrical corporations such as Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E) and Sacramento Municipal Utility District (SMUD).

Moreover, implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS would not prevent PG&E and SMUD or other electrical corporations, or the state, from achieving widespread transportation electrification. In fact, the projected land use pattern and planned transportation improvements would result in an overall reduction in per capita VMT for vehicles within the plan area of the proposed MTP/SCS, which would result in less energy needed from the electric grid to charge EVs as compared to baseline conditions. Because the proposed MTP/SCS would not conflict with SB 350 goals for widespread transportation electrification, this impact remains unchanged. No edits to the Draft EIR are required in response to Comment 6-71.

Comment 6-72

The comment addresses “California plans” for an increase in the number of EVs operating within the state and their “significant additional demand” on electrical facilities and infrastructure in the plan area.

The comment does not address the adequacy of the Draft EIR. The Draft EIR evaluates whether implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS would exceed the capacity of existing electric power infrastructure in Chapter 17 – Utilities and Service Systems (Impact USS-3, starting at page 17-73). No edits to the Draft EIR are required in response to Comment 6-72.

Comment 6-73

The comment states that the Draft EIR should identify and quantify the additional electrical demand of millions of new EVs in the plan area of the proposed MTP/SCS and discuss energy resources available to serve that demand and whether they will be sufficient.

With respect to electrical demand, the Draft EIR evaluates whether implementation of the projected land use pattern and planned transportation investments of the proposed MTP/SCS would exceed the capacity of existing electric power infrastructure, and if so, whether new or expanded infrastructure is required to meet demand, the construction of which could have significant environmental impacts (refer to Chapter 17 – Utilities and Service Systems, Impact USS-3, starting at page 17-73).

Moreover, increased use of EVs is anticipated to occur regardless of implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS. Additional electrical demand from “millions” of new EVs is not a reasonably foreseeable result of implementing the projected land use pattern and planned transportation improvements of the proposed MTP/SCS. Future increases in EVs in the plan area would occur as a result of many factors, including the ACC and ZEV programs, market demand, government incentives, consumer preferences, and battery technology. No edits to the Draft EIR are required in response to Comment 6-73.

Comment 6-74

The comment asserts that the Draft EIR should analyze impacts related to increased electricity demand, including peak electric demand, from the electrification of the transportation sector.

Refer to the response to Comment 6-73.

Comment 6-75

The comment asserts that SB 32 would transition the electric grid to 50 percent renewable power by 2030 and 100 percent renewable power by 2045 while simultaneously increasing electric demand “by transitioning the entire transportation fleet to electric power.”

These changes are incorrectly attributed to SB 32. SB 350 requires the increase to 50 percent renewable electricity by 2030, while SB 100 increased the 2030 target to 60 percent renewable energy, and also establishes that 100 percent of electricity should be procured from eligible renewable or zero-carbon resources by 2045. California law (SB 32 or otherwise) does not require a transition of the entire transportation fleet to electric power. The existing energy sources in the plan area are described in Draft EIR Chapter 8 and Chapter 17, along with the existing laws and regulations that govern energy supplies in the plan area.

With respect to electrical demand, the Draft EIR evaluates whether implementation of the projected land use pattern and planned transportation investments of the proposed MTP/SCS would exceed the capacity of existing electric power infrastructure, and if so, whether new or expanded infrastructure is required to meet demand, the construction of which could have significant environmental impacts (refer to Chapter 17 – Utilities and Service Systems, Impact USS-3, starting at page 17-73). No edits to the Draft EIR are required in response to Comment 6-75. Also refer to response to Comment 6-73.

Comment 6-76

The comment asserts that vehicle-to-grid (V2G) charging systems should be discussed as mitigation for grid impacts.

Refer to responses to comments 6-73 to 6-75 for discussion of why the proposed MTP/SCS would not result in “grid impacts” because of transportation electrification.

Comment 6-77

The comment asserts there are several reasons why the Draft EIR “should present an analysis of the project’s impact on current conditions in addition to a per capita analysis.”

The Draft EIR estimates energy use (electricity, natural gas, gasoline, diesel) under baseline conditions (2016) and future years (2027, 2035, 2040) and discloses this information in Table 8-2 on Page 8-19 of the Draft EIR; per capita energy consumption for baseline and future years is provided in Table 8-4 on page 8-33. The significance criteria used for evaluation of impacts in the Draft EIR was based on the following checklist questions provided in Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines.

- 1) Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources, during project construction or operation; and/or
- 2) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency.

CEQA affords the lead agency the discretion and responsibility to develop thresholds of significance to evaluate potential environmental impacts. Based on the Draft EIR significance criteria for energy impacts listed above, the Draft EIR found that overall per capita energy demand from the electricity, natural gas, and gasoline sectors would go down over the lifetime of the MTP/SCS (2040) compared to existing conditions (2016). At the time of writing the Draft EIR, SACOG, nor any air district or public utility has developed a numerical threshold to evaluated energy impacts against. Therefore, the Draft EIR concludes that a decrease in per capita energy consumption as compared to baseline conditions would result in a less-than-significant energy impact under Impact ENE-1. The Draft EIR in Impact ENE-2 also concludes that the proposed MTP/SCS would not conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency.

Moreover, with respect to electrical demand, the Draft EIR evaluates whether implementation of the projected land use pattern and planned transportation investments of the proposed MTP/SCS would exceed the capacity of existing electric power infrastructure, and if so, whether new or expanded infrastructure is required to meet demand, the construction of which could have significant environmental impacts (refer to Chapter 17 – Utilities and Service Systems, Impact USS-3, starting at page 17-73). No edits to the Draft EIR are required in response to Comment 6-77. Also refer to the response to Comment 6-73.

Comment 6-78

The comment asserts that the Draft EIR should evaluate the “design options and policies” of the proposed MTP/SCS that would increase reliance on renewable energy sources, compare that to existing conditions, set a threshold, and

determine the extent to which continued reliance of fossil fuels for transportation purposes is an inefficient energy practice.

The Draft EIR includes an analysis of whether the proposed MTP/SCS would result in the wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy in Impact ENE-1 (page 8-32). This analysis addresses fossil fuel resources (e.g., gasoline, diesel) that would be used for transportation purposes, and concludes that the impact would be less than significant because per capita energy consumption would be lower under implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS than under baseline (2016) conditions.

Moreover, the energy consumption values provided in Table 8-2 in Chapter 8 – Energy and Global Climate Change reflect regulatory and policy changes that would evolve over time resulting in reduced energy consumption. The specific design policies and a meaningful estimate of the energy reduced by each design policy would be speculative at the time of preparing this programmatic analysis. Projects constructed as a result of implementing the projected land use pattern and planned transportation improvements would include different design elements that would reduce energy consumption to varying degrees. These projects would be evaluated on a project-by-project basis. It is unknown at the time of writing this EIR what specific design policies would be used and the total energy reductions achieved through application of design policies. The Draft EIR provides a programmatic evaluation of the potential environmental consequences that would occur from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS, including wasteful, inefficient, and unnecessary consumption of energy. No edits to the Draft EIR are required in response to Comment 6-78.

Comment 6-79

The comment states that the energy discussion should address the path forward for each sector of the transportation fleet including light rail, automobile, long-haul freight, freight rail, and delivery trucks, toward operating in 100 percent renewable energy. The comment suggests that the discussions should consider the fuel types and quantities required to achieve this, and apparent obstacles, and identify points at which SACOG and the implementing agencies have influence over or will adversely affect the transition to renewable energy. The comment recommends that the Draft EIR provide mitigation to reduce significant GHG impacts.

The Draft EIR for the proposed MTP/SCS is not required to discuss how different transportation modes will move toward operating on 100 percent renewable energy, an outcome SACOG does not have control over. Such a discussion is not relevant to analysis of the potentially significant environmental impacts of implementing the proposed MTP/SCS. No edits to the Draft EIR are required in response to Comment 6-79.

Comment 6-80

The comment recommends that the Draft EIR discuss design options and policies for increased reliance on renewable energy that have not been adopted or have been scaled back, and explain why.

The comment is unclear as to what design options and policies are being referenced. The policies of the proposed MTP/SCS are provided in Chapter 4; however, it is not the role of the proposed MTP/SCS or the Draft EIR to discuss design options and policies that “have not been adopted or have been scaled back” and explain why. This comment does not address the adequacy of the Draft EIR. No edits to the Draft EIR are required in response to Comment 6-80.

Comment 6-81

The comment asserts that the Draft EIR should include a discussion of solar canopies on parking facilities that could offset increasing electricity demand from electrification of the transportation sector.

The Draft EIR evaluates the potentially significant environmental impacts of the proposed MTP/SCS; it is not the role of the Draft EIR for the proposed MTP/SCS to discuss measures that could offset increased electrical demand from electrification of the transportation sector.

The comment also suggests that the Draft EIR set forth mitigation for GHG impacts consisting of a program to assist implementing agencies with determining the most cost-effective opportunities to implement renewable generation,

to provide technical support for the implementation of renewable generation, and to facilitate the development of renewable energy to offset GHG impacts.

Mitigation Measure GHG-2 on Page 8-29 directs SACOG to, in partnership with air districts, work with counties and cities within the plan area of the proposed MTP/SCS to develop qualified GHG reductions plans, develop GHG-reducing planning policies, and implement local climate initiatives. These plans, policies, and initiatives would vary depending on the jurisdiction for a number of reasons including existing infrastructure, funding, and stakeholder input. Please see response to Comment 7-7 regarding changes made to Mitigation Measure GHG-2.

Comment 6-82

The comment asserts that the Draft EIR should address the extent to which the Sacramento Regional Transit (RT) light rail system could be transitioned to 100 percent renewable energy. The comment recommends that the Draft EIR recommend this transition as mitigation for GHG impacts.

Existing state law, including SB 100, already establishes the policy of the state to procure 100 percent of electricity supply from eligible renewable or zero carbon resources by 2045. As a result, the grid electricity that powers the RT light rail system would be transitioned to 100 percent renewable or zero carbon resources over the duration of the proposed MTP/SCS. No edits to the Draft EIR are required in response to Comment 6-82.

Comment 6-83

The comment asserts that the Draft EIR should consider the extent to which electric, hybrid, and fuel-cell trucks may be introduced into the regional transportation system over the life of the plan. The comment states that the lack of sufficient refueling infrastructure for zero-emission trucking under the plan constitutes an adverse impact on the energy efficiency of the project and the EIR should propose providing renewable fueling infrastructure for trucks to mitigate the project's GHG impacts. The comment recommends that the Draft EIR include mitigation to reduce GHG impacts in the form of providing infrastructure to support this classification of vehicles.

Mitigation Measure GHG-2 on Page 8-29 directs SACOG to, in partnership with air districts, work with counties and cities in the plan area of the proposed MTP/SCS to reduce GHG emissions. Relevant agencies include cities and counties as well as utilities such as SMUD and PGE.

As an example, of actions that SACOG has taken and the types of action SACOG will continue to take, in 2013 the SACOG Board of Directors adopted the region's first plug-in electric vehicle (PEV) readiness and infrastructure plan. The plan, titled TakeCharge, outlines the actions needed around the region to help increase the adoption of PEVs.

The first component of the plan is to help prepare the region's cities and counties for PEVs and related infrastructure by examining elements of building codes, zoning codes, parking ordinances, etc. that will be affected by these vehicles and their charging equipment. The plan provides templates, model language, and training opportunities that can be implemented at the local level to help streamline the permitting and inspection processes.

The second part of the plan looks at when, where, how many, and what types of PEVs and related charging infrastructure are needed throughout the region. The plan forecasts how many electric vehicles will be in the region, models driving and charging behavior for those vehicles, and estimates how many chargers will be needed to meet that demand.

To implement the plan, SACOG has sought opportunities to work with local jurisdictions on the readiness components of the plan, and to fund purchase and installation of chargers. To this end, SACOG received a grant from the California Energy Commission to purchase and install DC Fast Chargers at local grocery stores. Partnering with SMUD, SACOG installed chargers that will charge a fully depleted battery 80% in about 30 minutes at grocery stores as a way to provide charging to a broader range of existing and potential PEV drivers, especially those that may not have access to charging at home. The first of these chargers has been installed at the new Sacramento Foods Co-Op location, and the second is being installed at the Nugget Market in Elk Grove.

Recently, SACOG began providing technical assistance to Sacramento County to update PEV readiness elements of their building, zoning, and parking codes. This work is being done to help the county comply with Assembly Bill 1236, which requires all cities and counties with a population over 200,000 to be PEV ready by 2017.

SACOG has continued to seek opportunities to work with local cities and counties on PEV readiness, and to seek opportunities to provide more PEV charging throughout the region. No edits to the Draft EIR are required in response to Comment 6-83. Please see also response to Comment 7-7.

Comment 6-84

The comment asserts that the Draft EIR should address the current availability of convenient charging and refueling facilities for each mode of transportation including the identification of the fuel resources required such as electric charging and hydrogen fueling for cars and light trucks as well as charging facilities for electric bicycles. It is not the role of the Draft EIR to perform an assessment of availability charging infrastructure and fuel resources required for such infrastructure. This comment does not address the adequacy of the Draft EIR. No further response is required. See also response to Comment 6-83.

Comment 6-85

The comment asserts that the information identified in the previous comment regarding the current availability of charging and refueling facilities should be compared with the demand for charging and hydrogen fueling facilities that would be generated by the proposed MTP/SCS and required by state policy, as well as an analysis reviewing the extent to which charging and fueling facilities would be sufficient and reliable enough to meet demand. It is not the role of the Draft EIR to evaluate whether there would be adequate charging and refueling facilities in the plan area to meet increased future demand for electric or hydrogen vehicles because of state policy requiring or encouraging the increased use of such vehicles. While the proposed MTP/SCS includes policies supporting EV and ZEV infrastructure, and provides support to help local agencies to increase use of electric and hydrogen vehicles, this outcome is anticipated to occur in the plan area with or without implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS based on state actions. No edits to the Draft EIR are required in response to Comment 6-85.

Comment 6-86

The comment states that the plan should consider the extent to which it will be implemented with insufficient charging facilities at apartments and condominiums to serve the anticipated number of EVs that would be deployed under the proposed MTP/SCS and the extent to which the proposed MTP/SCS is unable to meet state targets due to lack of sufficient charging infrastructure.

This is a comment on the plan that will be considered at the time of adoption. The comment does not address the adequacy of the environmental analysis in the Draft EIR and no changes to the Draft EIR are required.

The comment also recommends that the Draft EIR mitigate “adverse impacts” of the proposed MTP/SCS through “a program to ensure greater deployment of EV charging facilities.” The comment is unclear as to the specifics of the “adverse impacts”. That said, Mitigation Measure GHG-2 on Page 8-29 directs SACOG to, in partnership with air districts, work with counties and cities in the plan area of the proposed MTP/SCS to reduce GHG emissions. See response to Comments 6-83 and 7-7.

Moreover, CARB, CPUC, and electric utilities in the plan area are making investments to provide EV charging infrastructure in recognition of the electrification of the transportation sector. Additionally, future projects constructed under the proposed MTP/SCS would undergo project-level CEQA evaluation, where on-site mitigation measures to reduce GHG emissions may be recommended or required by a lead agency. A common on-site mitigation measure to reduce project-related transportation GHG emissions is to require EV charging infrastructure and GHG-1/TRN-1 includes incorporation of a neighborhood EV network as one of the project modifications that an implementing agency may require of a project. It is foreseeable that through the CEQA evaluation process, project proponents may include EV charging spaces in future projects as a condition of approval. Also, the proposed MTP/SCS would encourage greater investment in EV charging infrastructure which would serve to accommodate the increase in EV

usage within the plan area of the proposed MTP/SCS. No edits to the Draft EIR are required in response to Comment 6-86.

Comment 6-87

The comment asserts that, though the Draft EIR identifies energy savings as a goal of the proposed MTP/SCS, the Draft EIR does not identify or discuss potentially achievable, cost-effective energy efficiency savings within the scope of the plan.

As stated in the comment, “energy efficiency entails using improved technology to provide the same or better level of energy service while using less energy.” As shown in Table 8-2 in Chapter 8 – Energy and Global Climate Change, per capita energy usage in electricity, natural gas, and gasoline consumption goes down over the plan period and Impacts ENE-1 and ENE-2 less than significant, requiring no mitigation. Energy-efficient technologies such as EnergyStar Appliances and improve insulation standards are beyond the scope of SACOG’s authority to implement. SACOG would contribute to improved energy efficiency through reducing VMT from implementation of the projected land use pattern and planned transportation improvements, which, as discussed in Chapter 8 – Energy and Global Climate Change and in Table 8-2, results in a reduction in future per capita energy usage relative to baseline conditions. No edits to the Draft EIR are required in response to Comment 6-87.

Comment 6-88

The comment states that the Draft EIR should discuss and quantify the impacts of energy policies and technologies that it adopts that would reduce energy consumption. The comment also states that the Draft EIR should provide justification for not adopting additional efficiency policies and technologies and that the discussion should not be limited to discussing design features and policies that were adopted to increase efficiency and statewide trends.

The Draft EIR does quantify energy consumption within the plan area of the proposed MTP/SCS for baseline conditions (2016), 2037, 2035, and 2040. The Draft EIR does not attempt to quantify the energy savings achieved through the use of new, more efficient technologies because it is unknown where, what, and when technologies would be deployed. It is not the role of the Draft EIR to discuss or justify why certain policies were not included in the plan; the Draft EIR evaluates the environmental impacts of the plan. Also, the proposed MTP/SCS is not a plan with the objective to achieve energy savings from the electricity and natural gas sectors. Per capita reductions would occur from those sectors due to the deployment of statewide regulations that target electricity and natural gas usage. Energy would be saved from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS through a decrease in per capita VMT which would directly result in decreased gasoline consumption. No edits to the Draft EIR are required in response to Comment 6-88.

Comment 6-89

The comment asserts that the Draft EIR should compare the energy efficiency of various modes of transportation that would be implemented including existing and new light rail systems, roads and freeways for SOVs, freight transportation systems including truck and rail, and alternative modes such as carpooling, transit, and cycling.

Such a comparison is not relevant to the Draft EIR analysis of the environmental impacts of the proposed MTP/SCS. As shown in Table 8-2, per capita gasoline consumption is expected to trend downwards over the plan period due to transportation investments and efficient land use planning. No edits to the Draft EIR are required in response to Comment 6-89.

Comment 6-90

The comment states that the Draft EIR should include a discussion of the barriers to greater reliance on more efficient transportation modes like bicycling including safety concerns, convenience, parking availability, and other barriers (e.g., noise, air quality).

It is not the role of the Draft EIR to discuss “barriers to greater reliance on more efficient modes” or “whether greater funding for cycling would result in a more energy-efficiency transportation system.” Nonetheless, the MTP/SCS does include policies and programs to remove barriers to greater reliance on walking and biking. Under Policy 1, for

example, SACOG provides incentives, information, tools, technical assistance, and encouragement to support implementation of the Sacramento region's Sustainable Communities Strategy through coordinated and phased greenfield growth that prioritizes walking and bicycling in scale and design while incorporating new urbanist design principles; complete communities that include a balance of homes, jobs, services, amenities, and diverse transportation options; and complete streets that provide safe, comfortable, and equitable facilities for people of all ages and abilities to walk, bike, and ride transit. In addition, the MTP/SCS includes the following policies:

- Policy 3: Implement pilot projects aimed at making microtransit and micromobility (such as bike and scooter share) work for urban, suburban, rural, and low-income areas of the region.
- Policy 4: Pursue flexibility in state and federal funding sources to enable testing and implementation of innovative mobility solutions that are affordable, accessible, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- Policy 8: Support more seamless travel through better traveler information for trip planning, reliable service and coordination between operators for transit, shared mobility and other first/last mile connections.
- Policy 20: Prioritize cost effective safety improvements that will help the region eliminate fatal transportation related accidents.
- Policy 22: Invest in bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure to encourage healthy, active transportation trips and provide recreational opportunities for residents and visitors.
- Policy 23: Prioritize and incentivize transportation investments that benefit environmental justice communities.
- Policy 25: Prioritize investments in transportation improvements that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and vehicle miles traveled.

This comment also states that the Draft EIR should discuss whether greater funding for cycling “would mitigate the GHG impacts of the project.” Draft EIR Mitigation Measure TRN-1 includes several bicycling-related measures that would increase investments in bicycle infrastructure and bicycling to reduce GHG emissions (Impact GHG-1), including providing bicycle networks, bicycle parking, bike-sharing, and incentives or subsidies for bicycling (pages 16-55 and 16-56).

In addition, SACOG undertakes a number of activities as part of plan implementation that support the policies included in the MTP/SCS and mitigation measure TRN-1. These activities are targeted at reducing barriers and creating opportunities and encouragement that increase biking and walking. Activities include, but are not limited to, maintenance of a regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Trails Master Plan (Appendix N of the MTP/SCS), development of the Sacramento Region Parks and Trails Strategic Development Plan, minimum funding set aside from regional discretionary funding for projects demonstrating clear benefits for active transportation modes, Complete Streets Working Group policy and implementation guidance, JUMP Bike Share in the cities of Davis, Sacramento, and West Sacramento, GOTCHA suburban bike share pilot in Elk Grove, Folsom, and Rancho Cordova, Regional Bike/Ped Data Collection Program, and grant application assistance. No edits to the Draft EIR are required in response to Comment 6-90.

Comment 6-91

The comment states that there should be a discussion of the energy intensiveness and cost-effectiveness of developing and operating freeway and surface street systems under the proposed MTP/SCS as opposed to developing and operating other modes such as transit systems and TDM programs. It is not the role of the Draft EIR to evaluate cost-effectiveness of the proposed MTP/SCS. Draft EIR Chapter 18 evaluates a reasonable range of alternatives that would avoid or substantially lessen the significant impacts of the proposed MTP/SCS; however, the proposed MTP/SCS would not result in significant energy impacts.

Moreover, while the proposed MTP/SCS does include investments to expand roadway capacity it also includes other transportation investments that would reduce single occupancy vehicle use and the rate of VMT within the plan area of the proposed MTP/SCS, such as micromobility programs, TDM strategies, transit services, and improved bicycle

and pedestrian infrastructure. These programs, as summarized in Table 8-2 in Chapter 8 – Energy and Global Climate Change, would ultimately result in a reduction in VMT within the plan area of the proposed MTP/SCS which would contribute to lower rates of per capita gasoline consumption. No edits to the Draft EIR are required in response to Comment 6-91. Refer to the response to Comment 6-53 for discussion of why the proposed MTP/SCS would not result in the wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy.

Comment 6-92

The comment states that there should be an identification and discussion of the significant impacts to transportation energy efficiency of allowing unlimited numbers of vehicles to routinely access freeway lanes simultaneously during rush hour cause traffic on freeways.

The Draft EIR estimates that over time, overall per capita energy consumption would decrease as compared to baseline conditions. Therefore, the Draft EIR concludes that the proposed MTP/SCS would not result in the wasteful, inefficient, and unnecessary consumption of energy and the impact would be less than significant. Please also refer to the response to Comment 6-53 for discussion of why the proposed MTP/SCS would not result in the wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy.

Comment 6-93

The comment is related to the previous comment and asserts that congested roadways are not an energy efficient practice.

Please see response to Comment 6-92.

Comment 6-94

The comment states that the Draft EIR should analyze an alternative project design that provides additional freeway capacity that would not entail expanding freeway capacity in the Interstate 80 (I-80) corridor. The comment states that additional freeway capacity could be achieved by ensuring that the number of vehicles on the freeway does not exceed the maximum amount that can be handled without degrading flow rate.

Draft EIR Chapter 18 analysis of alternatives includes Alternative 2: Infill and Transit Focused, which includes fewer investments in roadway and freeway capacity relative to the proposed MTP/SCS. Moreover, the comment does not provide an example or a citation to explain how SACOG or another public agency would ensure “that the number of vehicles on the freeway does not exceed the maximum amount that can be handled without degrading the flow rate.” No edits to the Draft EIR are required in response to Comment 6-94. See also response to Comment 6-7.

Comment 6-95

The comment states that “mitigation for this impact” should be discussed including regulating freeway access to the extent necessary to ensure that freeways operate at maximum capacity during rush hour.

The impact being referenced in this comment, and whether it is a significant impact, is not clear. The Draft EIR concludes that energy impacts (ENE-1 and ENE-2) would be less than significant and; therefore, no mitigation is required. No edits to the Draft EIR are required in response to Comment 6-95.

Comment 6-96

The comment states that the energy efficiency of TDM systems should be discussed and policies adopted to ensure that TDM policies are in place. SACOG’s TDM Program is discussed on Page 8-23 of Chapter 8 – Energy and Global Climate Change. Mitigation Measure TRN-1 also includes TDM measures, such as incentives or subsidies for using modes other than driving alone, which would reduce the potentially significant VMT (Impact TRN-1) and GHG (Impact GHG-1) impacts of the proposed MTP/SCS. It is not the role of the Draft EIR to discuss “the economic feasibility of increased transit and bicycle mode share as opposed to drive-alone commuting to reduce energy consumption.” No edits to the Draft EIR are required in response to Comment 6-96. The comment has been noted and will be considered during the approval of proposed MTP/SCS.

Comment 6-97

The comment states that the Draft EIR should identify and discuss SACOG implementing a program to mitigate GHG impacts by providing TDM services to implementing agencies.

SACOG's existing regional TDM Program that serves all of SACOG's member jurisdictions is described in the response to comment 6-45. Mitigation Measure TRN-1 also includes TDM measures, such as incentives or subsidies for using modes other than driving alone, which would reduce the potentially significant VMT (Impact TRN-1) and GHG (Impact GHG-1) impacts of the proposed MTP/SCS. No edits to the Draft EIR are required in response to Comment 6-97.

Comment 6-98

The comment states that there should be a discussion of how free parking induces more commuters to drive and thereby results in great VMT and energy consumption, and that policies such as parking cash-out, shared parking, and unbundling parking should be discussed.

The Draft EIR acknowledges the relationship between parking and travel behavior by including parking policies in Mitigation Measure TRN-1, which would reduce the potentially significant VMT (Impact TRN-1) and GHG (Impact GHG-1) impacts of the proposed MTP/SCS. The parking policies included in this mitigation measure include limiting or eliminating parking supply, unbundling parking costs, and providing parking cash-out programs. This mitigation measure states that implementing agencies shall require project modifications to reduce VMT effects, which may include the above-described parking policies. Mitigation Measure TRN-1 also states that implementing agencies shall require implementation of VMT reduction strategies through TDM programs. No edits to the Draft EIR are required in response to Comment 6-98.

Comment 6-99

The comment suggests that the Draft EIR should address the amount of land that will be required for parking lots for the vehicles that will be driving. It also asserts that the "significant amount of land used for parking" the vehicles "that will drive on the regional roads and highways constitutes a significant adverse impacts of the project."

There is no requirement for the Draft EIR to calculate the amount of land for parking under the proposed MTP/SCS. It is speculative at this time to forecast the total acreage or number of parking spots that would be constructed in the plan area of the proposed MTP/SCS by 2040, especially at a time when transportation network companies (now) and autonomous vehicles (in the future) are redefining the need for parking space when local agencies are considering redevelopment of parking areas for housing and other use. Parking structures are often constructed as components of projects. The number of spaces that may accompany a certain land use would be determined by a project proponent and lead agency. Actual parking provided would be determined in part by local ordinances and policies. Therefore, the Draft EIR does not attempt to quantify and predict the acreage and number of parking spaces that would be available during the plan period.

Moreover, the amount of land used for parking is not in and of itself an environmental impact. The Draft EIR evaluates whether implementation of the projected land use pattern and planned transportation improvements (which both include, in part, use of land for parking) would result in significant environmental impacts, including direct impacts associated with the development of land for parking and other developed land uses (e.g., agricultural and biological resources) and indirect impacts associated with for the provision of parking. The air quality, energy and climate change, and noise analyses of the Draft EIR are based in part on modeled VMT and traffic volumes under the proposed MTP/SCS, that shows an overall decline in the rate of private vehicle use – this would translate into lower parking demands. No edits to the Draft EIR are required in response to Comment 6-99.

Comment 6-100

The comment asserts that the EIR should evaluate impacts to VMT due to an increase in use of medium and heavy duty trucks within the region. The comment further asserts that the EIR fails to take into account and evaluate the impact of the land use pattern and the proposed transportation plan on medium and heavy duty trucking in the plan area.

VMT from medium and heavy duty trucks are accounted for in the calculation of “Mobile Source” GHG shown in Table 8-1. VMT from medium and heavy duty trucks are also included in the analysis of air quality impacts for all criteria pollutants presented in Chapter 5 – Air Quality. Commercial vehicle VMT, inclusive of medium and heavy duty truck VMT, is reported in the Draft 2020 MTP/SCS Appendix E, Table 14. The SACSIM travel demand model estimates commercial vehicle trips and VMT by 2-axle and 3+ axle categories, and the trip generation rates vary by land uses, capturing the major land use categories that generate medium and heavy duty truck trips. No edits to the Draft EIR are required in response to Comment 6-100.

Comment 6-101

The comment states that the EIR should identify and discuss the efficiency of the existing freight hauling system in the region and compare that with the efficiency of the freight transportation system that would develop under the plan as proposed. The comment asserts that opportunities to develop more efficient systems for freight transportation should be identified and discussed and that the EIR should evaluate how the proposed plan will affect freight hauling efficiency and consistency with the statewide goals for freight efficiency.

SACOG acknowledges that freight travel will increase over time--the commercial vehicle VMT forecast in the Draft 2020 MTP/SCS Appendix E Table 14 shows growth in VMT of 26% from 2016 to 2040. The Draft 2020 MTP/SCS recognizes SACOG’s role in supporting implementation of performance rules of freight travel in and through the SACOG region (see p.14 of Draft 2020 MTP/SCS) and in supporting implementation of the California Transportation Plan (see p.13 of Draft 2020 MTP/SCS).

Potential freight impacts of the plan were analyzed and based on whether the plan would cause a disruption to goods movement into or through the SACOG region (page 16-45 of DEIR). As documented on page 16-72 of DEIR, the plan was not found to disrupt goods movement.

Further, the plan would not be inconsistent with statewide efforts to improve freight movement efficiency. The plan’s focus on improving overall travel efficiency would also benefit freight movement especially to final destinations. As shown in Table 16-9 (page 16-37), measures such as regional accessibility, street pattern/urban design, residential density, and mix of use are all increasing. This means land uses are being located closer together with a better mix and density of uses such that travel distances are reduced. This reduces trip lengths for all modes including commercial vehicles used for freight delivery. No edits to the Draft EIR are required in response to Comment 6-101.

Comment 6-102

The comment asserts that the EIR should identify the types of freight operations in the plan area including local freight delivery, freight trips with only one trip end in the area, and freight that is only passing through the region. The comment further asserts there should be a discussion of the routes and modes by which freight travels and the extent to which the routes and modes will be energy efficient and renewably-powered under the proposed plan.

See response to Comment 6-101. In addition, the air quality impact analysis (Chapter 5 of the DEIR) as well as the greenhouse gas and energy consumption impact analysis (Chapter 8 of the DEIR) include the effects of commercial VMT and related fuel consumption. For example, fuel consumption factors are sensitive to the types of vehicles and the expected change in fuel content over time based on California laws and regulations. The plan would not disrupt or interfere with these plans.

The routes used by commercial vehicles are accounted for in the travel forecasts. Therefore, the impact of transportation projects and investments on these routes in terms of access to land uses, travel times, and congestion are accounted for in these forecasts. No edits to the Draft EIR are required in response to Comment 6-102.

Comment 6-103

The comment states that the EIR should discuss and compare the energy typically used by various freight modes and consider industry trends toward greater efficiency and reduced reliance on fossil fuels. The comment asserts that the EIR should consider whether the plan implements efficient freight transportation systems.

Please see response to Comments 6-101 and 6-102.

Comment 6-104

The comment states that the locations in the region where warehouse facilities and online fulfillment centers are established over the life of the plan will influence the distances that trucks are required to travel to deliver goods to commercial sites and to consumers within the region. The comment asserts that the EIR should address how the proposed land use and transportation plan will affect shipping distances.

Please see response to Comments 6-100 and 6-101 for discussion of land uses generating commercial vehicle trips. See discussion of emerging trends in transportation sector and limitations to travel demand modeling in light of these changes in Draft 2020 MTP/SCS DEIR, pp. 16-39 to 16-40, including shift to online shopping and home delivery. Cities and counties, not SACOG, are ultimately responsible for the way their local communities continue build out in the future, including decisions on warehouse siting. (Gov. Code, § 65080, subd. (b)(2)(K)). For this reason, cities and counties are not required to revise their "land use policies and regulations, including [their] general plan, to be consistent with the regional transportation plan or an alternative planning strategy." The comment does not provide evidence to support the conclusions that the plan is inconsistent with the California Sustainable Freight Action Plan. The MTP/SCS has been specifically crafted to comply with the SB 375 GHG reduction targets for the land use and transportation sectors based on the Scoping Plan. Evidence for this consistency is found under Impact GHG-1 on DEIR pages 8-20 through 8-21. No edits to the Draft EIR are required in response to Comment 6-104.

Comment 6-105

The comment states that the plan is energy inefficient because it fails to plan warehouse locations, which will lead to new warehouses and fulfillment centers being pushed to locate on the urban periphery where large parcels and lower land prices will be available. The comment asserts that this results in a freight network that is not efficiently interconnected with other freight modes such as freight rail and air, resulting in greater truck miles travelled, greater traffic congestion, and a less efficient transportation system.

Please see response to Comments 6-101 and 6-104. See also response to Comment 6-11 regarding the level of detail required of the land use designations in the plan, which is a regional pattern of development and not a site-specific zoning ordinance.

Comment 6-106

The comment states that warehouse locations should be discussed and recommended for the implementing agencies so that the plan embodies an efficient freight delivery system and also to mitigate adverse impacts to GHG and air quality emissions. The comment further asserts that EIR should include a map with an overlay of the freight corridors showing the location of rail terminal facilities, warehouse facilities, logistics centers, and air freight facilities, and that the planning process should take into account adjacent land uses, access to freeways, access to efficient shipping such a freight rail, and likely impacts related to traffic congestion.

Please see response to Comments 6-101 and 6-104. See DEIR Map 5-3 "Existing Facilities That Emit Toxic Air Contaminants," showing locations of distribution centers. See DEIR Table 5-15 "Identified TAC Sources", enumerating distribution centers, railyards and ports. The comment does not recognize the limitations of regional planning in California. Local cities and counties control land use through their general plans and zoning. The MTP/SCS does not change general plan land use designations or zoning but it does incentivize more compact regional land use patterns as explained on DEIR pages 16-22 through 16-23, 16-35 through 16-37. No edits to the Draft EIR are required in response to Comment 6-106.

Comment 6-107

The comment states that maps should be provided showing where warehouse facilities would be most usefully located in view of the congestion, energy, air quality, and VMT impacts. The comment asserts that this kind of discussion should be included in the discussion of transportation and GHG impacts, and form the basis for mitigating impacts by facilitating the development of more efficient freight systems.

Please see response to Comment 101, 104, and 106.

Comment 6-108

The comment asserts that the plan is inconsistent with the 2017 Scoping Plan and with the California Sustainable Freight Action Plan, which call for planning of modern freight corridors, reduced air quality emissions, and an accelerated transition to a more efficient and less polluting transportation system.

Please see response to Comments 6-100 through 6-102. In addition, the comment does not provide evidence to support the conclusions that the plan is inconsistent with the 2017 Scoping Plan and the California Sustainable Freight Action Plan. The MTP/SCS has been specifically crafted to comply with the SB 375 GHG reduction targets for the land use and transportation sectors based on the Scoping Plan. Evidence for this consistency is found under Impact GHG-1 on DEIR pages 8-20 through 8-21. Nonetheless, the EIR considers whether the MTP/SCS would substantially interfere with achievement of the state's long-term climate goals, as set forth in the Scoping Plan and identifies a significant impact. No edits to the Draft EIR are required in response to Comment 6-108.

Comment 6-109

The comment asserts that the EIR should identify efficient sites to be zoned for logistic parks (intermodal freight hubs that anchor distribution centers and allow freight rail and trucking companies to partner and provide streamlined and efficient supply chain solutions) in the region to mitigate project impacts and to facilitate shipping by more efficient, more economic, less polluting, and less congesting modes that reduce VMT and GHG emissions.

Please see response to Comments 6-101, 6-102, and 6-104 through 6-107.

Comment 6-110

The comment states that the EIR should discuss what kinds of freight rail services are available in the region, what purposes they serve, and how additional freight could be channeled through rail facilities. The comment further states that the mitigation discussion should address the Sierra Northern Railway, its connection to the Port of Sacramento as well as the kinds of freight that could be diverted there but that may rely on less efficient modes such as trucking at the present time.

Freight rail is described on DEIR pages 16-20 through 16-21 and includes the Sierra Northern Railway (page 16-20). Performing market-based research on how additional freight could be channeled through rail facilities is beyond the scope of identifying potential environmental impacts of the plan. No edits to the Draft EIR are required in response to Comment 6-110.

Comment 6-111

The comment states that, to understand freight impacts, the EIR should discuss the kinds of goods that can be delivered to the region or shipped from the region without the use of trucks, such as shipments by freight rail including by containerized cargo and trailer on flat car. (DEIR, 16-20.) According to the comment, expanding freeway capacity without looking at how existing rail capacity can be used to reduce truck traffic is uneconomic, inefficient, and polluting.

Please see response to Comments 6-101 and 6-110. In addition, the expansion of freeway capacity included in the plan was not recommended on the basis of serving truck traffic only. Instead, SACOG used a balanced approach to evaluate new roadway capacity projects as explained in DEIR pages 16-41 through 16-42. No edits to the Draft EIR are required in response to Comment 6-111.

Comment 6-112

The comment states that the EIR should include measures to provide for fare free transit passes or reduced fare transit passes to mitigate the significant impacts to transportation and to GHG emissions by increasing transit mode share, thereby reducing VMT and mitigating GHG impacts. According to the comment, funding for fare free or reduced fare transit passes should be generated by employer contributions to a transportation management association.

Providing transit passes or using transit pass subsidies are included in mitigation measure TRN-1 on DEIR page 16-55. See response to Comment 6-45.

Comment 6-113

The comment states that the EIR should discuss increased funding for programs of the Sacramento Transportation Management Association as mitigation for impacts.

Providing funding support for programs that reduce vehicle travel and VMT are included in mitigation measure TRN-1 on DEIR page 16-55. See response to Comment 6-45.

Comment 6-114

The comment asserts that there should be a discussion of the other economic incentives that are in place that hinder more efficient modes and support inefficient modes such as trucking, and address how incentives affect the efficiency of the transportation system and in particular consider how the funds that are channeled through SACOG to improve the transportation system can be allocated to relieve economic burdens on energy efficient modes.

Discussion of how the plan proposes to address the issues identified in the comment are contained in DEIR pages 16-46 through 16-47. Specific examples include generating revenues on roadway express lanes that can partially subsidize express bus service in those corridors and increasing regional transit service hours by 60 percent between 2016 and 2040. No edits to the Draft EIR are required in response to Comment 6-114.

Comment 6-115

The comment lists several tools that may be used to reduce impacts of the MTP/SCS, including subsidizing transit passes, realistic parking fees, and congestion charges. The comment further asserts that the use of sales tax revenues and general funds to support streets and highways should be identified and discuss as subsidies that interfere with the price signal to the consumer and thereby encourage reliance on inefficient modes. According to the comment, the EIR should evaluate the extent to which economic incentives would be in place and would drive either a less energy-efficient or a more energy-efficient transportation system.

See response to Comments 6-101 and 6-112 through 114. See also response to Comment 6-45.

Comment 6-116

The comment states that the risk of noncompliance with the MTP/SCS should be identified as a potentially significant adverse impact of the proposed plan and evaluated. The comment further states that there are many policies in the RTP/SCS that may or may not be as effective as SACOG would like, and that risk should be identified as a potentially significant impact.

Impact TRN-1, starting on DEIR page 16-46, explains the important relationship between the plan and actions necessary from the state and SACOG's member agencies to achieve VMT and GHG reduction goals. The discussion on page 16-48 acknowledges the challenges noted in the comment:

California – at the state, regional, and local levels – has not yet gone far enough in making the systemic and structural changes to how we build and invest in communities that are needed to meet state climate goals. It will take collaboration among all these levels of government, and supporting actions by other organizations and actors, to achieve the state's climate goals because the MPOs do not have the land use authority or resources to meet challenge alone.

Due to the evidence provided in the TRN-1 discussion, the impact recognizes that other agencies may not fully implement the plan and that information contributed to the conclusion that, despite mitigation measure TRN-1, the impact will remain significant and unavoidable. No edits to the Draft EIR are required in response to Comment 6-116.

Comment 6-117

The comment requests that SACOG consider increased use of Amtrak as mitigation for project impacts including transportation GHG emissions. The EIR should discuss collaborating with Caltrans on programs to increase the convenience and ridership of Amtrak.

The plan contains expansion of Capitol Corridor service. The project list (available at https://www.sacog.org/sites/main/files/file-attachments/appendix_a-_project_list.pdf?1568838271) includes project CAL18320 and VAR56199, which represent Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the Sacramento to Roseville Third Mainline Track Project. The combination of these two phases will include expanded rail capacity that benefits freight and passenger rail travel. The Capitol Corridor service in this segment will increase from one to three round-trips per day under phase 1 and then up to 10 round-trips per day upon completion of phase 2. No edits to the Draft EIR are required in response to Comment 6-117.

Comment 6-118

The comment notes that the Davis Amtrak Access and Connections Study is scheduled to be heard by the City of Davis Planning Commission on December 11, 2019. The comment states that this provides a good example of the kinds of efficient transportation solutions that should be undertaken with respect to Amtrak.

Please see response to Comment 6-117.

Comment 6-119

The comment requests that the list of MTP/SCS projects be amended to include working with the Tahoe, Placer County and Caltrans to implement winter sports train service to Truckee by extending Capitol Corridor service beyond Auburn.

The MTP/SCS analyzes a six-county transportation and land use plan, including the projects listed in Appendix A, at a programmatic level. SACOG also works with regional and surrounding transportation planning and transit agencies, including Placer County, Placer County Transportation Planning Agency (PCTPA), Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA), Caltrans, and Capitol Corridor Joint Powers Authority (CCJPA), to develop and prioritize the MTP/SCS project list based on network performance goals, financial constraints, and environmental constraints. A winter sports train service is not included in the 2020 MTP/SCS project list. Appendix E describes the project nomination and evaluation processes.

SACOG will continue to work with member agencies in the future to examine projects that reduce VMT and emissions by connecting people to community destinations with walking, biking and transit facilities. No edits to the Draft EIR are required in response to Comment 6-119.

Comment 6-120

The comment is a list of references. Comment noted.

November 6, 2019

Board of Directors
Sacramento Area Council of Governments
1415 L Street
Sacramento 95814

Dear Board of Directors

SACOG MTP/SCS DEIR: GHG-RELATED COMMENTS

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on the subject DEIR. Our below comments focus specifically on DEIR Chapter 8.

Sections 8.2 and 8.3, Environmental and Regulatory Setting (DEIR pp. 8-2 ff.)

We'd like to acknowledge the overall high quality of these sections, notwithstanding our particular critiques below. The scope and level of detail of Section 8.3 are particularly noteworthy, especially re explication of SB 375, SB 743, and the Draft Natural and Working Lands Plan and we appreciate the contribution to our understanding

Local And Regional Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plans, Climate Action Plans, And Related Initiatives (DEIR p. 8-15)

SB 375 and the SCS support GHG reductions to be delivered primarily through local agency plans and actions. It's therefor important that the DEIR characterizes such local plans accurately and clearly to adequately inform public and official understanding. We suggest that the DEIR presents an unrealistically sanguine picture of current local plans and initiatives, and offer the following observations and suggestions.

Plans' Regulatory Status is Not Characterized

Per the DEIR,

Many of SACOG's member jurisdictions and partner agencies have climate action plans (CAPs), GHG reduction plans, and/or sustainability plans that set goals and targets on the reduction of GHG emissions, and outline policies to help achieve those goals.... At the time of writing ... cities ... as well as ... counties ... have adopted CAPs. (p. 8-15),

This section's title and the above sentences conflate three commonly encountered plan titles, obfuscating their critical differences. Only a "qualified", CEQA-compliant, greenhouse gas reduction plan (GHGRP) has regulatory definition and status, and is required to include enforceable GHG reduction measures. Other terms such as

7-1

7-2

“CAP” and “sustainability plan” are undefined, may be applied to any document (including a qualified GHGRP), and are therefore meaningless in terms of meaningfully assessing regional support of GHG reduction goals. The DEIR should describe the relevant regulatory context, and should note that at least some of the referenced plans are not “qualified” (e.g., Sacramento and Placer County’s plans). We offer a possibly useful description of the role of Climate Action Plans (Attachment 1)

7-2
cont.

The significance of Policies versus Measures is not Distinguished

The DEIR states,

Policies observed among CAPs ... Transportation policies ... CAPs frame policies ... jurisdictions are committed to establishing policies

We likewise have observed many climate-related policies in local CAPs and general plans; but notice also a much scarcer inventory of enforceable measures and implementation actions, particularly regarding the broad planning strategies presented in the SCS. Without further context, the DEIR’s citation of such policies is misleading. The DEIR should recognize that most such policies await implementation.

7-3

Level of Demonstrated Commitment.

We also question the extent to which,

... jurisdictions are committed to establishing policies that will provide energy efficiency for both residential and commercial land uses.

First, the term “jurisdictions” is so indefinite in regional scope (two?... all?) as to be almost meaningless. Second, the assertion raises the question, given such commitment why haven’t such policies been established (let alone implemented)? Finally, we are unaware of any such local policies more progressive than the requirements of the Title 24, 2019 CalGreen codes effective January 2020. If there are such actionable, practically significant policies we request they be identified as examples of effective local action. Otherwise, absent other substantial supporting evidence, the statement should be modified to reflect the uncertain level of commitment evident for most jurisdiction in the planning area.

7-4

Enforceability of 2050 State Goal

The DEIR states,

given that the 2050 target ... has not yet been codified in legislation ... the 2017 Scoping Plan does not provide a framework to achieve emissions targets beyond 2030 (DEIR p. 8-24).

The DEIR should reconcile this statement with legal and judicial guidance that “community-wide targets should align with ... long-term (2050) GHG emissions limits set forth in ... the Executive Order [S-3-05]” (California Attorney General’s Office, March 06, 2009. “Climate Change, the California Environmental Quality Act, and General Plan Updates: Straightforward Answers to Some Frequently Asked Questions”); cited in Center for Biological Diversity v. California Dept. of Fish and Wildlife (2015) 62 Cal.4th 204, 229–230).

7-5

Likelihood of GHG Mitigation

The DEIR states,

Future development would also be required to undergo environmental review... It is likely that in cases where climate change impacts are identified, appropriate and feasible mitigation would be applied to reduce GHG emissions (DEIR p. 8-24)

This appears to be a speculative statement unsupported by substantial evidence, and we suggest there is substantial evidence to the contrary (see ECOS/et al, GHG comment letters re Elk Grove, Placer County, Galt, Sacramento County CAPs).

7-6

Mitigation Measure Measure GHG-2: Coordinate ... to reduce regional GHGs...

The DEIR states:

SACOG ... shall work with the counties and cities ...to adopt qualified GHG reduction plans (e.g., CAPs), develop ... policies, and implement ... initiatives ... including ZNE ... retrofits of existing buildings, incentivizing ... renewable energy ... and other measures.

We offer the following observations:

- As noted above, “qualified” GHGRPs are regulatory-defined documents; “CAPs” are not. To identify the latter as an example or subset of the former is an ‘apples and oranges’ misnomer.
- The DEIR does not here identify how SACOG might “work with” “local agencies (e.g., by referencing the programs listed under “Impact GHG-2”).
- The DEIR does not indicate how SACOG proposed support for building envelope efficiency and renewable energy would support SB 375, CARB, and the SCS’s focus on integrated land use, housing, and transportation; light-vehicle VMT reduction; and future development with a mix of housing located close to jobs and transit. Regarding the development of policies, we note above the uncertain value of the existing policies that, “*Many of SACOG’s member jurisdictions...*” have already adopted.

7-7

Mitigation Measure GHG-3: Implement ... mitigation measures to reduce GHG emissions ...

Re, construction worker commuting’

Project proponents shall ...incentivize ... construction workers to carpool ... or use ...transit

Please provide any available examples or cites for this measure.

7-8

Editorial Comments

p. 8-9 Re, “SB 375 ... demonstrates how the region will meet its GHG per capita” (“). Replace “will” with “can”, since the DEIR repeatedly acknowledges that the SCS is not enforceable.

p. 8-11 Please provide a citation for, “The second document, published by CARB in

7-9

January 2019”.

p. 8-14 “The measures included in the Draft Plan... reductions of -36.6 to -11.7MMTCO₂e....”. The negative values seem anomalous.

p. 8-15 The sentence, “At the time of this writing ... West Sacramento ...West Sacramento ...have adopted....”, lists West Sacramento twice.

p. 8-15 The City of Roseville also has “Communitywide Sustainability Action Plan”

p. 8-19 Table 8-2. Electricity...Consumption.... The gasoline value for 2035 seems anomalous.

p. 8-21 Table 8.3, Proposed Reduction Targets. This table presents daily per capita GHG targets. Such targets are usually expressed on an annual basis. To facilitate ready comparison with State and local targets, please provide annual targets instead of or in addition to the daily values.

**7-9
cont.**

Thank you very much for your GHG-reduction efforts.

Sincerely,



Laurie Litman, President
350 Sacramento



Ralph Propper, President
Environmental Council of Sacramento

The Role of Climate Action Plans (CAPs)

California has determined that climate change is a serious and immediate threat. Climate-forcing GHG emissions are one type of impact that lead agencies must consider under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). An agency may do so either on a project-specific basis, or at a programmatic level via a “Climate Action Plan” (CAP).¹ CAPs themselves also require CEQA review.² If there is substantial evidence (i.e., a “fair argument”) that approving a project or plan such as a CAP may have a significant impact, an Environmental Impact Report is prepared.³

Correctly done, CAPs can provide more comprehensive and detailed GHG-reduction than is practical on a project-specific basis; can ensure analysis of cumulative impacts; and allow consideration of broad policy and program-wide alternatives and mitigation not feasible during project-level review.⁴ CAPs can also provide co-benefits such as better air quality and health outcomes, habitat protection, more livable communities, and economic savings through energy and mobility efficiencies.

CAP “Streamlining” Function. If a jurisdiction adopts a CAP compliant with CEQA, future projects consistent with the CAP’s provisions may tier their GHG analysis from the CAP’s environmental document and are relieved of further GHG mitigation. This “streamlining” is efficient for lead agencies and project proponents. However, a weak CAP can be more troublesome than none, because inadequate measures may be (incorrectly) asserted as sufficient mitigation for future projects. A fully CEQA-compliant CAP from which future GHG analysis may be legitimately tiered is commonly referred to as being “qualified”.

CEQA’s Enforceability Requirements. A fundamental prerequisite of CEQA mitigation is that it be certain, i.e., “fully enforceable through permit conditions, agreements, or other legally binding instruments.”⁵ Enforceable and otherwise credible GHG-reduction mitigation is incumbent on lead agencies and project proponents, whether CEQA-compliance is tiered or project-specific, and lead agencies are prohibited from approving projects if feasible mitigation measures would reduce impacts.⁶ If CAP measures are not fully enforceable, they must be made so at the project level, and if there is substantial evidence that the measures would be inadequate, GHG impacts must be analyzed in the project EIR.⁷ A CAP proposing non-enforceable or ineffective measures thus fails its streamlining function. Arguably “non-qualified” CAPs create process uncertainty, ill-serving the lead agency, project proponents, and the general public.

7-10

¹ California Code of Regulations, Title 14 (14 CCR) §15183.5 (b). CEQA regulations use the term “greenhouse gas reduction plans”; “CAP” is the common designation.

² Golden Door et al v. County of San Diego (2018), Cal. Ct. App., 4th.

³ 14 CCR §15064

⁴ 14 CCR §15168(b)

⁵ 14 CCR §15126.4(a)(2)

⁶ 14 CCR §15021(a)(2); §15096(g)(2)

⁷ 14 CCR §15183.5(b)(2)

ENVIRONMENTAL COUNCIL OF SACRAMENTO AND

350 SACRAMENTO COMMENT LETTER

Comment 7-1

The comment serves as an introduction to the comment letter. The comment does not address the adequacy of the analysis contained in the Draft EIR. No edits to the Draft EIR are required in response to Comment 7-1.

Comment 7-2

The comment suggests that the Draft EIR does not adequately characterize the difference between local plans to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. The comment quotes the discussion under the Heading – Local and Regional Greenhouse Gas Reduction Plans, Climate Action Plans, and Related Initiatives on Page 8-15 of Chapter 8 – Energy and Global Climate Change and indicates that the Draft EIR “conflates” three discrete plan titles. The comment states that for CEQA-streamlining purposes, a qualified GHG reduction plan (GHGRP) has regulatory definition and status, while other GHG reducing plans such as an unqualified climate action plan (CAP) and/or sustainability plan may not meet the criteria for CEQA streamlining under CEQA Guidelines Section 15183.5.

The Draft EIR provides descriptions of adopted climate action plans, GHG reduction plans, and sustainability plans in the plan area. The purpose of this description is to establish the setting for the impact analysis of whether implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS would substantially interfere with achievement of applicable local GHG reduction plan goals (Impact GHG-3). The Draft EIR provides this analysis on pages 8-31 to 8-32. Providing analysis of the differences among the climate action plans, GHG reduction plans, and sustainability plans in the plan area is not relevant to an analysis of whether the proposed MTP/SCS would substantially interfere with the GHG reduction goals of these plans. Moreover, whether or not a plan meets the requirements for a qualified GHG reduction plan is not relevant to the analysis provided in the Draft EIR. No edits to the Draft EIR are required in response to Comment 7-2.

Comment 7-3

The comment asserts that policies to reduce GHG emissions included within local CAPs and general plans in the plan area of the proposed MTP/SCS sometimes lack enforceable measures and implementation actions.

As described in the response to Comment 7-2, the Draft EIR in Impact GHG-3 evaluates whether implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS would substantially interfere with the GHG reduction goals of an adopted climate action plan, GHG reduction plan, or sustainability plan. Whether or not a local GHG reduction policy lacks an enforcement measure or implementation is not relevant to the analysis of whether the proposed MTP/SCS would interfere with achievement of a local GHG reduction goal. The proposed MTP/SCS identifies a projected land use pattern and planned transportation improvements that would reduce per capita GHG emissions from passenger vehicles.

However, for the reasons stated above in the response to Comment 7-2, the applicability of general plan or CAP policies would vary on a project-by-project basis and is beyond the scope of this programmatic analysis. The Draft EIR level of analysis is not intended to evaluate project-level impacts. Future projects constructed as a result of implementing the projected land use pattern and planned transportation improvements would be subject to measures and policies of varying degrees of stringency and enforceability. It is unknown at the time of writing this Final EIR what specific policies would apply to certain projects and when. The Draft EIR provides a programmatic evaluation of the potential environmental consequences that would occur from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS and recommends mitigation where appropriate.

The language of Mitigation Measure GHG-2 on Page 8-29 directs SACOG to partner with air districts within the plan area of the proposed MTP/SCS to “work with the counties and cities within the plan area to adopt qualified GHG reduction plans (e.g., CAPs), develop GHG-reducing planning policies, and implement local climate initiatives.” SACOG lacks the regulatory authority necessary to implement many of the actions necessary to minimize impacts of growth in the region. However, through implementation of Mitigation Measures GHG-2, SACOG will continue its

important role of regional education, collaboration, and technical assistance that promotes climate change conscious planning strategies within the plan area and fosters partnerships with cities, counties, and other public and private stakeholders. No edits to the Draft EIR are required in response to Comment 7-3.

Comment 7-4

The text quoted in this comment is from a larger description of Draft EIR page 8-15 of “SACOG’s member jurisdictions and partner agencies” in the plan area that have adopted climate action plans, GHG reduction plans, and/or sustainability plans. In this context the word “jurisdictions” is referring to SACOG member jurisdictions and partner agencies with adopted climate action plans, GHG reduction plans, or sustainability plans. The comment also poses the question of why GHG-reduction policies have not yet been developed or implemented by some jurisdictions. SACOG has no regulatory jurisdiction in this regard. These decisions are made individually by the cities and counties in the region under their own authority. Nevertheless, SACOG works to encourage these outcomes through education, collaboration, and local technical assistance.

SACOG and other MPOs across the state are charged with developing regional transportation plans (RTPs) for federal review. With the passage of Senate Bill (SB) 375 in 2008, MPOs were tasked by the California Air Resources Board (CARB) with developing sustainable communities strategies (SCSs) as part of RTPs. SCSs identify how coordination of land use patterns, housing, and transportation strategies would reduce future per capita GHG emissions from passenger vehicles relative to a 2005 baseline.

The Draft EIR presents a programmatic analysis of the anticipated environmental impacts of implementation of the projected land use pattern. Future projects would be required to adhere to the policies, programs, and GHG reduction measures established and enforced by local agencies depending on location. As discussed in response to Comment 7-3, Mitigation Measure GHG-2 requires SACOG to participate in partnerships with jurisdictions within the plan area of the proposed MTP/SCS. Development projects constructed in accordance with the proposed land use pattern would be subject to GHG-reducing measures and policies, as applicable. No edits to the Draft EIR are required in response to Comment 7-4.

Comment 7-5

The Draft EIR sentence quoted in this comment accurately describes existing California law and the 2017 Scoping Plan. The Draft EIR correctly reflects that California law does not include a codified 2050 target for GHG reduction and correctly explains that the 2017 Scoping Plan does not provide a framework to achieve emissions targets beyond 2030. The comment suggests that the Draft EIR should reconcile the quoted text from Draft EIR page 8-24 with a statement cited in the California Supreme Court decision in the *Center for Biological Diversity v. California Department of Fish and Wildlife* (2015) 62 Cal.4th 204, 229-230 (*CBD v. CDFW*) case which evaluated the adequacy of the GHG analysis prepared for the Newhall Ranch Development Project in unincorporated Los Angeles County. The Court rejected the business-as-usual methodology used in the EIR and offered several compliance pathways to analyze climate change impacts.

In the decision, the Court notes that “over time consistency with year 2020 goals will become a less definitive guide, especially for long-term projects that will not begin operations for several years. An EIR taking a goal-consistency approach to CEQA significance may in the near future need to consider the project’s effects on meeting longer term emissions reduction targets.” (*CBD v. CDFW, supra*, 62 Cal.4th at p. 223.) The Court notes that then-pending legislation would codify the 2030 limit equivalent to 40 percent below 1990 levels. That 2030 goal was ultimately codified by the legislature with approval of SB 32. However, to date, no 2050 goal has been codified. The Draft EIR text quoted in the comment does not state or suggest that the 2017 Scoping Plan does not look beyond 2030. Rather, the Draft EIR is accurately explaining that the 2017 Scoping Plan does not identify a specific pathway to achieve the 2050 target. In several instances, the 2017 Scoping Plan references the state’s long-term goals. In the “Setting the Path to 2050” Section of the 2017 Scoping Plan, CARB notes that “the State’s 2020 and 2030 targets have not been set in isolation. They represent benchmarks, consistent with prevailing climate science, charting an appropriate trajectory forward that is in-line with California’s role in stabilizing global warming below dangerous

thresholds” (CARB 2017:18). In the 2017 Scoping Plan, CARB recognizes that technologies will need to be developed that are currently infeasible or nonexistent to reach the 2050 target.

The Supreme Court has also stated, in *Cleveland National Forest Foundation v. San Diego Assn. of Governments* (2017) 3 Cal.5th 497, 519, that agencies must ensure that CEQA analysis stays in step with evolving scientific knowledge and state regulatory schemes, but also holds that it was not an abuse of discretion to decline to adopt the Executive Order that sets forth the 2050 goal as a threshold of significance where that plan’s projected 2050 emissions were disclosed in the EIR. (*Id.* at p. 518.)

In recognition of the state’s 2030 and 2050 goals and the judicial and regulatory guidance described above, the Draft EIR estimates future GHG emissions by sector (e.g., transportation, energy) for 2030 and 2050, as summarized in Table 8-1 on Page 8-17. These estimates build upon the projected land use patterns in those years and associated vehicle miles traveled, as well as from other sectors that are not within the purview of SACOG to control, including the solid waste, water, wastewater, agriculture, and high global warming potential sectors.

The Draft EIR then evaluates whether the proposed MTP/SCS would substantially interfere with achievement of the state’s long-term climate goals, as set forth in the 2017 Scoping Plan and concludes that, while the proposed MTP/SCS would meet the region’s SB 375 target, recent reports on the state’s climate goals suggest that the regional 2035 GHG emissions reduction targets under SB 375 are not adequate to fully meet the goals of the 2017 Scoping Plan. Collectively, CARB determined that if the state’s 18 MPOs all met the SB 375 GHG emissions reduction targets set by CARB in 2018, a 19 percent reduction in per capita VMT would be achieved by 2035. In the target re-setting report, CARB expressed that, to meet the statewide reduction goals set forth by SB 32 and the 2017 Scoping Plan, the state would need to reduce per capita GHG emissions by 25 percent by 2035, resulting in a 6 percent gap between the 19 percent emissions reductions targets set for the regions (averaged for the 18 MPOs and compared to a baseline year of 2005). The conclusion is, even meeting the SB 375 GHG emissions reduction targets, a 6 percent gap compared to the state’s 25 percent reduction need would remain. Therefore, the Draft EIR identifies a significant and unavoidable impact related to emissions from the passenger vehicle sector due to the identified gap between the required 25 percent reduction in per capita VMT by 2035 as compared to SACOG’s target of 19 percent. SACOG’s fair share of filling the 6 percent gap is unknown at this time. With respect to operational emissions from other GHG sectors, other regulations that would advance the state toward meeting its long-term GHG reductions goals, such as the Draft 2030 California Natural and Working Lands Climate Change Implementation Plan, SB 350 100 percent carbon free electricity goal, are outside the scope of SACOG’s authority and, thus, SACOG cannot ensure that they will be implemented. Therefore, the Draft EIR conservatively concludes that the potential of the proposed MTP/SCS to substantially interfere with achievement of the climate goals set forth in CARB’s 2017 Scoping Plan related to the transportation, passenger-vehicle sector, other operational sectors (i.e., energy, solid waste, other on- and off-road mobile sources, water and wastewater treatment), and construction emissions would be potentially significant and mitigation was recommended. No edits to the Draft EIR are required in response to Comment 7-5.

Comment 7-6

The comment asserts that the Draft EIR’s statement that “future development would also be required to undergo environmental review” and “in cases where climate change impacts are identified, appropriate and feasible mitigation would be applied to reduce GHG emissions,” is speculative and unsupported by substantial evidence. In accordance with State CEQA Guidelines Section 15168, the Draft EIR was prepared as a programmatic document and is not intended to serve as the CEQA review for individual future projects that would occur from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS. The Draft EIR provides a general overview of the reasonably foreseeable environmental impacts from implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS and, where impacts are potentially significant, provides feasible project-level mitigation measures that would avoid or substantially lessen the impact. Because the enforcement of project-level mitigation is beyond the scope of SACOG’s authority, SACOG appropriately concludes that Impact GHG-2 would be significant and unavoidable for the reasons summarized in Chapter 8 – Energy and Global Climate Change. See also response to Comment 7-6.

For future projects that would occur as a result of implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS, implementation and development of mitigation measures, and ultimately significance determinations would be the responsibility of the

lead agency overseeing project-level CEQA environmental review. The degree to which GHG emissions impacts would be reduced would be determined on a project-by-project basis. CEQA requires the identification of feasible mitigation measures and alternatives for potentially significant environmental impacts. Therefore, the Draft EIR appropriately assumes that future projects with potentially significant GHG emissions impacts would be required to implement feasible mitigation measures or alternatives to reduce GHG emissions. However, SACOG does not have the legal or jurisdictional authority to require CEQA lead agencies to implement mitigation measures or alternatives at the project level. The Draft EIR therefore concludes that implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS would result in a significant and unavoidable impact with respect to Impact GHG-2 (substantial interference with achievement of the State's long-term climate goals as set forth in CARB's 2017 Scoping Plan). No edits to the Draft EIR are required in response to Comment 7-6.

Comment 7-7

The comment makes three observations relating to SACOG's work supporting local development of GHG emissions reducing programs.

In response to the first bullet point, the text of Mitigation Measure GHG-2 is identifying a CAP (climate action plan) as a type of qualified GHG reduction plan; a CAP that meets the requirements of CEQA Guidelines Section 15183.5 for qualified plans for the reduction of GHG emissions can also be a qualified GHG reduction plan. Also refer to the response to Comment 7-2 discussion of the definitions of CAPs, GHGRPs, and sustainability plans, and their relation to the Draft EIR GHG analysis of the proposed MTP/SCS. In response to the second bullet point, Mitigation Measure GHG-2 has been modified as follows:

Mitigation Measure GHG-2: Coordinate and support local agencies within the plan area of the proposed MTP/SCS to reduce regional GHGs from all sectors.

SACOG, in partnership with air districts within the plan area of the proposed MTP/SCS, shall work with the counties and cities within the plan area to adopt qualified GHG reduction plans (e.g., CAPs), develop GHG-reducing planning policies, and implement local climate initiatives. These reductions can be achieved through a combination of programs, including ZNE in new construction, retrofits of existing buildings, incentivizing the development of renewable energy sources that serve both new and existing land uses, and other measures. SACOG's work with local agencies will include:

- Providing tools and project support for planning, approving, and paying for low-VMT development. For example, SACOG has established a local agency working group for SB 743 implementation that can be continued past the implementation deadline to develop best practices for VMT-reducing policies.
- Securing funding and implement the Green Means Go Pilot Program to encourage infill development and revitalization of commercial corridors. In developing this program, local jurisdictions identified "Green Zones"—low-VMT infill areas—where they would use the Green Means Go Program to catalyze infill development.
- Civic Lab Program—SACOG collaboration with teams of public agency staff and their private sector partners to identify local solutions to regional challenges to implementing the MTP/SCS (innovative mobility solutions and commercial corridor revitalization strategies).
- SACOG regional funding programs— SACOG has established a number of programs (see description of programs listed under Impact GHG-2) that support the needed high density and transit-oriented development in the region and the smart growth vision set forth in the Blueprint. These programs are designed in consultation with local agencies and are governed by the objectives and policies of the MTP/SCS.
- Planning Collaboration --Engage member agency planners through the housing planners group, and the city and county managers in the region through the Regional Managers group, to design a housing program application for the State's Regional Early Action Program that both implements the Regional Housing Needs Allocation and supports GHG reducing housing policies and programs.

-
- Education and Partnership --Participate in locally-initiated climate reduction initiatives—SACOG sits on the Mayors' Climate Commission of West Sacramento and Sacramento, participated in the Mobility Technical Advisory Committee, and provided data and research to inform the GHG reduction recommendations of the Commission. SACOG has also provided—and will continue to provide—transportation data to local agencies as they develop their Climate Action Plans.
 - Grant Partnering and Technical Assistance—SACOG partners with and provides technical assistance to local agencies applying to California Climate Investments grant programs. SACOG advises grant applications on GHG reduction strategies as part of application assistance.

In response to the third bullet point, the Draft EIR evaluates the GHG emissions that would occur under implementation of the proposed MTP/SCS, which includes not just the passenger vehicle sector addressed by SB 375 and the SCS but also the entire transportation sector and other sectors in the plan area that generate GHG emissions (e.g., energy, solid waste, water agriculture). Because the Draft EIR identifies substantial interference with achievements of the state's long-term climate goals as set forth in CARB's 2017 Scoping Plan as a potentially significant impact, it identifies feasible GHG mitigation measures that would substantially lessen GHG emissions from all GHG sectors in the plan area, including the building envelope efficiency and renewable energy measures referenced in this comment. Also refer to the response to Comment 7-3, which addresses the commenter's concern with the "uncertain value" of existing policies adopted by SACOG member jurisdictions. No edits to the Draft EIR are required in response to Comment 7-7.

Comment 7-8

The comment requests an example or citation for the portion of mitigation measure GHG-3 that would reduce GHG emissions by requiring that project proponents provide incentives for construction workers to carpool or use transit. This mitigation measure is recommended by the Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District (SMAQMD) in its Guidance for Construction GHG Emissions Reductions and could be applied at the project level to reduce GHG emissions and air pollution from worker commute trips (SMAQMD 2016). No edits to the Draft EIR are required in response to Comment 7-8.

Comment 7-9

The comment makes several editorial comments to the Draft EIR.

In response to the first editorial comment, the Draft EIR appropriately uses the word "will" instead of "can" when describing the proposed MTP/SCS. State law identifies the requirements for the proposed MTP/SCS, which states in part that the SCS shall:

set forth a forecasted development pattern for the region, which, when integrated with the transportation network, and other transportation measures and policies, *will* reduce the greenhouse gas emissions from automobiles and light trucks to achieve, if there is a feasible way to do so, the greenhouse gas emission reduction targets approved by the state board [Government Code Section 65080(b)(2)(B)(vii)] (emphasis added).

The comment also requests a citation for an additional CARB document. This citation is provided in the Draft EIR on Page 20-19 of Chapter 20 – References, and for convenience has been provided below.

California Air Resources Board. (2019). California Air Resources Board 2017 Scoping Plan-Identified VMT Reductions and Relationship to State Climate Goals. https://ww2.arb.ca.gov/sites/default/files/2019-01/2017_sp_vmt_reductions_jan19.pdf.

The comment also suggest that the reductions identified in the 2030 California Draft Natural and Working Lands Climate Change Implementation Plan summarized on Page 8-15 are "anomalous." These values are taken from Figure 5 on page 14 of the Draft Natural and Working Lands Climate Change Implementation Plan.

The comment notes that the City of West Sacramento is mentioned twice in the discussion of local climate change initiatives on Page 8-15. The comment also notes that the City of Roseville has a Communitywide Sustainability Action Plan. In response to this comment, the language of the Draft EIR has been amended as follows in the second paragraph on Page 8-15:

Many of SACOG's member jurisdictions and partner agencies have climate action plans (CAPs), GHG reduction plans, and/or sustainability plans that set goals and targets on the reduction of GHG emissions, and outline policies to help achieve those goals. At the time of writing this Draft EIR, the cities of Sacramento, Elk Grove, West Sacramento, Citrus Heights, Folsom, ~~West Sacramento~~, Roseville, and Woodland as well as the counties of Sacramento, Yolo, and Placer have adopted CAPs, GHG Reduction Plans, or Sustainability Plans. In addition, many of the member jurisdictions (e.g., City of Galt and City of Winters) within the plan area of the proposed MTP/SCS have begun the CAP process by conducting baseline emissions inventories, which establish a reference point for GHG emissions reduction.

The commenter identified a missing digit in the gasoline value for 2035 in Draft EIR Table 8-2. In response to this comment, Table 8-2 of the Draft EIR has been amended in the second paragraph on Page 8-15 to correct the 2035 value for gasoline:

Table Error! No text of specified style in document.-1

Electricity, Natural Gas, and Gasoline Consumption Estimates for 2016, 2027, 2035, and 2040 in the Plan Area of the Proposed MTP/SCS

Energy Source	2016	2027	2035	2040
Electricity (GWh)	13,013	13,822	14,508	14,913
Natural Gas (therms)	363,722,676	349,502,624	362,951,902	372,003,363
Gasoline (1000 gallons)	984,921	713,772	<u>634,338</u>	628,944
Diesel (1000 gallons)	187,066	208,936	223,309	231,015

Sources: SACOG 2019 and Ascent Environmental 2019

The edits above do not alter the analysis or significance determinations of the Draft EIR. While the 2035 gasoline value contained a typographical error in Table 8-2 in the Draft EIR, the Draft EIR impact analysis was based on the correct number of 634,338 (1,000 gallons).

The comment asserts that Table 8-3 of the Draft EIR should present GHG targets on an annual basis instead of, or in addition to, the daily per capita targets presented in the Draft EIR. Table 8-3 shows the SB 375 targets established for the SACOG region by CARB and shows the performance of the proposed MTP/SCS in meeting the 2035 target. CARB expresses its targets in per capita pounds per day of CO₂ emissions from passenger vehicles. CARB measures compliance with the target by comparing per capita CO₂ emissions from passenger vehicles (measured in pounds per day) in 2035 with a 2005 baseline and calculating the percentage difference between the two years. Therefore, these data are presented in the appropriate format using appropriate metrics in Table 8-3 and do not need to be expressed on an annual basis to facilitate comparison with state or local targets.



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Board of Directors
Sacramento Area Council of Governments
1415 L Street, Suite 300
Sacramento, CA 95814

November 7, 2019

RE: SACOG 2020 Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy

Summary

The Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) has put forth a sophisticated Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (MTP/SCS), a regional plan that the region's jurisdictions should follow. While this regional plan is not as strong as we feel it could be, the 2020 MTP/SCS is a viable strategy for the region to meet its regional greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction targets mandated by the California Air Resources Board (CARB) per Senate Bill 375 (2008).

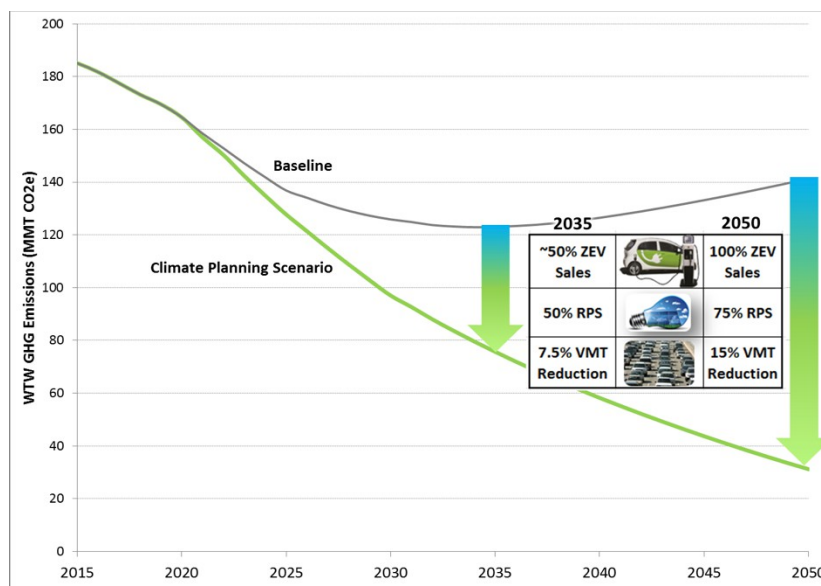
The plan represents a reasonable compromise between what the region could accomplish if the political will existed, and the reality of much more expansive car-oriented, low-density growth that is actually being actively pursued by some of the region's jurisdictions on the ground. ECOS would prefer a greater percentage of transportation investment to non-auto modes, and a much more compact land use footprint than proposed. The Sacramento region is not meeting its mandated GHG reduction targets because local jurisdictions are not complying with the strategy that SACOG has laid out for them, and the State must do more to ensure compliance of local authorities to our Sustainable Community Strategies, as well as to ensure the State's own investments are aligned with its climate laws.

CARB's [2017 California Climate Change Scoping Plan](#) outlines the State's strategy to meet GHG reduction goals mandated by AB 32 and SB 32 (80% below 1990 levels by 2050). As illustrated in the graph below, even with 100% zero emission vehicles and 75% of energy production from renewable sources, we would still need 15% more vehicle-miles-traveled (VMT) reduction *beyond* what is projected by our current Regional Transportation Plans / Sustainable Community Strategies (*2017 Scoping Plan*, p. 101).

Clean vehicles and clean energy will not alone be sufficient for achieving our goals. We must significantly change historic growth patterns to enable people to drive less. "VMT reduction" is a very good proxy metric for GHG reduction from improved land use and transportation, but also for the many co-benefits to natural resource conservation, public health, and social equity that this improved land use can provide.

Yet, despite broad recognition of this need, CARB's most recent [2018 Progress Report](#) on SB 375 (2008) implementation has illustrated that per capita VMT is going up in California, not down, and none of the State's regions are on track to achieving their respective GHG reduction targets through improved land use and transportation (reduced VMT) as mandated by SB 375.

8-1



(ARB Draft Scoping Plan, 2017)

From the inception of the “Blueprint” which became the model for SB 375, SACOG has been a national leader in demonstrating the benefits of integrating transportation and land use planning. SACOG’s travel demand modeling has since been as sophisticated as can be found anywhere, and that sophistication continues today. In recent years SACOG has developed innovative programs, and provided technical assistance and policy guidance to push the region forward, including: having an integral role in negotiating Sacramento’s highly successful bike and scooter share program; aid in coordination of a smart-transfer platform between transit systems; development of the Civic Lab program to promote mobility innovation; the Transit-Oriented Development Tool Kit and ensuing Action Plan; and regional emergency preparedness guidance, to name a few.

Despite these laudable efforts, the Sacramento Region has not met its mandated 2020 GHG reduction target, and is not on track to meet its 2035 target. ECOS believes that SB 375 is one of the most important laws ever passed by California, but it is clear that successful implementation is going to take more than the current regulatory paradigm that SB 375 provides to integrate land use and transportation planning effectively to achieve state mandates.

The region and the State can and must do more. Our local agencies must begin altering their growth plans in compliance with the regional plan with urgency. The State must provide more tools to ensure local compliance, and the State must also take action to ensure its own transportation dollars are allocated in compliance with its own climate and equity goals.

ECOS does not believe that SACOG’s plan is the region’s primary inhibitor to achieving our climate goals. Following are suggestions to improve the 2020 MTP/SCS within SACOG’s authority.

Land use scenario

ECOS believes that the growth footprint of the region for the next 20 years could and should be much more compact than the proposed plan. However, we recognize that the proposed land use scenario is unrealistically compact compared to the current expansive planning of many of the region’s jurisdictions.

ECOS questions the reclassification of some communities that were considered “Developing” in 2016 as “Established” in 2020, but this reclassification only shifts the perception of the infill vs. greenfield development proportion perhaps a couple of percentage points. ECOS is not so concerned with whether the proposed land use footprint presumes 37% or 39% greenfield development, when we think the

8-1
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8-2

conversation needs to be about how the region's greenfield development could be reduced to 10% or less.

Only political constraints, not physical constraints, prevent the region from realizing such a compact growth scenario. In our comments on the 2016 MTP/SCS, ECOS wrote:

Referring to MTP Table 3.10, roughly 75% of the total 1,287,421 acres of the Established Communities category in the MTP is not currently developed. The existing developed area of the Established Communities is 264,242 gross acres, with 16,619 allocated for development. "Center/Corridor Communities" have 36,821 gross acres, with 26,684 currently developed and 3,825 designated for development in the MTP. Current residential density in the developed portion of Established Communities is quite low: 2.6 dwelling units (DUs) per gross acre (GA) and 4.1 DUs per net residential acre (NRA). The numbers are slightly better in the Center/Corridor Communities: 4.0 DU/GA and 10.5 DU/NRA respectively, (DU/GA, MTP Tables 3.2 and 3.10; DU/NRA, MTP Table 5A.3). By comparison, the *average* density in all of San Francisco is 12 DU/GA, and one million people in the densest 33 ZIP codes of Los Angeles live at a similarly high average density (2010 U.S. census).

... we can make rough numerical estimates of the densities that could be achieved by a "what-if" strategy of directing growth solely into already developed portions of Centers and Corridors and Established Communities. Assuming all anticipated growth is equally divided between these two categories (increase of 142,448 DUs in each), this strategy would push the gross residential density in Established Communities to 3.1 DU/GA (4.9 DU/NRA), and 9.4 DU/GA (24.4 DU/NRA) in Centers & Corridors. Even in this extreme all-infill scenario, the densities in Established Communities are still not high values for transit-oriented density ... and those in Centers/Corridors still fall short of densities achieved in both San Francisco and Los Angeles.

Note that the above numbers are all specific to the 2016 MTP, as we were not able to locate the equivalent data in the 2020 to update these density estimates. Yet, as the population growth estimates in the 2020 plan are less than in 2016, it is safe to assume that hypothetical densities referenced here would be even less in such a scenario. Of course, reallocation of anticipated growth is not this simple, but we offer this rough calculation as an illustrative reference point for how much potential for infill there is in the region that is not being capitalized upon.

Regardless of how much more compact regional growth could ideally be, ECOS acknowledges SACOG's proposed MTP/SCS as an ambitious, viable compromise for the region to meet our required GHG reduction targets. However, the reality is that many of the region's jurisdictions are planning peripheral, automobile-oriented, greenfield development.

The table below (derived from the table on page 5 in Appendix C of the 2020 MTP/SCS) compares the growth forecast by community type in the MTP compared to planned "Build Out" of the region's cumulative general plans.

The planning horizons of the region's respective general plans range from 2030 to 2050, an average of which makes these growth projections at "build out" roughly commensurate with the horizon year of the MTP/SCS. The total build out of the general plans of the Sacramento region anticipates 660,760 houses beyond existing stock in 2016 – well more than **2.5 times** SACOG's estimate of housing growth for 2016-40. Of this 660,760 figure, over 60% of the growth is greenfield development: with **2.3 times** more growth in SACOG's "Developing Community" areas, and **17 times** more growth in "Rural Residential" areas than in the SCS.

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8-3

2020 MTP/SCS, Appendix C, Land Use Forecast, Regional Totals

Jurisdiction / Community Type	Existing Conditions		Draft Preferred Scenario		Build Out Estimate		Unrealized Growth	
	Total in Year 2016		Total in Year 2040		Total at Build Out		Build Out minus Projected Year 2040	
	Jobs	Housing Units	Jobs	Housing Units	Jobs	Housing Units	Jobs	Housing Units
Region Total	1,060,960	921,150	1,330,490	1,181,170	2,169,010	1,581,910	838,520	400,740
Center and Corridor Communities	370,920	113,920	453,750	200,530	581,680	224,240	127,930	23,710
Established Communities	644,370	711,050	789,430	792,200	1,066,430	848,780	277,000	56,580
Developing Communities	12,130	20,480	52,870	110,000	301,670	230,980	248,800	120,980
Rural Residential Communities	30,130	73,750	31,540	76,550	73,200	122,240	41,660	45,690
Areas Not Identified for Growth in the MTP/SCS by 2040	3,410	1,950	2,900	1,890	146,030	155,670	143,130	153,780

8-3
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153,780 planned units are completely outside of the SCS footprint, and these figures do not include major potential expansion areas that are currently being pursued, including proposals such as a full build out of Cordova Hills, the “Natomas North Precinct” and “Upper West Side” proposals, adopted and continued applications to expand the Sphere of Influence of the City of Elk Grove, further speculation to expand south of Folsom, and significant rural residential growth in Placer and El Dorado counties that is not anticipated by the SACOG plan.

If realized, any one of these expansion proposals could be a detriment to successful implementation of SACOG's plan; taken together these plans would certainly eliminate any possibility of the region meeting its mandated GHG reduction targets.

The 2040 transportation plan that is proposed by the 2016 MTP/SCS Update to meet our emission reduction targets necessarily relies on significantly increased residential densities. Jurisdictions in the Sacramento region must make a commitment to constrain their growth patterns to meet these densities or the multi-modal transportation system as is currently envisioned for 2040 will never be built.

Environmental Justice and Displacement

SACOG offers very sophisticated analysis of the location and needs of disadvantaged communities in the region, but we are disappointed at the lack of discussion or analysis of the risk of displacement to the region's most vulnerable residents in the plan. This could have been avoided by integration of work on this issue that SACOG has been developing in parallel to the MTP, in the Transit-Oriented Development Tool Kit and Action plan.

Success of the 2020 MTP/SCS in meeting our climate goals relies on significant investment in infill development and supporting transportation infrastructure. Yet, infill investment inevitably adds to gentrification and displacement pressures on low-income residents in these existing communities. Thus, this needed infill investment *must* be coupled with anti-displacement protections to guard against the perpetuation of historical patterns of segregation, to ensure the vulnerable residents of these communities equitably reap the benefits of these investments, as well as to ensure that our ability to meet our climate goals is not undermined by forcing low-wage workers into long commutes.

8-4

Low-income residents use transit and active transportation options more than others, if it's available. Displacing these residents to the urban periphery not only disproportionately burdens these families, but also eats up agricultural land and open space and increase VMT and associated GHG emissions. Displacement is the Achilles heel of smart growth policy and is a problem we can no longer afford to ignore.

SACOG's TOD Tool Kit recognizes this, offering a substantial discussion of both the factors that contribute to displacement and menu of policy remedies that could be employed by jurisdictions to mitigate displacement pressures.

8-4
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SACOG's first priority should be to integrate this work from the developing TOD Action Plan into the MTP. Further, where SACOG *does* have direct control of discretionary funding, having anti-displacement strategies in place should be an explicit criteria for allocation of these funds. This should be of particular importance for awarding funds under SACOG's proposed "Green Means Go" program to subsidize and accelerate infill development, if it were to be funded by the State.

8-5

Looking forward, SACOG (and all Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs)) need to provide leadership in developing a quantitative methodology for analyzing displacement risk and the potential impacts to housing economics and VMT performance that displacement poses.

Revenue Presumptions

SACOG's plan relies on significant presumptions about future revenues that are not entirely certain or within SACOG's control to implement. The MTP/SCS presumes revenues from two local transportation tax measures with undetermined content and not certain to pass; it anticipates a State budget allocation for the proposed "Green Means Go" program; and it relies on significant revenues from road-pricing strategies that would require State and local actions to authorize and implement.

8-6

If these new revenue streams are realized, it is imperative that SACOG, the local jurisdictions and the State ensure that the revenues are strictly used in accordance with the MTP/SCS and our climate goals, and are not just perpetuating the status quo. For projects funded by the proposed "Green Means Go" program, SACOG should provide VMT performance criteria, inclusionary housing targets, and anti-displacement strategies.

Road-Pricing Strategies

We agree that new road pricing strategies should be explored to replace diminishing gas tax revenues (due to better vehicle efficiency) and decreased federal transportation investment. Any such strategies should ultimately be aimed not only at replacing lost revenues, but also to reflect the true cost of driving on our environment and communities, in an effort to shift travel behavior to non-auto modes.

However, in employment of such future strategies, care must be given to identify and mitigate adverse impacts on low income communities, particularly low-income rural communities, and we commend SACOG for its expressed intent to explore these topics in its recent road-pricing pilot proposal. We are concerned about reliance on road-pricing strategies that would require local and State actions, and on the significant VMT and GHG reductions presumed due to these strategies.

8-7

Road-pricing strategies have the potential to reduce driving, if employed correctly, but this will depend on whether there are viable travel alternatives to driving for the region. Raising the cost of driving will not stop people from driving to work if driving is the only way to get there. SACOG needs to explain how revenues from these pricing strategies will be used to provide non-auto alternatives to account for the planned VMT reduction.

We question whether VMT/GHG reduction requiring State action should be counted towards a region's GHG reduction target under SB 375, or towards the identified VMT reduction that is needed by actions of the State *beyond* the SB 375 targets to meet California's 2050 climate goals. It can't be both, and this is an issue that must be resolved by the MPOs and the Air Resources Board.

8-8

SACOG should encourage local air pollution control districts to adopt indirect source rules, similar to that adopted by the San Joaquin Valley Unified Air Pollution Control District, to mitigate the VMT emissions caused by new land developments. Funds generated by these rules should be directed to funding alternatives to these emissions, for example, by funding public transit.

Alternatives Analysis

We are disappointed that SACOG decided to dismiss our recommendation to analyze an all-infill scenario as "not realistic or feasible." We acknowledge that a 100% infill scenario would likely have practical physical constraints that would make it infeasible, but SACOG should analyze the performance of the most compact scenario that is physically feasible (even if not politically feasible) as a reference point. We believe that analysis of the consequences of the much more expansive planning that is actually occurring in the region beyond the SCS footprint would be extremely valuable.

8-9

Of the alternatives that were analyzed, we note that both the slightly-more-compact and slightly-more-expansive scenarios were all projected to have the same GHG reduction performance as the Preferred Scenario, with the only apparent variable being the degree of road-pricing that was applied.

ECOS does not disagree with the emphasis put on the importance of the cost of driving in this analysis, or the assertion that if we make poor land use decisions we should pay for it. But we are not convinced that increased road-pricing strategies alone will fully mitigate the impacts of more expansive land use, absent alternatives to driving. Indeed, these alternatives might be funded by revenues from road pricing.

8-10

Further, reducing the variables of an alternatives analysis solely to the cost-of-driving fully illustrates the many impacts associated with more expansive growth, such as loss of biodiversity, agricultural land and open space; risk of fire or flood, and health and economic impacts on our communities. We do not expect that an alternatives analysis should fully duplicate for each alternative all the analysis of the MTP's preferred scenario. However, an analysis that pivots on the cost-of-driving alone minimizes the importance of land use decisions in achieving GHG reduction and other co-benefits.

Transportation investments

SACOG's proposed plan offers a viable strategy for the region to meet our mandated GHG reduction targets and represents a improved future. We believe the region should more aggressively invest in non-auto infrastructure to ensure the next twenty years of growth will indeed follow SACOG's plan accordingly.

ECOS believes a greater proportion of investment in transit and active transportation is needed, and we are disappointed that investment in road capacity increases in the 2020 plan compared to the 2016 plan. We are also disappointed to see SACOG follow a statewide trend in classifying some road-widening projects as "maintenance" which, if classified correctly as "capacity" projects, would further increase the proportion of road capacity funding. Adding auxiliary lanes, even if for good reason (restricted high-occupancy-vehicle lanes etc.), still adds capacity and should be classified as such. This mis-classification is a trend that must stop.

8-11

Highway capacity projects, many of which were already in planning prior to the passage of our climate laws, are a large part of why regions across the state are not meeting their VMT and GHG reduction targets. Many studies have shown that investing in added road capacity induces additional VMT, does not reduce congestion effectively, diverts resources from alternative modes that would reduce congestion, adds to already high road-maintenance costs, and promotes low-density car-oriented growth.

Local jurisdictions and the State should reconsider whether these road capacity projects are worth pursuing, and, if so, how to mitigate for their VMT impacts. MPOs, including SACOG, have an important role to play in these considerations. SB 743 implementation is a critical opportunity to do so. SACOG should provide more guidance to local jurisdictions on effective implementation of SB 743. Particularly, SACOG should provide guidance on how regional facilities could be mitigated and funded through collaborative strategies, such as mitigation banking.

In addition to the concern for the proportion of funding directed to road capacity, ECOS is also concerned with the timing of these projects. Many would occur in the early years of the plan, while the major transit investments would be funded in the final years of the plan.

ECOS would like to see our transit investments made earlier. We recommend that SACOG develop an explicit “phasing methodology,” to determine the cost and benefits associated with the timing of a project and the cumulative effects on the performance of the plan depending on that timing. Consistency with the SCS, for both transportation infrastructure and land use development, should take timing into account. While developing such a phasing methodology may go beyond the mandate of SB 375, it is a necessary step for successful SCS implementation, and SACOG should provide continued leadership in this regard.

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VMT and GHG determinations

In the 2020 plan, SACOG does a better job than before in explaining travel behavior in the region and the importance of VMT reduction and the need for change. SACOG has determined explicit VMT reduction targets to meet California’s 2050 climate goals, and has illustrated that the region is not meeting them. What is still lacking is an explanation of how these methodologies would be applied to specific projects, or across the plan cumulatively.

To fully exhibit how the plan operates, SACOG should break out the major road and transit investments, with a full per-project performance and cost/benefits analysis. This would go beyond the SB 375 mandate, but would illustrate how the major investments of regional import interact and would go a long way to understanding the trade-offs to be considered. This would be a valuable next step for SCS implementation, and SACOG's leadership would be valuable.

8-12

While the explanation of VMT and the methodologies employed are very informative, the MTP/SCS provides little illustration of how final determinations are made. Specifically there is little clarity on how a reduction of 6% in VMT per capita translates to a 19% GHG reduction. This determination continues to be a “black box” of modeling to the layperson, which SACOG has the tools to better illuminate.

8-13

Conclusion

We hope that these observations and suggestions on the 2020 MTP/SCS are viewed as constructive. We applaud SACOG for a great body of work that has led to this plan. SACOG can do better, but the primary impediment to the region meeting its mandated GHG reduction targets is not SACOG’s plan. The locals, the regions and the State must all do more to ensure we meet our climate, health, and equity goals, and to ensure that all of our communities prosper. ECOS is committed to work with SACOG and the region to ensure this happens. Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

8-14

Sincerely,



Ralph Propper, President
Environmental Council of Sacramento

ECOS

Comment 8-1

Thank you for your comments on the draft MTP/SCS. This comment does not raise any issues related to adequacy of the Draft EIR.

In response to the comments on the MTP/SCS, we acknowledge ECOS' summary of the state's greenhouse gas reduction strategy and the state's 2018 progress report on SB 375 implementation. SACOG's own 2017 progress report shows similar trends to the state report, though also shows that the SACOG region had unique trends compared to the rest of the state, such as a lack of multifamily and infill housing development, and a less than robust jobs recovery.

Thank you for acknowledging the draft MTP/SCS as a viable strategy for the region to meet its regional GHG reduction targets. Within the framework of SACOG's statutory role and obligations as a metropolitan planning organization and regional transportation planning agency, the 2020 MTP/SCS forecasts less time spent in congestion, cleaner air, fewer greenhouse gas emissions per capita, a modernized, more productive transit system, and more ways for residents to choose walking or biking for some of their daily trips. The plan achieves its positive outcomes by developing a phasing strategy for growth and transportation investments over 20 years.

We agree though, that the region and State can and must do more than in the past if we are to realize the outcomes of this plan and successful implementation of SB 375. This need for coordinated local actions, supportive state policy and tools, and interagency partnerships, is acknowledged in the four action elements of Chapter 4 (pages 51-56).

Two prominent examples of where the region and State must do more:

- The "Green Means Go" pilot program to pair targeted housing and transportation investments together to spur catalyst infill projects in order to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. In the program, locally-identified Green Zones create areas targeted for infill and compact development, increasing housing and transportation options and promoting shorter, fewer, and cleaner vehicle trips.

- Development of a road user charge pilot is another effort where SACOG will need strong partnership from the State. Just last month SACOG applied in partnership with two other MPOs for a Caltrans planning grant to design a roadway user charge pilot that will help us to better understand how best to implement a pricing system that is equitable to low-income and rural communities, raises revenues to pay for the transportation system of the MTP/SCS, and manages transportation demand to reduce transportation GHG emissions.

These two efforts are new to the MTP/SCS, are critical to its success, and need local, regional and State level support in order for them to launch and be effective. We also see the need for State help with a reasonable substitute for redevelopment and RHNA reform that focuses on housing production.

Comment 8-2

ECOS asserts the 20-year growth footprint of the draft MTP/SCS should be more compact and rely more heavily upon infill development within Established Communities and Center and Corridors Communities, and asserts that that political, not physical, constraints prevent the region from realizing more compact growth. This comment is on the MTP/SCS and does not raise any issues related to adequacy of the Draft EIR.

In response to the comments on the MTP/SCS, SACOG notes that economic factors are presently the most influential constraint to all growth in the region. SACOG's 2017 Regional Progress Report showed that after the 2008 market crash, the region should be building 11,000 homes per year to keep up with housing demand. However, in the 10

years following the crash, the region averaged just under 4,000 homes per year, despite local plans and entitlements allowing for much more development.

The 2017 Regional Progress Report also showed that of the major metropolitan regions in California, the Sacramento region gained more jobs before the recession and lost more jobs during the recession. And while the Sacramento region has recovered the number of jobs lost during the recession, household incomes were still below pre-recession levels as of 2015. These economic trends have been factored into the land use forecast of the draft MTP/SCS.

Since the 2008 recession, residential and commercial financing and financial feasibility has, and continues to be, a challenge everywhere, including both infill and greenfield locations in the region. This challenge and others are factored into the development of the land use forecast. Please see pages 17-21 of Appendix D of the draft MTP/SCS for a full discussion of the challenges to development in infill and greenfield environments, and how these were factored into the development of the land use forecast.

Not noted in the Regional Progress Report, but influential on the pace of infill development in the Sacramento region, was the dissolution of local government redevelopment authority. Most of the near-term infill and redevelopment projected in the prior two MTP/SCS' was in former redevelopment areas. To overcome the challenges facing infill development, SACOG, its member agencies, and private and public sector stakeholders, did conceive of the Green Means Go program. However, this program requires State action to be realized, and it alone will not ensure the region achieves its GHG reduction targets. It needs to complement the host of other regional programs that support local MTP/SCS implementation—SACOG's Regional Flexible Funding Program, the Rural Urban Connections Strategy, Civic Lab, the Regional Housing Needs Allocation, the Mobility Innovation Accelerator, TOD Action Plan, regional local grant assistance and partnership, and others. And as noted in response 8-1, above, other supportive actions from the State are also needed.

The draft MTP/SCS does assume more than two-dozen new greenfield areas break ground prior to 2040. This assumption is due to evidence of market demand for the type of housing and lifestyles offered in these greenfield communities, as well as projections that the Sacramento region is a fast-growing region even after the recession. The MTP/SCS does acknowledge that, as housing production doubles, and new Developing Communities break ground, it will be critical for the region to develop a balance of infill and greenfield growth over time to avoid the uncoordinated development pattern of the early 2000s that led to worsening congestion and air quality.

Comment 8-3

ECOS notes that the growth in the 2020 MTP/SCS is less than the sum of the large development capacity, or build out capacity, within the local plans of SACOG's 28 member cities and counties. This comment is on the MTP/SCS and does not raise any issues related to adequacy of the Draft EIR.

In response to the comments on the MTP/SCS, the statement made by ECOS is true. The MTP/SCS and local general plans are two related, but different, kinds of planning documents. General plans are by nature aspirational, have widely ranging timeframes and are not comprehensively updated frequently. The MTP/SCS must be a fiscally and time-constrained plan, with a forecasted growth pattern that is consistent with—i.e., not exceeding—the region's 2040 forecasted population, employment, and housing growth. For example, if a city has a general plan with a 20-year planning horizon, the MTP/SCS growth forecast may indicate growth on only a portion of the land designated in the city's general plan for future growth. The reverse may also be true. The MTP/SCS growth forecast may show growth in areas that are not yet formally included in a county's or city's general plan if SACOG estimates that there is market demand for growth in that location and that the entitlement process can realistically be expected to be successfully completed and construction begun during the planning period. This means the region has more than adequate room in proposed and adopted local land use plans to accommodate projected growth over the next 20 years. The MTP/SCS, inclusive of its transportation investment strategy, planning and investment policies, and implementing actions, lays out a strategy for coordinating and phasing land development with transportation projects that accommodates growth and enhances quality of life.

The plan also acknowledges the risk of uncoordinated growth: “Where housing is constructed also has implications for air quality, natural resources, quality of life, and local government budgets. As housing production doubles, it will be critical to maintain a balance of infill and greenfield growth over time to avoid an uncoordinated development pattern that can create more traffic congestion, harmful air pollution from vehicles, and additional cost for local governments that provide services and maintain infrastructure. Furthermore, for over a decade, consumers have been demanding a wider range of housing types — whether for lifestyle, budget, or both.” (Page 25, Chapter 3.)

In Chapter 4, Policies and Implementing Actions, the plan describes the actions SACOG and local government partners will take to support increased residential densities, more infill development, and coordinated development and transportation investments.

Please also see response to Comment 8-1.

Comment 8-4

This comment is on the MTP/SCS and does not raise any issues related to adequacy of the Draft EIR. In response to the comments on the MTP/SCS, we thank you for acknowledging SACOG’s continued effort to improve our analysis of the needs of disadvantaged communities in the Sacramento region. The TOD Toolkit and TOD Action Plan are collaborations between local jurisdictions and SACOG. These are examples of the technical assistance, tools and coordination SACOG provides to member cities and counties in their work to implement the MTP/SCS.

The draft plan has been amended to include a discussion of displacement risk on page 50 of Chapter 4:

“The plan’s growth strategy also assumes a reversal of historic building trends in that the majority of new homes in the future will be built as either attached homes or single-family homes on smaller lots. This mix of new housing products is critical for housing choice, affordability, walkability, transportation options, and preserving open space and agricultural land.

Although housing and employment development and physical improvements such as lighting, sidewalks, and increased transit service are positive steps needed to build vibrant communities, they come with the risk of unintended negative consequences. These include displacement, meaning that a neighborhood’s increasing desirability as it is improved leads to rising housing costs that can drive out existing residents.

Displacement can make a community less equitable, because lower income residents can no longer afford to live there, making it harder to access its opportunities and amenities. A related negative consequence can be that some residents may perceive that improvements that have been made without including them in the planning are not for them or they don’t understand how to use them.

Anti-displacement strategies at a local level such as engaging potentially affected residents and helping them build that social capital will be critical to building vibrant communities. Because there is much debate over what solutions can be used to solve or alleviate displacement issues, jurisdictions will need to identify policies and programs that best fit their unique needs and priorities.

The MTP/SCS relies on and supports a concerted effort on the part of cities and counties to foster a balance of jobs and housing. Understanding that not all residents will choose to live and work in the same community, more housing near job centers, and more jobs near major residential areas, will provide choice and reduce the growth rate of vehicle miles traveled. The plan’s land use forecast assumes that housing-rich jurisdictions will invest in, attract, and encourage job growth, and that today’s jobs-rich jurisdictions will invest in, attract, and encourage compact residential development.”

Regarding ECOS comment that the TOD Action Plan be integrated into the MTP, the TOD Action Plan is identified as an implementation tool of the MTP, for use by SACOG’s member cities and counties, and transit agency partners, to further two of the plan’s objectives: Build vibrant places for today’s and tomorrow’s residents; Foster the next generation of mobility solutions. SACOG has modified the following actions in Chapter 4 of the draft MTP/SCS to highlight this resource:

“Continue to provide tools and project support to grow regional jobs and housing, including tools for preventing displacement. Examples include the TOD Toolkit, Rural-Urban Connections Strategy, Economic Prosperity Strategy, Housing Policy Toolkit, SB 375 and SB 743 CEQA streamlining.”

and

“Continue to provide technical assistance to support urban, suburban, and rural community revitalization without displacement.”

Comment 8-5

This comment is on the MTP/SCS and does not raise any issues related to adequacy of the Draft EIR.

In response to the comments on the MTP/SCS with regard to discretionary funding, Policy 23 states that SACOG will: “prioritize and incentivize transportation investments that benefit environmental justice communities.” Specific criteria for allocation of SACOG’s discretionary funds would be considered during developing of funding program guidelines to ensure guidelines are consistent with the requirements of each funding source. SACOG develops program guidelines in a public process and welcomes ECOS and other stakeholders to engage in the development of funding program guidelines in the future.

SACOG will continue to work on improving its data, tools and analyses of displacement and risks to historically vulnerable populations to support local jurisdictions and lead agencies which have direct control over designing and implementing local programs and policies to address displacement risk.

Comment 8-6

This comment is on the MTP/SCS and does not raise any issues related to adequacy of the Draft EIR.

In response to the comments on the MTP/SCS, the financial constraint assumptions for the draft MTP/SCS are developed according to federal and state transportation planning guidance. In accordance with this, the revenues must be reasonable available during the planning period. Voter-approved local transportation sales tax measures and fees, Green Means Go, and revenue from road-pricing strategies, are revenue assumptions consistent with federal rules governing metropolitan transportation planning. Please see Appendix I for further description.

SACOG appreciates the assertion that new revenue streams should be implemented in strict accordance with the MTP/SCS and state climate goals. Not only is this required of transportation projects receiving state or federal funding, the draft MTP/SCS also includes Policies 9-16 to guide the SACOG Board’s policy decisions related to transportation planning and funding.

Regarding program criteria for the proposed Green Means Go program, funding criteria for the program will need to be developed in partnership with the state and member agencies through a public process, if and when, SACOG is able to successfully secure funding for the program. We invite ECOS to participate as an engaged stakeholder to share its ideas for program criteria.

Comment 8-7

This comment is on the MTP/SCS and does not raise any issues related to adequacy of the Draft EIR.

In response to the comments on the MTP/SCS, thank you for your interest and general support for the road pricing strategies of the draft MTP/SCS. Please see Policies 11, 12, 14, 15, and 16, which will guide SACOG’s pilot testing, design, partnerships, and ultimately deployment of road pricing strategies. Policy 16 in particular relates to minimizing impacts of facility and mileage-based pricing on lower income and rural households.

The plan also includes several actions directing SACOG to work in partnership with several agencies to identify options for both facility-based pricing and mileage-based pricing strategies.

Just last month SACOG applied in partnership with two other MPOs for a Caltrans planning grant to design a roadway user charge pilot that will help us to better understand how best to implement a pricing system that is equitable to low-income and rural communities. A task in this project is to engage advocacy and interest groups in the scoping phase of the project, and as advisors to the design and testing work. We will be inviting ECOS and other advocacy and interest groups when this project starts.

Comment 8-8

This comment is on the MTP/SCS and does not raise any issues related to adequacy of the Draft EIR.

In response to the comments on the MTP/SCS, SACOG will continue to work with the Air Resources Board and MPOs on the coordinated regional and state actions needed to meet the regional GHG emissions reduction targets and the state overall climate goals as set forth in the 2017 Scoping Plan.

As part of SACOG's SB 743 technical assistance to local agencies, VMT mitigation concepts will be studied. We will involve our local air pollution control district partners as we have in past efforts that support mutual goals.

Comment 8-9

This comment expresses disappointment that an all-infill scenario was not analyzed in the Draft EIR. As stated in the Draft EIR, SACOG eliminated this alternative from detailed review based on a finding that it does not represent a reasonable land use forecast based on the latest available land use conditions and trends. MPOs in air quality non-attainment areas must use the latest available estimates and assumptions for population, land use, travel, employment, congestion, and economic activity in the development of the MTP (23 C.F.R. Section 450.322(e)). Not doing so would jeopardize the plan's conformity analysis by basing future emissions estimates on a land use pattern that is infeasible to implement. SACOG cannot supersede the exercise of land use authority by cities and counties within the region. (Gov. Code, § 65080, subd. (b)(2)(K).)

SACOG analyzed policy, regulatory, and market factors including status of local, state, and federal entitlement applications, as applicable; housing permit activity in the vicinity of the project; major infrastructure requirements; and developer readiness to pursue entitlement and construction; to inform the land use projection. The proposed MTP/SCS and Alternatives 1 and 2 reflect growth patterns that are consistent with this analysis. An all infill alternative would not acknowledge the current condition of Developing Communities that are already approved and constructing development. It also would not acknowledge that the majority of Rural Residential Communities already allow a certain amount of development by right, so excluding growth from these communities would not represent a realistic or feasible alternative. SACOG notes that political and economic constraints are an acceptable reason for finding an alternative infeasible under CEQA. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21081, subd. (a)(3) [alternatives may be found infeasible based on "specific economic, legal, social, technological, or other considerations"]; CEQA Guidelines, § 15126.6, subd. (f)(1) [in devising a range of alternatives, the lead agency may take into account site suitability, economic viability, availability of infrastructure, general plan consistency, and consistency with other plans or regulatory limitations, among other factors].)

While political constraints may play a role in the infeasibility of a 100% infill alternative, economic constraints play an even larger role. Federal transportation planning law also requires land development forecasts be based on reasonable assumptions (40 C.F.R. §93.122(b)(1)). Given this requirement, SACOG only considered alternatives that meet that standard. As noted in the response to comment 8-2, above, the draft MTP/SCS articulates the many market challenges to infill areas of the region, and which make a 100% infill scenario an infeasible alternative for consideration.

The draft MTP/SCS articulates some of the market challenges in the infill areas of the region:

"Barriers to growth in the Centers and Corridors include limited public and private sector financing, especially in the short term given current lending practices and the lack of redevelopment funds. In many cases, existing infrastructure capacity is not sufficient, and financing improvements can be challenging due to the multiple owners typically found in fine-grained urban lot patterns. Remediating contaminated soils and groundwater is another barrier on some of these lands." (Appendix D, pg. 18.)

And with regard to Established Communities, the other category of infill areas:

"Residential and commercial financing and financial feasibility is currently a challenge everywhere, including Established Communities. Older auto-oriented shopping and strip centers in mature suburbs may be in decline, but market economics may not yet be ripe for reuse projects. Additionally, many neighborhoods have arterials and local streets that experience significant traffic and congestion, need maintenance and rehabilitation, and lack attractive transit, pedestrian and bicycle facilities." (Appendix D, pg. 19.)

SACOG did not analyze an alternative with more expansive development pattern because of results from a body of scenario analysis conducted over the course of the last two MTP/SCS updates. Results from those scenario analyses showed that a more expansive development pattern, under a fiscally constrained transportation funding scenario, would not achieve the region's SB 375 GHG target.

ECOS also notes that all alternatives analyzed were projected to have the same GHG reduction performance as the Preferred Alternative. This is true; because a key objective of the project is to meet the SB 375 GHG reduction target, SACOG designed alternatives that would, if implemented, achieve that target. Pages 18-5–18-6 of the Draft EIR describes the variables used in the design of the alternatives. System pricing, as described in this section, is one of several variables that affect passenger-vehicle GHG emissions. No edits to the Draft EIR are required in response to Comment 8-9.

Comment 8-10

ECOS states that it does not disagree with the emphasis put on the importance of the cost of driving in the analysis of alternatives, but questions whether road-pricing strategies alone can fully mitigate impacts without alternatives to driving.

Based on analysis of many land use and transportation variables, SACOG agrees that road-pricing strategies alone will not mitigate the impacts of more expansive land uses. As noted in response to comment 8-9, the three alternatives analyzed in the draft EIR were varied based on several land use and transportation factors, including cost of driving. The alternatives analysis shows that both Alternative 1 (Outward Expansion) and the No Project Alternative have greater environmental impacts across most resource categories, including air quality, biological resources, agricultural land and open space, risk of fire and flood, and transportation. No edits to the Draft EIR are required in response to Comment 8-10.

Comment 8-11

This comment is on the MTP/SCS and does not raise any issues related to adequacy of the Draft EIR.

In response to the comments on the MTP/SCS, although the dollar amount of investment in road capacity projects is higher in the draft MTP/SCS compared to the 2016 MTP/SCS, the draft MTP/SCS adds 100 fewer lane miles of capacity projects. The dollar amount increased because of updated project cost estimates from project sponsors. The reduction in lane miles is based on a more compact development pattern, the reality of rapidly increasing costs of capacity projects and the lack of revenues to pay for them, and a stricter SB 375 GHG target.

We have classified auxiliary lanes as system management "operations" projects in the draft MTP/SCS. This is a separate expenditure category from "maintenance" and "capacity." This categorization was done to maintain consistency with Caltrans definitions for those projects. These projects do add capacity to the state highway system, and for this reason they are modeled as non-exempt projects in SACOG's air quality conformity analysis.

Regarding SB 743 implementation, SACOG does convene a local agency working group to support member agencies in effective implementation of SB 743. With a Caltrans planning grant, SACOG is currently working with the local agency working group and a consultant to identify best practice tools for SB 743 implementation. Please see SACOG's project webpage for more information: <https://www.sacog.org/sb-743-technical-assistance>.

Regarding the development of a phasing methodology, SACOG is committed to advancing the state of the practice for making performance-based decisions when it comes to transportation infrastructure. The draft MTP/SCS includes a commitment to ongoing efforts at SACOG to "Continue to improve project assessment tools that support data-informed decision-making." This includes cost-benefit analysis, where appropriate, that can examine the cumulative effects of various transportation infrastructure investments.

Finally, the timing of projects in the plan is also affected by financial constraints that make advancing major projects, and transit projects with significant operating costs in particular, a significant challenge. SACOG is committed to partnering with member agencies, the state, private sector partners, and stakeholder groups to prepare grant applications or identify innovative financing mechanisms to advance projects that are supportive of the objectives in the draft MTP/SCS. As ECOS suggests, improving technical analysis tools, such as benefit-cost analysis, is part of the work needed to support these phasing strategies.

Comment 8-12

This comment is on the MTP/SCS and does not raise any issues related to adequacy of the Draft EIR.

In response to the comments on the MTP/SCS, SACOG has determined that the screening process applied to inclusion of projects for construction by the horizon year of the MTP/SCS, plus the process of reviewing current conditions versus future/growth-dependent need in the Project Performance Assessment for SACOG funding rounds provides the most useful information to support phasing decisions on transportation projects. SACOG is committed to improving the project assessment tools moving forward (see response to comment 8-11). Future improvements to the Project Performance Assessment tools will consider more robust assessment of VMT impact of transportation projects.

Comment 8-13

This comment is on the MTP/SCS and does not raise any issues related to adequacy of the Draft EIR.

In response to the comments on the MTP/SCS, the 6% reduction in VMT per capita referred to in the comment is a change from 2016 (base year for MTP/SCS) to 2040, for total VMT.

The 19% GHG reduction is a change from 2005 (base year for SB 375) to 2035 (target year for SB 375), for passenger vehicle GHG only. This is the target for the region set by ARB, and requires use of a 2005 base year to calculate whether the 2035 target will be met.

SACOG notes that 2005 was near-peak VMT per capita in the SACOG region. As a result, some of the difference is accounted for by the difference in base years (VMT per capita between 2005 and 2016 declined by 6%). Also, some GHG reduction in the 19% is related to factors other than VMT (e.g. ITS and TSM improvement smoothing traffic flow and locally funded EV incentives).

Comment 8-14

Thank you for your comments. SACOG looks forward to continuing to work with ECOS as the MTP/SCS is implemented.

SACOG DRAFT EIR PUBLIC COMMENT MEETING (OCTOBER 24, 2019)

Comment 9-1

At this meeting held October 24, 2019 by SACOG staff, attendees were given the opportunity to present oral comments on the Draft EIR. No one presented comments on the Draft EIR. No further response is required.



Gavin Newsom
Governor

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



Kate Gordon
Director

Letter
10

November 7, 2019

Renee Devere-Okie
Sacramento Area Council of Governments
1415 L Street, Suite 300
Sacramento, CA 95814

Subject: 2020 Metropolitan Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (MTP/SCS)
SCH#: 2019049139

Dear Renee Devere-Okie:

The State Clearinghouse submitted the above named EIR to selected state agencies for review. The review period closed on 11/6/2019, and the comments from the responding agency (ies) is (are) available on the CEQA database for your retrieval and use. If this comment package is not in order, please notify the State Clearinghouse immediately. Please refer to the project's ten-digit State Clearinghouse number in future correspondence so that we may respond promptly.

Please note that Section 21104(c) of the California Public Resources Code states that:

"A responsible or other public agency shall only make substantive comments regarding those activities involved in a project which are within an area of expertise of the agency or which are required to be carried out or approved by the agency. Those comments shall be supported by specific documentation."

Check the CEQA database for submitted comments for use in preparing your final environmental document: <https://ceqanet.opr.ca.gov/2019049139/3>. Should you need more information or clarification of the comments, **we recommend that you contact the commenting agency directly.**

This letter acknowledges that you have complied with the State Clearinghouse review requirements for draft environmental documents, pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act. Please contact the State Clearinghouse at (916) 445-0613 if you have any questions regarding the environmental review process.

Sincerely,

Scott Morgan
Director, State Clearinghouse

cc: Resources Agency

1400 TENTH STREET P.O. BOX 3044 SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA 95812-3044
TEL 1-916-445-0613 state.clearinghouse@opr.ca.gov www.opr.ca.gov

OFFICE OF PLANNING AND RESEARCH STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

Comment 10-1

This comment summarizes the steps taken by the State Clearinghouse to circulation the Draft EIR. No response is necessary.

Comment 10-2

This comment provides a weblink to the comments received from the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (Letter 3). Please see all responses to Letter 3.

Comment 10-3

This comment confirms that SACOG has complied with the State Clearinghouse review requirements. No response is necessary.

CHAPTER 4 – REVISIONS TO THE DRAFT EIR

This chapter includes the revisions to the Draft EIR. These revisions include minor edits and clarifications that have been made in response to comments received on the Draft EIR and minor corrections identified by staff, such as grammatical corrections and clarifications. The revisions appear in the order they appear in the Draft EIR. Text additions are noted in underline and text deletions appear in strikeout.

CHAPTER 2 – EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Table ES.1 Summary of Impacts which begins on Page ES-7 is revised to reflect all final changes to mitigation measures. This revised Table is provided in Appendix A, Revised Table ES-1, of this Final EIR.

CHAPTER 4 – AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

The text on Pages 4-13 through 4-14 is revised as follows:

Additionally, a portion of the city of Sacramento is located ~~directly adjacent to~~ within the Secondary Zone.

CHAPTER 6 – BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

The following paragraph has been added to Page 6-26 following paragraph 2 and preceding paragraph 3:

Metro Air Park Habitat Conservation Plan

The Natomas Basin Conservancy adopted the Metro Air Park HCP (MAP HCP) in July 2001. The MAP HCP is located in the Natomas Basin in the Sacramento Valley, which is located in the northern portion of Sacramento County and the southern portion of Sutter County. The plan covers the 1,892-acre MAP Special Planning Area (MAP SPA) and 123 acres of lands outside the MAP SPA. The MAP HCP was prepared in conjunction with the Natomas Basin HCP (discussed below). The MAP HCP covers 14 sensitive species which are included in Appendix BIO-1 (Natomas Basin Conservancy 2001).

The text on Page 6-28 in paragraph 1 is revised as follows:

Pursuant to Section 10(a)(1)(B) of the ESA, the South Sacramento Habitat Conservation Plan (SSHCP) presents a regional approach to preserve Federal and state endangered and threatened species and to streamline the existing development-permitting process in areas under development. The SSHCP, which was approved by Sacramento County in 2018, is a large-scale consolidated effort to protect and enhance wetlands (primarily vernal pools), aquatic, and upland habitats to provide ecologically viable conservation areas (County of Sacramento et al. 2010). Permits for the SSHCP are being drafted but have not yet been issued as of May 2019. The SSHCP covers 372,000-acres of south Sacramento County and Rancho Cordova, California. It will preserve natural lands in Sacramento County and protect habitat for 28 special-status plant and animal species, including 10 state and federally listed species, which are included in

Appendix BIO-1. The boundary of the SSHCP was defined using political and ecological factors. The geographical boundaries are U.S. Highway 50 to the north, the Sacramento River levee and County Road J11 to the west, the Sacramento County line with El Dorado and Amador counties to the east, and the San Joaquin County line to the south. The SSHCP will allow the County and cities of ~~Sacramento~~, Rancho Cordova, and Galt to extend incidental take coverage to third parties. As of August 2019, all final permits under the SSHCP have been secured and the SSHCP is now in its implementation phase.

The following footnote has been added to Table 6-1 on Pages 6-4 through 6-5:

Table 0-1
Land Cover Types and Acreages by County in the Proposed MTP/SCS Plan Area

Land Cover Type	El Dorado	Placer	Sacramento	Sutter	Yolo	Yuba	TOTAL
WILDLAND LAND COVER							
Grasslands	93,838	64,832	174,450	34,277	80,911	55,621	503,929
Chaparral	74,822	58,722	37	0	44,709	2,477	180,767
Scrub	327	2,105	11	0	312	0	2,755
Valley Oak Woodland/ Savanna	3,477	11,430	1,135	5,094	181	1,215	22,532
Foothill Woodland	55,612	50,234	17,370	305	109,667	49,834	283,022
Montane Forest	691,547	476,261	449	0	3,299	131,368	1,302,924
Riparian	1,457	9,399	12,092	14,659	12,565	7,982	58,154
Barren	34,700	18,797	1,564	95	2,346	5,234	62,736
Mine Tailings	0	0	2,465	0	0	0	2,465
Rock Outcrops/Cliffs	0	499	0	0	0	0	499
Serpentine	0	0	0	0	247	0	247
TOTAL WILDLAND	955,780	692,279	209,573	54,430	254,237	253,731	2,420,030
AQUATIC LAND COVER							
Wetlands	8,984	30,654	54,167	17,010	26,608	21,785	159,208
Open Water/Lakes and Reservoirs/Rivers	17,037	12,508	23,240	237	13,493	8,543	75,058
TOTAL AQUATIC	26,021	43,162	77,407	17,247	40,101	30,328	234,266
AGRICULTURE LAND COVER							
Orchards and Vineyards	694	2,895	35,544	67,319	61,901	34,593	202,946
Pasture	3	7,866	43,180	1,719	141	308	53,217
Rice	0	20,250	8,680	132,497	0 ¹	38,135	199,562
Row and Field Crops	4,373	14,431	70,047	97,199	281,263	32,493	499,806
TOTAL AGRICULTURE	5,070	45,442	157,451	298,734	343,305	105,529	955,531
DEVELOPED/DISTURBED LAND COVER							
Developed	16,381	80,385	185,275	18,408	45,492	21,997	367,938
Disturbed	0	1,580	7,278	0	0	0	8,858

Land Cover Type	El Dorado	Placer	Sacramento	Sutter	Yolo	Yuba	TOTAL
Nonnative Vegetation	37	61	6	0	369	0	473
TOTAL DEVELOPED/ DISTURBED	16,418	82,026	192,559	18,408	45,861	21,997	377,269
TOTAL LAND COVER	1,003,289	862,910	636,990	388,819	683,504	411,585	3,987,096

Note: Totals may not sum due to rounding.

¹ The rice land cover type is included as a subset of “Cultivated Lands” in the Yolo County HCP/NCCP. “Cultivated Lands” are included as “Row and Field Crops” in the Draft EIR. As a result, total acreage for rice land cover in Yolo County is shown as zero. The acreage totals for row and field crops in Yolo County include the rice land cover acreage from the Yolo County HCP/NCCP.

Source: Land Cover data was compiled by Ascent in 2019 to create the land cover dataset that was analyzed in this chapter using data from U.S. Forest Service (USDA 2014, 2016), California Aquatic Resources Inventory (SFEI 2017), Placer County Conservation Plan (County of Placer 2016), South Sacramento HCP (County of Sacramento et al. 2014), Sutter-Yuba landcover (SACOG 2012), and Yolo HCP (County of Yolo 2015).

The following text has been added to Page 6-13:

Areas mapped as rice, primarily in the valley regions of the plan area of the proposed MTP/SCS, include both flooded and fallow rice fields. Rice fields commonly include irrigation features, such as berms, ditches, canals, and water control structures. Rice is grown as a monoculture, using tillage or herbicides to eliminate unwanted vegetation; remaining vegetation is generally confined to the berms, ditches, and canals between and around fields, and is dominated by wetland plants, both native and nonnative. Special-status wildlife species associated with rice fields include giant garter snake, snowy plover, burrowing owl, greater sandhill crane, Swainson’s hawk, loggerhead shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus*), tricolored blackbird, greater sandhill crane, western spadefoot, western pond turtle, coast horned lizard, and numerous bat species. With respect to the rice land cover type in Yolo County, the Yolo County HCP/NCCP includes rice as a subset of the “Cultivated Lands” land cover type. This Draft EIR incorporates the rice land cover type within the “Row and Field Crops” land cover type (see below).

The text on Page 6-31 is revised as follows:

This impact analysis recognizes that biological resources could be indirectly or directly affected by construction and maintenance activities associated with potential projects in the plan area of the proposed MTP/SCS. Biological resources could be directly or indirectly disturbed by the following activities:

Operational Impacts:

- projected changes in land use, where wildland or agricultural areas are converted;
- indirect changes in biological resources due to land use, such as changes in hydrology and runoff due to increased impervious surfaces (see Chapter 11 – Hydrology and Water Quality for a discussion of water runoff and water quality degradation and associated mitigation measures);
- direct loss of habitat associated with roadway widening, new transportation facilities, or interchange, rail, and bikeway improvements;

- increased human usage resulting in direct and indirect habitat degradation (e.g., litter, pollution, increased mortality due to vehicle strikes);
- reduction of resources available to wildlife;
- herbicide application and removal of vegetation as part of landscaping and road maintenance; and
- degradation of water quality in wetlands and waterways, resulting from road runoff containing petroleum products.

Construction Impacts:

- stream dewatering or installation of temporary water-diversion structures during construction of new growth, bridges and other transportation facilities over riverine systems;
- temporary stockpiling of soil or construction materials and sidecasting of soil and other construction wastes;
- temporary removal of riparian vegetation along waterways during construction of new land uses and bridges;
- removal of vegetation during construction of temporary staging areas and access roads;
- ground disturbance;
- operation of equipment resulting in transfer of invasive species;
- temporary disturbance due to construction noise;
- soil compaction in temporarily disturbed areas and generation of dust by construction equipment; and
- water runoff from the construction area.

The language of Mitigation Measure BIO-1a on Page 6-45 is revised as follows:

- Prior to initiation of construction activities under the proposed MTP/SCS, the implementing agency shall require a qualified biologist to conduct a data review, land cover mapping (including aquatic habitats such as wetlands), and a reconnaissance-level survey and habitat assessment of the area of impact to identify whether any special-status plant or wildlife species habitat, riparian or other sensitive habitats, sensitive natural communities, wetlands, wildlife movement corridors, or wildlife nursery sites could be affected by construction activities. Additionally, the biologist will determine whether any local policies or ordinances intended to protect biological resources (e.g., tree removal policies) would apply, and whether construction activities would result in conflicts with these policies or ordinances. The data reviewed shall include the Biological Resources setting of this EIR (See Section 6.2 “Environmental Setting), and the best available current data for the area, including vegetation mapping data, species distribution

information, CNDDB, CNPS Inventory of Rare and Endangered Plants of California, and relevant general plans, HCPs, and NCCPs. The biological resources assessment shall be completed at a time of year that is appropriate for identifying habitat and no more than one year prior to initiation of construction activities. The scope of the biological resources assessment shall include direct impacts to habitat and species within the area of impact and also indirect impacts to adjacent and nearby habitats and the species within them.

The text of Mitigation Measure BIO-1c on Page 6-46 is revised as follows:

If the qualified biologist, after implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-1a, determines that suitable habitat for special-status wildlife is present within the area of impact and could be adversely affected by construction activities, then the ~~following~~ measures listed below shall be implemented. Additional or more specific Avoidance and Minimization Measures may be required at the project level based on project-specific activities, site-specific conditions, and other factors in order to avoid or substantially lessen adverse impacts. Additional Avoidance and Minimization Measures shall be developed in coordination with CDFW or USFWS, as appropriate. Measures include, but are not limited to, the following:

The text in the third bullet point on Page 6-48 is revised as follows:

- For work conducted during the California red-legged frog migration season (November 1 to May 31), exclusionary fencing will be erected around the area of impact during ground-disturbing activities after hand excavation of burrows has been completed. A qualified biologist will visit the site weekly to ensure that the fencing is in good working condition. Fencing material and design will be subject to the approval of USFWS and CDFW. If exclusionary fencing is not used, a qualified biological monitor will be on-site during all ground disturbance activities. Exclusion fencing will also be placed around all spoils and stockpiles.

The text in the sixth bullet point on Page 6-49 is revised as follows:

- All suitable burrows directly affected by construction will be hand excavated under the supervision of a qualified wildlife biologist. If California tiger salamanders are found, the biologist will relocate individuals to the nearest suitable burrow that is outside of the area of impact.

The text in the eighth bullet point on Page 6-49 is revised as follows:

- For work conducted during the California tiger salamander migration season (~~November 4~~ October 15 to May 31), exclusionary fencing will be erected around the area of impact during ground-disturbing activities after hand excavation of burrows has been completed. A qualified biologist will visit the site weekly to ensure that the fencing is in good working condition. Fencing material and design will be subject to the approval of USFWS and CDFW. If exclusionary fencing is not used, a qualified biological monitor will be on-site during all ground disturbance activities. Exclusion fencing will also be placed around all spoils and stockpiles.

The text in the ninth bullet point on Page 6-49 is revised as follows:

- For work conducted during the California tiger salamander migration season (~~November 4~~ October 15 to May 31), a qualified biologist will survey the area of impact (including access roads) in mornings following measurable precipitation events. Construction may commence once the biologist has confirmed that no California tiger salamanders are in the work area.

The following bullet points have been added following the seventh bullet point on Page 6-50:

- Potential barriers to CTS movement such as curbs and edges greater than 3 inches in suitable CTS habitat shall be minimized.
- Work activities shall be limited to period with the least probability for CTS encounters.
- Work activities shall be limited to an 820-foot buffer for breeding ponds during the metamorphosis dispersal period of CTS.
- Measures to minimize small mammal control that could adversely affect burrow habitat of CTS shall be implemented.

The text in the eighth bullet point on Page 6-50 is revised as follows:

- The implementing agency shall secure any necessary take authorization prior to project construction through formal consultation with CDFW and USFWS pursuant to Section 2081 of the California Fish and Game code and Section 7 of the ESA, respectively.

The text in the last bullet point on Page 6-52 is revised as follows:

- Prior to construction, CDFW shall be consulted pursuant to CEQA and USFWS shall be consulted pursuant to Section 7 of the ESA. The activities may qualify to use the *Programmatic Formal Consultation for U.S. Army Corps of Engineers 404 Permitted Projects with Relatively Small Effects on the Giant Garter Snake within Butte, Colusa, Glenn, Fresno, Merced, Sacramento, San Joaquin, Solano, Stanislaus, Sutter and Yolo Counties, California* (USFWS 1999). The Habitat Replacement & Restoration Guidelines (Appendix A), Items Necessary for Formal Consultation (Appendix B), Avoidance & Minimization Measures During Construction (Appendix C), and Monitoring Requirements (Appendix D) shall be followed.

The following bullet point has been added following the first bullet point on Page 6-55:

- If Swainson's hawk foraging habitat would be lost during construction activities, mitigation for loss of this habitat shall be required.

The text of the second and third bullet points on Page 6-55 is revised as follows:

- If suitable habitat for other nesting special-status raptors (e.g., ferruginous hawk [*Buteo regalis*], golden eagle, bald eagle, northern harrier) or common raptors protected under California Fish and Game Code (e.g., red-tailed hawk, red-shouldered hawk) is identified within the area of impact or within 500 feet of the area of impact or larger buffer as recommended by CDFW (e.g., 0.25 mile for white-tailed kite), all tree removal activities

and construction activities shall occur during the nonbreeding season (September 1–January 31), if feasible.

- If tree removal or other construction activities must occur between February 1 and August 31, the implementing agency shall retain a qualified biologist to conduct a preconstruction survey for nesting raptors within 500 feet of the area of impact or a larger buffer as recommended by CDFW (e.g., 0.25 mile for white tailed kite) no more than 7 days prior to initiation of construction.

The text of the sixth bullet point on Page 6-57 is revised as follows:

If suitable habitat for other special-status nesting birds (e.g., bank swallow [*Riparia riparia*], black swift [*Cypseloides niger*], grasshopper sparrow [*Ammodramus savannarum*], loggerhead shrike, tricolored blackbird, and western snowy plover) or other native nesting birds protected under sections 3503 and 3503.5 of the California Fish and Game Code is identified within the area of impact or within 500 feet of the area of impact, all tree removal activities and construction activities shall occur during the nonbreeding season (September 1–January 31), if feasible. If tree removal or other construction activities must occur between February 1 and August 31, the implementing agency shall retain a qualified biologist to conduct protocol-level nest surveys within 500 feet of the area of impact no more than 7 days prior to initiation of construction.

The text in the first bullet point on Page 6-58 is revised as follows:

- If nests are detected, direct impacts and indirect impacts (e.g., noise, presence of construction crews) shall be avoided by establishing appropriate buffers around active nest sites. Factors to be considered for determining buffer size will include the presence of natural buffers provided by vegetation or topography; nest height; locations of foraging territory; and baseline levels of noise and human activity. Buffer size may be adjusted if the qualified biologist, in consultation with CDFW or USFWS, determines that such an adjustment would not be likely to adversely affect the nest. The buffer areas shall be protected with construction fencing, and no activity shall occur within the buffer areas until the qualified biologist has determined, in coordination with CDFW or USFWS, that the young have fledged, the nest is no longer active, or reducing the buffer would not likely result in nest abandonment. Monitoring of the nest by a qualified biologist during and after construction activities will be required if the activity has potential to adversely affect the nest.

The following discussion has been added on Page 6-62:

Salt Marsh Harvest Mouse

- The only suitable habitat and portion of the species range for salt marsh harvest mouse within the plan area of the proposed MTP/SCS is on Sherman Island in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta.
- Take of fully protected mammal species (i.e., salt marsh harvest mouse) is prohibited, and disturbance, injury, or mortality of this species shall be avoided.

The following bullet point has been added following the fifth bullet point on Page 6-63:

- For projects that entail the use of construction-related pile drivers, minimization measures such as soft starts, hydroacoustic monitoring, decibel restrictions, and limited construction timing (i.e., limiting the amount of strikes per day) shall be enforced.

The language of the second sub-bullet under the first bullet in Mitigation Measure BIO-7 on Page 6-81 is revised as follows:

If the qualified biologist, after implementation of Mitigation Measure BIO-6, determines that wildlife movement corridors or native wildlife nursery sites are present within the area of impact and could be adversely affected by construction activities, then the following measures shall be implemented:

- Implementing agencies shall design projects such that they avoid and minimize direct and indirect impacts on wildlife movement corridors and/or native wildlife nursery sites. Design considerations may include but would not be limited to the following:
 - constructing wildlife friendly overpasses, underpasses, bridges and/or culverts that are integrated with appropriate roadside fencing that maintains animals off the road and direct them towards crossing structures;
 - implementing agencies shall consider agency guidance in designing wildlife crossings, including the guidance of CDFW and other applicable wildlife agencies;
 - using wildlife friendly fencing;
 - limiting wildland conversions in identified wildlife corridors or native wildlife nursery sites;
 - retaining wildlife friendly vegetation in and around developments; and
 - avoid the nursery season for common wildlife during construction.

The language of Mitigation Measure BIO-13 on Page 6-86 is revised as follows:

Mitigation Measure BIO-13: ~~Implement Mitigation Measure BIO-2~~ Implement Mitigation Measure BIO-3

The language of Mitigation Measure BIO-14 on Page 6-86 is revised as follows:

Mitigation Measure BIO-14: ~~Implement Mitigation Measure BIO-3~~ Implement Mitigation Measure BIO-5

The language of Mitigation Measure BIO-15 on Page 6-86 is revised as follows:

Mitigation Measure BIO-15: ~~Implement Mitigation Measure BIO-2~~ Implement Mitigation Measure BIO-7

The language of Mitigation Measure BIO-19 on Page 6-87 is revised as follows:

Mitigation Measure BIO-19: ~~Implement Mitigation Measure BIO-2~~ Implement Mitigation Measure BIO-3

The language of Mitigation Measure BIO-20 on Page 6-87 is revised as follows:

Mitigation Measure BIO-20: ~~Implement Mitigation Measure BIO-3~~ Implement Mitigation Measure BIO-5

The language of Mitigation Measure BIO-21 on Page 6-87 is revised as follows:

Mitigation Measure BIO-21: ~~Implement Mitigation Measure BIO-4~~ Implement Mitigation Measure BIO-7

CHAPTER 8 – ENERGY AND GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE

The text on Page 8-15 is revised as follows:

Many of SACOG’s member jurisdictions and partner agencies have climate action plans (CAPs), GHG reduction plans, and/or sustainability plans that set goals and targets on the reduction of GHG emissions, and outline policies to help achieve those goals. At the time of writing this Draft EIR, the cities of Sacramento, Elk Grove, ~~West Sacramento~~, Citrus Heights, Folsom, West Sacramento, Roseville, and Woodland as well as the counties of Sacramento, Yolo, and Placer have adopted CAPs, GHG Reduction Plans, or Sustainability Plans. In addition, many of the member jurisdictions (e.g., City of Galt and City of Winters) within the plan area of the proposed MTP/SCS have begun the CAP process by conducting baseline emissions inventories, which establish a reference point for GHG emissions reduction.

In Table 8-2 on page 8-19, the gasoline value for 2035 is corrected from “34,338” to “634,338”.

The text of Mitigation Measure GHG-2 on Page 8-29 is revised as follows:

Mitigation Measure GHG-2: Coordinate and support local agencies within the plan area of the proposed MTP/SCS to reduce regional GHGs from all sectors.

SACOG, in partnership with air districts within the plan area of the proposed MTP/SCS, shall work with the counties and cities within the plan area to adopt qualified GHG reduction plans (e.g., CAPs), develop GHG-reducing planning policies, and implement local climate initiatives. These reductions can be achieved through a combination of programs, including ZNE in new construction, retrofits of existing buildings, incentivizing the development of renewable energy sources that serve both new and existing land uses, and other measures. SACOG’s work with local agencies will include:

- Providing tools and project support for planning, approving, and paying for low-VMT development. For example, SACOG has established a local agency working group for SB 743 implementation that can be continued past the implementation deadline to develop best practices for VMT-reducing policies.

- Securing funding and implement the Green Means Go Pilot Program to encourage infill development and revitalization of commercial corridors. In developing this program, local jurisdictions identified “Green Zones”—low-VMT infill areas—where they would use the Green Means Go Program to catalyze infill development.
- Civic Lab Program—SACOG collaboration with teams of public agency staff and their private sector partners to identify local solutions to regional challenges to implementing the MTP/SCS (innovative mobility solutions and commercial corridor revitalization strategies).
- SACOG regional funding programs—SACOG has established a number of programs (see description of programs listed under Impact GHG-2) that support the needed high density and transit-oriented development in the region and the smart growth vision set forth in the Blueprint. These programs are designed in consultation with local agencies and are governed by the objectives and policies of the MTP/SCS.
- Planning Collaboration—Engage member agency planners through the housing planners group, and the city and county managers in the region through the Regional Managers group, to design a housing program application for the State’s Regional Early Action Program that both implements the Regional Housing Needs Allocation and supports GHG reducing housing policies and programs.
- Education and Partnership—Participate in locally-initiated climate reduction initiatives—SACOG sits on the Mayors’ Climate Commission of West Sacramento and Sacramento, participated in the Mobility Technical Advisory Committee, and provided data and research to inform the GHG reduction recommendations of the Commission. SACOG has also provided—and will continue to provide—transportation data to local agencies as they develop their Climate Action Plans.
- Grant Partnering and Technical Assistance—SACOG partners with and provides technical assistance to local agencies applying to California Climate Investments grant programs. SACOG advises grant applications on GHG reduction strategies as part of application assistance.

CHAPTER 12 – LAND USE AND PLANNING

The text on Page 12-49 has been revised as follows:

One of the primary ways that the LURMP promotes recreational use of the Delta is by providing alternative transportation choices allowing urban residents in the Secondary Zone and Delta Legacy Communities (i.e., Freeport, Clarksburg, Hood, Courtland, Ryde, Walnut Grove, Locke, and Isleton) to visit the Primary Zone for recreation or tourism.”

...

The ~~Great~~ California Delta Trail Master Plan is anticipated to be published in ~~June~~ 2020 and would include routes for bicycling and hiking that connect to other trails, park and recreational facilities, and public transportation. DPC is currently working on a ~~Delta Blueprint Report for the~~

~~Eastern region~~ Great California Delta Trail Eastern Blueprint Report for Sacramento, Yolo, and San Joaquin Counties, which includes Sacramento, San Joaquin, and Yolo counties. Adopted Delta trail segments within the plan area of the proposed MTP/SCS to date include the West Sacramento River Walk, the Sacramento River Parkway, and the Clarksburg Branch Line Trail (DPC 2019). The draft Delta Blueprint Report for the Eastern region is available on the DPC website as of August 2019. DPC staff indicate that the Blueprint is now final. Neither the draft nor final version of the Report were available prior to the Notice of Preparation for this EIR. Therefore, neither the draft nor final version of the Report were analyzed for consistency with the proposed MTP/SCS.

CHAPTER 15 – PUBLIC SERVICES AND RECREATION

The text on Page 15-25 is revised as follows:

The LURMP also identifies opportunities for new recreational facilities on publicly-owned land. Some potential opportunities include pedestrian access on publicly-owned levees adjacent to the Brannan Island State Recreation Area; construction of new visitor facilities, interpretive facilities, and trails at the Stone Lake National Wildlife Refuge; and new pedestrian trails, visitor facilities, and water access facilities at Delta Meadows. In 2018, a majority of land use projects ~~recommended~~ commented on by DPC under the LURMP were within Sacramento County (35 percent) and Yolo County (24 percent) (DPC 2018).

The text on Page 15-26 is revised as follows:

The ~~Great~~ California Delta Trail Master Plan will include routes for bicycling and hiking that connect to other trails and park and recreational facilities, as well as route connections to public transportation. The Plan is anticipated to be published in ~~June 2020~~. ~~DPC is currently finishing a Blueprint Report for the Eastern region of the Delta, set to publish in 2019, has prepared a draft~~ Great California Delta Trail Eastern Blueprint Report for Sacramento, Yolo, and San Joaquin Counties, which ~~that~~ includes Sacramento, San Joaquin, and Yolo counties. Adopted Delta trail segments within the plan area of the proposed MTP/SCS to date include the West Sacramento River Walk, the Sacramento River Parkway, and the Clarksburg Branch Line Trail (DPC 2019). The draft Delta Blueprint Report for the Eastern region is available on the DPC website as of August 2019. DPC staff indicate that the Blueprint is now final. Neither the draft nor final version of the Report were available prior to the Notice of Preparation for this EIR. Therefore, neither version of the Report was analyzed for consistency with the proposed MTP/SCS.

CHAPTER 5 – LIST OF PREPARERS

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APPENDIX A

Final EIR Appendix A

Table ES.1 Summary of Impacts

REG: Regional CCC: Center and Corridor Communities EC: Established Communities DC: Developing Communities RRC: Rural Residential Communities LNID: Lands Not Identified for Development PLA: Placer County HFTA SAC: Sacramento County HFTA YOL: Yolo County HFTA				Less than Significant; No mitigation required										
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				Potentially Significant; May be Significant and Unavoidable after mitigation is adopted; however, the project-specific impacts are unknown without analysis at the project-level										
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			A.	B. Localized					C. High Frequency Transit Areas			Mitigation*		
Impact Statement	REG	CCC	EC	DC	RRC	LNID	PLA	SAC	YOL					
AESTHETICS														
IMPACT AES-1: HAVE A SUBSTANTIAL ADVERSE EFFECT ON A SCENIC VISTA.	Land Use										Mitigation Measure AES-1: Protect public views of important scenic vistas, scenic resources along state scenic highways, and visual character and quality.			
	Transpo.										Mitigation Measure AES-2: Design river crossings to minimize aesthetic and visual impacts to the greatest feasible extent.			
IMPACT AES-2: SUBSTANTIALLY DAMAGE SCENIC RESOURCES, INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, TREES, ROCK OUTCROPPINGS, AND HISTORIC BUILDINGS ALONG A STATE SCENIC HIGHWAY.	Land Use										Mitigation Measure AES-3: Implement Mitigation Measures AES-1.			
	Transpo.													
IMPACT AES-3: IN NON-URBANIZED AREAS, SUBSTANTIALLY DEGRADE THE EXISTING VISUAL CHARACTER OR QUALITY OF PUBLIC VIEWS OF THE SITE AND ITS SURROUNDINGS? (PUBLIC VIEWS ARE THOSE THAT ARE EXPERIENCED FROM PUBLICLY ACCESSIBLE VANTAGE POINTS.) IF THE PROJECT IS IN AN URBANIZED AREA, WOULD THE PROJECT CONFLICT WITH APPLICABLE ZONING AND OTHER REGULATIONS GOVERNING SCENIC QUALITY?	Land Use										Mitigation Measure AES-4: Design projects to be visually compatible with surrounding areas.			
	Transpo.													
IMPACT AES-4: CREATE A NEW SOURCE OF SUBSTANTIAL LIGHT OR GLARE WHICH WOULD ADVERSELY AFFECT DAY OR NIGHTTIME VIEWS IN THE AREA.	Land Use										Mitigation Measure AES-5: Reduce sun glare resulting from implementation of planned transportation improvements.			
	Transpo.										Mitigation Measure AES-6: Design structures to avoid or reduce impacts resulting from glare. Mitigation Measure AES-7: Design lighting to minimize light trespass and glare.			

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		A.	B. Localized						C. High Frequency Transit Areas		
REG	CCC	EC	DC	RRC	LNID	PLA	SAC	YOL			
Impact Statement											
IMPACT AES-5: CAST SHADOW IN SUCH A WAY AS TO CAUSE A PUBLIC HAZARD OR SUBSTANTIALLY DEGRADE THE EXISTING VISUAL/AESTHETIC CHARACTER OR QUALITY OF A SITE OR PLACE FOR A SUSTAINED PERIOD OF TIME.	Land Use										None required.
	Transpo.										
IMPACT AES-6: RESULT IN CONSTRUCTION IMPACTS THAT WOULD SUBSTANTIALLY ADVERSELY AFFECT A SCENIC VISTA, SUBSTANTIALLY DAMAGE SCENIC RESOURCES ALONG A STATE SCENIC HIGHWAY, SUBSTANTIALLY DEGRADE VISUAL CHARACTER OR QUALITY OF PUBLIC VIEWS IN NON-URBAN AREAS OR CONFLICT WITH APPLICABLE ZONING AND OTHER REGULATIONS GOVERNING SCENIC QUALITY IN URBANIZED AREAS, CREATE A NEW SOURCE OF SUBSTANTIAL LIGHT AND GLARE WITH ADVERSE EFFECTS ON VIEWS, OR CAST SHADOWS THAT CAUSE A PUBLIC HAZARD OR SUBSTANTIALLY DEGRADE THE EXISTING VISUAL/AESTHETIC CHARACTER.	Land Use										Mitigation Measure AES-8: Reduce the visibility of construction-related activities. Mitigation Measure AES-9: Re-vegetate exposed earth surfaces. Mitigation Measure AES-10: Minimize contrasts between the project and surrounding areas.
	Transpo.										Mitigation Measure AES-11: Replace and renew landscaping along roadway corridors and development sites. Mitigation Measure AES-12: Implement Mitigation Measure AES-4
AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES											
IMPACT AG-1: CONVERT PRIME FARMLAND, UNIQUE FARMLAND, OR FARMLAND OF STATEWIDE IMPORTANCE, AS SHOWN ON THE MAPS PREPARED PURSUANT TO THE FMMP OF THE DOC, TO NON-AGRICULTURAL USE.	Land Use										Mitigation Measure AG-1: Mitigate for loss of farmland.
	Transpo.										
IMPACT AG-2: CONFLICT WITH EXISTING ZONING OR GENERAL PLAN LAND USE DESIGNATIONS FOR AGRICULTURAL USE, OR WITH A WILLIAMSON ACT CONTRACT.	Land Use										Mitigation Measure AG-2: Implement Mitigation Measure AG-1 Mitigation Measure AG-3: Design proposed projects to avoid or minimize, to the greatest extent feasible, conflicts and inconsistencies with land protected by agricultural zoning or a Williamson Act contract, taking into account the terms of the applicable zoning and/or contract.
	Transpo.										

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		A.	B. Localized				C. High Frequency Transit Areas			Mitigation*	
Impact Statement		REG	CCC	EC	DC	RRC	LNID	PLA	SAC	YOL	
IMPACT AG-3: CONFLICT WITH EXISTING ZONING OR LAND USE DESIGNATION FOR, OR CAUSE REZONING OF, FOREST LAND, TIMBERLAND, OR TIMBERLAND ZONED TIMBERLAND PRODUCTION.	Land Use										Mitigation Measure AG-4: Mitigate for loss of forest land or timberland.
	Transpo.										
IMPACT AG-4: INVOLVE OTHER CHANGES IN THE EXISTING ENVIRONMENT, WHICH, DUE TO THEIR LOCATION OR NATURE, COULD RESULT IN CONVERSION OF FARMLAND TO NON-AGRICULTURAL USE.	Land Use										Mitigation Measure AG-5: Minimize conversion of farmland to non-agricultural use. Mitigation Measure AG-6: Inventory innovative ideas and best practices from the RUCS toolkit, EPA, and USDA Supporting Sustainable Rural Communities publication, and other sources and implement a locally appropriate strategy to manage growth issues at the rural-urban interface to support the long-term viability of agriculture in the SACOG region.
	Transpo.										
IMPACT AG-5: RESULT IN THE LOSS OF "FOREST LAND" AS DEFINED IN THE CALIFORNIA FOREST LEGACY ACT OF 2007 (PRC SECTION 12220(G)) OR CONVERSION OF FOREST LAND TO NON-FOREST USE.	Land Use										Mitigation Measure AG-7: Implement Mitigation Measure AG-4.
	Transpo.										

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Impact Statement	REG	CCC	EC	DC	RRC	LNID	PLA	SAC	YOL		
IMPACT AG-6: RESULT IN CONSTRUCTION IMPACTS THAT WOULD CONVERT PRIME FARMLAND, UNIQUE FARMLAND, OR FARMLAND OF STATEWIDE IMPORTANCE; CONFLICT WITH EXISTING ZONING OR LAND USE DESIGNATION FOR AGRICULTURAL USE OR A WILLIAMSON ACT CONTRACT; CONFLICT WITH EXISTING ZONING OR LAND USE DESIGNATIONS FOR, OR CAUSE REZONING OF, FOREST LAND, TIMBERLAND, OR TIMBERLAND ZONED TIMBERLAND PRODUCTION; INVOLVE OTHER CHANGES IN THE EXISTING ENVIRONMENT WHICH, DUE TO THEIR LOCATION OR NATURE, COULD RESULT IN CONVERSION OF FARMLAND TO NON-AGRICULTURAL USE; OR RESULT IN THE LOSS OF FOREST LAND OR CONVERSION OF FOREST LAND INTO NON-FOREST USE.	Land Use	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☐	☒	☒	☒	Mitigation Measure AG-8: Minimize construction-related impacts to agricultural and forestry resources.
	Transpo.	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	
AIR QUALITY											
IMPACT AIR-1: CONFLICT WITH OR OBSTRUCT IMPLEMENTATION OF AN APPLICABLE AIR QUALITY PLAN.	Land Use	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	None required.
	Transpo.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
IMPACT AIR-2: EXPOSE SENSITIVE RECEPTORS TO SUBSTANTIAL TAC CONCENTRATIONS, INCLUDING THOSE FROM CONSTRUCTION OR OPERATIONAL EMISSIONS.	Land Use	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☐	☒	☒	☒	Mitigation Measure AIR-1: Adhere to CARB Handbook siting guidance to the maximum extent possible and implement best management practices identified by CARB, SMAQMD in the MSAT Protocol Guidance Document, and in EPA's Recommendation for Constructing Roadside Vegetation Barriers to Improve Near-Road Air Quality
	Transpo.	☒	☒	☒	☒	☒	☐	☒	☒	☒	Mitigation Measure AIR-2: Implement the strategies contained in the CARB Technical Advisory.

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REG	CCC	EC	DC	RRC	LNID	PLA	SAC	YOL			
Impact Statement											
IMPACT AIR-3: RESULT IN OTHER EMISSIONS (SUCH AS THOSE LEADING TO ODORS) ADVERSELY AFFECTING A SUBSTANTIAL NUMBER OF PEOPLE	Land Use										Mitigation Measure AIR-3: Implementing agencies shall require assessment of new and existing odor sources for individual land use projects to determine whether sensitive receptors would be exposed to objectionable odors and apply recommended applicable mitigation measures as defined by the applicable local air district and best practices.
	Transpo.										
IMPACT AIR-4A: BE INCONSISTENT WITH OR EXCEED APPLICABLE THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE ESTABLISHED BY THE LOCAL AIR DISTRICT FOR LONG-TERM OPERATIONAL CRITERIA AIR POLLUTANT EMISSIONS.	Land Use										Mitigation Measure AIR-4: Implementing agencies shall require recommended applicable mitigation measures as defined by the applicable local air district.
	Transpo.										Mitigation Measure AIR-5: Implement Mitigation Measure TRN-1.
IMPACT AIR-4B: BE INCONSISTENT WITH OR EXCEED APPLICABLE THRESHOLDS OF SIGNIFICANCE ESTABLISHED BY THE LOCAL AIR DISTRICT FOR SHORT-TERM CONSTRUCTION CRITERIA AIR POLLUTANT EMISSIONS.	Land Use										Mitigation Measure AIR-6: Implementing agencies shall require project applicants to implement applicable, or equivalent, construction mitigation measures as defined by the applicable local air district.
	Transpo.										

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			A.	B. Localized					C. High Frequency Transit Areas			Mitigation*	
Impact Statement		REG	CCC	EC	DC	RRC	LNID	PLA	SAC	YOL			
BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES													
IMPACT BIO-1: HAVE A SUBSTANTIAL ADVERSE EFFECT, EITHER DIRECTLY OR THROUGH HABITAT MODIFICATION, ON ANY SPECIES IDENTIFIED AS A CANDIDATE, SENSITIVE, OR SPECIAL-STATUS SPECIES IN LOCAL OR REGIONAL PLANS, POLICIES, OR REGULATIONS OR BY CDFW OR USFWS.	Land Use										Mitigation Measure BIO-1a: Conduct a Biological Resources Assessment. Mitigation Measure BIO-1b: Identify Special-Status Plant Species, and Avoid, Minimize, and Mitigate Impacts.		
	Transpo.										Mitigation Measure BIO-1c: Identify Special-Status Wildlife, and Avoid, Minimize, and Mitigate Impacts.		
IMPACT BIO-2: HAVE A SUBSTANTIAL ADVERSE EFFECT ON ANY RIPARIAN HABITAT OR OTHER SENSITIVE NATURAL COMMUNITY IDENTIFIED IN LOCAL OR REGIONAL PLANS, POLICIES, OR REGULATIONS OR BY CDFW OR USFWS	Land Use										Mitigation Measure BIO-2: Implement Mitigation Measure BIO-1a.		
	Transpo.										Mitigation Measure BIO-3: Avoid, Minimize, and Mitigate Impacts on Sensitive Natural Communities.		
IMPACT BIO-3: HAVE A SUBSTANTIAL ADVERSE EFFECT ON STATE OR FEDERALLY PROTECTED WETLANDS (INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, MARSH, VERNAL POOL, AND COASTAL WETLANDS) THROUGH DIRECT REMOVAL, FILLING, HYDROLOGICAL INTERRUPTION, OR OTHER MEANS.	Land Use										Mitigation Measure BIO-4: Implement Mitigation Measure BIO-1a.		
	Transpo.										Mitigation Measure BIO-5: Avoid, Minimize, and Mitigate Impacts on Wetland and Other Waters.		
IMPACT BIO-4: INTERFERE SUBSTANTIALLY WITH THE MOVEMENT OF ANY NATIVE RESIDENT OR MIGRATORY FISH OR WILDLIFE SPECIES OR WITH ESTABLISHED NATIVE RESIDENT OR MIGRATORY WILDLIFE CORRIDORS, OR IMPEDE THE USE OF NATIVE WILDLIFE NURSERY SITES.	Land Use										Mitigation Measure BIO-6: Implement Mitigation Measure BIO-1a.		
	Transpo.										Mitigation Measure BIO-7: Avoid, Minimize, and Mitigate Impacts on Wildlife Movement Corridors or Native Wildlife Nursery Sites.		

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		A.	B. Localized						C. High Frequency Transit Areas			Mitigation*
		REG	CCC	EC	DC	RRC	LNID	PLA	SAC	YOL		
Impact Statement		REG	CCC	EC	DC	RRC	LNID	PLA	SAC	YOL		
IMPACT BIO-5: CONFLICT WITH ANY LOCAL POLICIES OR ORDINANCES PROTECTING BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES, SUCH AS A TREE PRESERVATION POLICY OR ORDINANCE.	Land Use										Mitigation Measure BIO-8: Implement Mitigation Measure BIO-1a.	
	Transpo.										Mitigation Measure BIO-9: Avoid, Minimize, and Mitigate for Impacts to Protected Trees and Other Biological Resources Protected by Local Ordinances.	
IMPACT BIO-6: CONFLICT WITH THE PROVISIONS OF AN ADOPTED HABITAT CONSERVATION PLAN, NATURAL COMMUNITIES CONSERVATION PLAN, OR OTHER APPROVED LOCAL, REGIONAL, OR STATE HABITAT CONSERVATION PLAN.	Land Use										Mitigation Measure BIO-10: Implement Mitigation Measure BIO-1a. Mitigation Measure BIO-11: Implement Mitigation Measure BIO-1b. Mitigation Measure BIO-12: Implement Mitigation Measure BIO-1c.	
	Transpo.										Mitigation Measure BIO-13: Implement Mitigation Measure BIO-2 BIO-3. Mitigation Measure BIO-14: Implement Mitigation Measure BIO-3 BIO-5. Mitigation Measure BIO-15: Implement Mitigation Measure BIO-4 BIO-7.	
IMPACT BIO-7: SUBSTANTIALLY REDUCE THE HABITAT OF A FISH OR WILDLIFE SPECIES; CAUSE A FISH OR WILDLIFE POPULATION TO DROP BELOW SELF-SUSTAINING LEVELS; THREATEN TO ELIMINATE A PLANT OR ANIMAL COMMUNITY; OR SUBSTANTIALLY REDUCE THE NUMBER OR RESTRICT THE RANGE OF AN ENDANGERED, RARE, OR THREATENED SPECIES.	Land Use										Mitigation Measure BIO-16: Implement Mitigation Measure BIO-1a. Mitigation Measure BIO-17: Implement Mitigation Measure BIO-1b. Mitigation Measure BIO-18: Implement Mitigation Measure BIO-1c.	
	Transpo.										Mitigation Measure BIO-19: Implement Mitigation Measure BIO-2 BIO-3. Mitigation Measure BIO-20: Implement Mitigation Measure BIO-3 BIO-5. Mitigation Measure BIO-21: Implement Mitigation Measure BIO-4 BIO-7.	

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REG	CCC	EC	DC	RRC	LNID	PLA	SAC	YOL						
Impact Statement				REG	CCC	EC	DC	RRC	LNID	PLA	SAC	YOL		
CULTURAL AND PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCES														
IMPACT CR-1: CAUSE A SUBSTANTIAL ADVERSE CHANGE IN THE SIGNIFICANCE OF A HISTORICAL BUILT ENVIRONMENT RESOURCE PURSUANT TO CEQA GUIDELINES SECTION 15064.5.			Land Use										Mitigation Measure CR-1: Conduct project-specific historic built environment resource studies and identify and implement project-specific mitigation.	
			Transpo.											
IMPACT CR-2: CAUSE A SUBSTANTIAL ADVERSE CHANGE IN THE SIGNIFICANCE OF AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCE PURSUANT TO CEQA GUIDELINES SECTION 15064.5.			Land Use										Mitigation Measure CR-2: Conduct project-specific archaeological resource studies and identify and implement project-specific mitigation.	
			Transpo.											
IMPACT CR-3: DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY DESTROY A UNIQUE PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCE OR SITE.			Land Use										Mitigation Measure CR-4: Conduct project-specific paleontological resource studies and identify and implement mitigation.	
			Transpo.											
IMPACT CR-4: DISTURB ANY HUMAN REMAINS, INCLUDING THOSE INTERRED OUTSIDE OF FORMAL CEMETERIES.			Land Use										None required.	
			Transpo.											

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		A.	B. Localized					C. High Frequency Transit Areas			Mitigation*
REG	CCC	EC	DC	RRC	LNID	PLA	SAC	YOL			
Impact Statement											
IMPACT CR-5: CAUSE A SUBSTANTIAL ADVERSE CHANGE IN THE SIGNIFICANCE OF A TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCE.	Land Use										Mitigation Measure CR-5: Conduct project-specific consultation with traditionally and culturally affiliated California Native American tribes to identify tribal cultural resources and implement project-specific mitigation.
	Transpo.										Mitigation Measure CR-6: Reduce visibility or accessibility of tribal cultural resources.
IMPACT CR-6: ELIMINATE IMPORTANT EXAMPLES OF MAJOR PERIODS OF CALIFORNIA HISTORY OR PREHISTORY PURSUANT TO CEQA GUIDELINES SECTION 15065(A)(1).	Land Use										Mitigation Measure CR-7: Implement Mitigation Measures CR-1 through CR-6.
	Transpo.										
ENERGY AND GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE											
IMPACT GHG-1: CONFLICT WITH THE SACOG REGION'S ACHIEVEMENT OF SB 375 GHG EMISSIONS REDUCTION TARGETS.	Land Use		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	None required.
	Transpo.		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
IMPACT GHG-2: SUBSTANTIALLY INTERFERE WITH ACHIEVEMENT OF THE STATE'S LONG-TERM CLIMATE GOALS. AS SET FORTH IN CARB'S 2017 SCOPING PLAN	Land Use										Mitigation Measure GHG-1: Implement Mitigation Measure TRN-1. Mitigation Measure GHG-2: Coordinate and support local agencies within the plan area of the proposed MTP/SCS to reduce regional GHGs from all sectors.
	Transpo.										Mitigation Measure GHG-3: Implement all feasible on- and off-site mitigation measures to reduce GHG emissions below a lead agency-approved threshold of significance.

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Impact Statement		REG	CCC	EC	DC	RRC	LNID	PLA	SAC	YOL	
IMPACT GHG-3: CONFLICT WITH APPLICABLE LOCAL GHG REDUCTION PLANS.	Land Use		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	None required.
	Transpo.		N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
IMPACT ENE-1: RESULT IN POTENTIAL SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT DUE TO WASTEFUL, INEFFICIENT, OR UNNECESSARY CONSUMPTION OF ENERGY RESOURCES, DURING PROJECT CONSTRUCTION OR OPERATION.	Land Use										None required.
	Transpo.										
IMPACT ENE-2: CONFLICT WITH OR OBSTRUCT A STATE OR LOCAL PLAN FOR RENEWABLE ENERGY OR ENERGY EFFICIENCY.	Land Use										None required.
	Transpo.										

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	REG	CCC	EC	DC	RRC	LNID	PLA	SAC	YOL		
Impact Statement											
GEOLOGY, SEISMICITY, SOILS AND MINERAL RESOURCES											
IMPACT GEO-1A: DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY CAUSE SUBSTANTIAL ADVERSE EFFECTS, INCLUDING THE RISK OF LOSS, INJURY, OR DEATH DUE TO RUPTURE OF A KNOWN EARTHQUAKE FAULT.	Land Use	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	None required.
	Transpo.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
IMPACT GEO-1B: DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY CAUSE SUBSTANTIAL ADVERSE EFFECTS, INCLUDING THE RISK OF LOSS, INJURY, OR DEATH INVOLVING STRONG SEISMIC GROUND SHAKING.	Land Use	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	None required.
	Transpo.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
IMPACT GEO-1C: DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY CAUSE SUBSTANTIAL ADVERSE EFFECTS, INCLUDING THE RISK OF LOSS, INJURY, OR DEATH INVOLVING SEISMIC-RELATED GROUND FAILURE, INCLUDING LIQUEFACTION.	Land Use	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	None required.
	Transpo.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
IMPACT GEO-1D: DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY CAUSE SUBSTANTIAL ADVERSE EFFECTS, INCLUDING THE RISK OF LOSS, INJURY, OR DEATH INVOLVING LANDSLIDES.	Land Use	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	None required.
	Transpo.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
IMPACT GEO-2: RESULT IN SUBSTANTIAL SOIL EROSION OR THE LOSS OF TOPSOIL.	Land Use	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	None required.
	Transpo.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	

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	REG	CCC	EC	DC	RRC	LNID	PLA	SAC	YOL		
IMPACT GEO-3: LOCATE A PROJECT ON A GEOLOGIC UNIT OR SOIL THAT IS UNSTABLE, OR THAT WOULD BECOME UNSTABLE AS A RESULT OF THE PROJECT, AND POTENTIALLY RESULT IN ON-SITE OR OFF-SITE LANDSLIDE, LATERAL SPREADING, SUBSIDENCE, LIQUEFACTION, OR COLLAPSE.	Land Use	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	None required.
	Transpo.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
IMPACT GEO-4: RESULT IN DEVELOPMENT ON EXPANSIVE SOIL, CREATING SUBSTANTIAL RISKS TO LIFE OR PROPERTY.	Land Use	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	None required.
	Transpo.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
IMPACT GEO-5: HAVE SOILS INCAPABLE OF ADEQUATELY SUPPORTING THE USE OF SEPTIC TANKS OR ALTERNATIVE WATER DISPOSAL SYSTEMS WHERE SEWERS ARE NOT AVAILABLE FOR THE DISPOSAL OF WASTEWATER.	Land Use	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	None required.
	Transpo.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
IMPACT GEO-6: DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY DESTROY A UNIQUE GEOLOGIC FEATURE.	Land Use	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	None required.
	Transpo.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
IMPACT GEO-7: RESULT IN SUBSTANTIAL IMPACTS TO GEOLOGY, SEISMICITY, AND SOILS FROM CONSTRUCTION OF PROPOSED MTP/SCS PROJECTS.	Land Use	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	None required.
	Transpo.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	

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	REG	CCC	EC	DC	RRC	LNID	PLA	SAC	YOL		
Impact Statement											
IMPACT GEO-8: RESULT IN THE LOSS OF AVAILABILITY OF A KNOWN DESIGNATED MINERAL RESOURCE THAT WOULD BE OF VALUE TO THE REGION AND THE RESIDENTS OF THE STATE.	Land Use	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	None required.
	Transpo.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
IMPACT GEO-9: RESULT IN THE LOSS OF AVAILABILITY OF A LOCALLY-IMPORTANT MINERAL RESOURCE RECOVERY SITE DELINEATED ON A LOCAL GENERAL PLAN, SPECIFIC PLAN, OR OTHER LAND USE PLAN.	Land Use	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	None required.
	Transpo.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
IMPACT GEO-10: RESULT IN A SUBSTANTIAL IMPACT TO MINERAL RESOURCES FROM CONSTRUCTION OF PROPOSED MTP/SCS PROJECTS.	Land Use	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	None required.
	Transpo.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS											
IMPACT HAZ-1: CREATE A SIGNIFICANT HAZARD TO THE PUBLIC OR THE ENVIRONMENT THROUGH THE ROUTINE TRANSPORT, USE, OR DISPOSAL OF HAZARDOUS MATERIALS.	Land Use	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	None required.
	Transpo.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	

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	REG	CCC	EC	DC	RRC	LNID	PLA	SAC	YOL		
Impact Statement											
IMPACT HAZ-2A: CREATE A SIGNIFICANT HAZARD TO THE PUBLIC OR THE ENVIRONMENT THROUGH REASONABLY FORESEEABLE UPSET AND ACCIDENT CONDITIONS INVOLVING THE RELEASE OF HAZARDOUS MATERIALS INTO THE ENVIRONMENT.	Land Use	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	None required.
	Transpo.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
IMPACT HAZ-2B: CREATE A SIGNIFICANT HAZARD TO THE PUBLIC OR THE ENVIRONMENT THROUGH REASONABLY FORESEEABLE UPSET AND ACCIDENT CONDITIONS INVOLVING THE RELEASE OF ASBESTOS INTO THE ENVIRONMENT.	Land Use	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	None required.
	Transpo.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
IMPACT HAZ-3: EMIT HAZARDOUS EMISSIONS OR HANDLE HAZARDOUS OR ACUTELY HAZARDOUS MATERIALS, SUBSTANCES, OR WASTE WITHIN 0.25 MILE OF AN EXISTING OR PROPOSED SCHOOL.	Land Use	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	None required.
	Transpo.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
IMPACT HAZ-4: RESULT IN DEVELOPMENT ON A SITE WHICH IS INCLUDED ON A LIST OF HAZARDOUS MATERIALS SITES COMPILED PURSUANT TO GOVERNMENT CODE SECTION 65962.5 AND, AS A RESULT, CREATE A SIGNIFICANT HAZARD TO THE PUBLIC OR ENVIRONMENT.	Land Use	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Mitigation Measure HAZ-1: Conduct site-specific investigation to characterize the potential presence of hazardous wastes.
	Transpo.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	

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Impact Statement		REG	CCC	EC	DC	RRC	LNID	PLA	SAC	YOL		
IMPACT HAZ-5: FOR A PROJECT LOCATED WITHIN AN AIRPORT LAND USE PLAN, OR WHERE SUCH A PLAN HAS NOT BEEN ADOPTED, WITHIN TWO MILES OF A PUBLIC AIRPORT OR PUBLIC USE AIRPORT, RESULT IN A SAFETY HAZARD EXCESSIVE NOISE FOR PEOPLE RESIDING OR WORKING IN THE PROJECT AREA.	Land Use										None required.	
	Transpo.											
IMPACT HAZ-6: IMPAIR IMPLEMENTATION OF, OR PHYSICALLY INTERFERE WITH, AN ADOPTED EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN OR EMERGENCY EVACUATION PLAN.	Land Use										Mitigation Measure HAZ-2: Implement Mitigation Measure HAZ-4	
	Transpo.										Mitigation Measure HAZ-3: Implement Mitigation Measure HAZ-6	
IMPACT HAZ-7: RESULT IN CONSTRUCTION IMPACTS THAT WOULD CAUSE A HAZARD TO THE PUBLIC OR THE ENVIRONMENT.	Land Use										None required.	
	Transpo.											
IMPACT HAZ-8: EXPOSE PEOPLE OR STRUCTURES TO A SIGNIFICANT RISK OF LOSS, INJURY, OR DEATH INVOLVING WILDLAND FIRES.	Land Use										Mitigation Measure HAZ-4: Minimize the risk of loss, injury, or death to people or structures as a result of wildland fires.	
	Transpo.											
IMPACT HAZ-9: RESULT IN PROJECTS LOCATED IN OR NEAR STATE RESPONSIBILITY AREAS OR LANDS CLASSIFIED AS VERY HIGH FIRE HAZARD SEVERITY ZONES THAT COULD SUBSTANTIALLY IMPAIR AN ADOPTED EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN OR EMERGENCY EVACUATION PLAN, EXACERBATE WILDFIRE RISK, OR POST-FIRE CREATE FLOODING OR LANDSLIDE HAZARDS.	Land Use										Mitigation Measure HAZ-5: Implementation Mitigation Measure HAZ-4	
	Transpo.										Mitigation Measure HAZ-6: Minimize the risk of impairing an adopted emergency response plan or evacuation plan, exacerbating wildfire risk, or post-fire hazards.	

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	REG	CCC	EC	DC	RRC	LNID	PLA	SAC	YOL		
Impact Statement											
HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY											
IMPACT HYD-1: VIOLATE WATER QUALITY STANDARDS OR WASTEWATER REQUIREMENTS OR OTHERWISE SUBSTANTIALLY DEGRADE SURFACE OR GROUNDWATER QUALITY.	Land Use	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	None required.
	Transpo.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
IMPACT HYD-2: SUBSTANTIALLY DECREASE GROUNDWATER SUPPLIES OR INTERFERE SUBSTANTIALLY WITH GROUNDWATER RECHARGE SUCH THAT THE PROJECT MAY IMPEDE SUSTAINABLE GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT	Land Use	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	None required.
	Transpo.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
IMPACT HYD-3A: SUBSTANTIALLY ALTER EXISTING DRAINAGE PATTERNS, INCLUDING ALTERATION OF THE COURSE OF A STREAM OR RIVER OR ADDITION OF IMPERVIOUS SURFACES, IN A MANNER THAT WOULD RESULT IN SUBSTANTIAL EROSION OR SILTATION.	Land Use	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	None required.
	Transpo.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
IMPACT HYD-3B: SUBSTANTIALLY ALTER EXISTING DRAINAGE PATTERNS, INCLUDING ALTERATION OF THE COURSE OF A STREAM OR RIVER OR ADDITION OF IMPERVIOUS SURFACES, IN A MANNER THAT WOULD SUBSTANTIALLY INCREASE RATES OR AMOUNTS OF SURFACE RUNOFF AND RESULT IN FLOODING.	Land Use	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	None required.
	Transpo.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	

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Impact Statement		REG	CCC	EC	DC	RRC	LNID	PLA	SAC	YOL	
IMPACT HYD-3C: SUBSTANTIALLY ALTER EXISTING DRAINAGE PATTERNS, INCLUDING ALTERATION OF THE COURSE OF A STREAM OR RIVER OR ADDITION OF IMPERVIOUS SURFACES, IN A MANNER THAT WOULD CREATE OR CONTRIBUTE RUNOFF, WATER THAT WOULD EXCEED THE CAPACITY OF EXISTING OR PLANNED STORMWATER DRAINAGE SYSTEMS, SUCH THAT THE CONSTRUCTION OF NEW, EXPANDED, OR RELOCATED FACILITIES THAT COULD CAUSE SIGNIFICANT EFFECTS IS REQUIRED, OR PROVIDE SUBSTANTIAL ADDITIONAL SOURCES OF POLLUTED RUNOFF.	Land Use										None required.
	Transpo.										
IMPACT HYD-4: IN FLOOD HAZARD, TSUNAMI, OR SEICHE ZONES, RISK RELEASE OF POLLUTANTS DUE TO PROJECT INUNDATION.	Land Use										None required.
	Transpo.										
IMPACT HYD-5: CONFLICT WITH OR OBSTRUCT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A WATER QUALITY CONTROL PLAN OR SUSTAINABLE GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT PLAN.	Land Use										None required.
	Transpo.										
IMPACT HYD-5: CONFLICT WITH OR OBSTRUCT THE IMPLEMENTATION OF A WATER QUALITY CONTROL PLAN OR SUSTAINABLE GROUNDWATER MANAGEMENT PLAN.	Land Use										None required.
	Transpo.										

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Impact Statement	REG	CCC	EC	DC	RRC	LNID	PLA	SAC	YOL		
LAND USE AND PLANNING											
IMPACT LU-1: PHYSICALLY DIVIDE AN EXISTING COMMUNITY	Land Use	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Mitigation Measure LU-1: Implementing agencies and/or project sponsors shall implement measures, where feasible and necessary based on project- and site-specific considerations that include, but are not limited to:
	Transpo.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	
IMPACT LU-2: CAUSE A SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT RESULTING FROM A CONFLICT WITH THE SCS REQUIREMENTS OF SENATE BILL 375.	Land Use	☐	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	None required.
	Transpo.	☐	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
IMPACT LU-3: CAUSE A SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT RESULTING FROM A CONFLICT WITH THE PROVISIONS OF THE LAND USE AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLAN ADOPTED BY THE DELTA PROTECTION COMMISSION.	Land Use	☐	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	None required.
	Transpo.	☐	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
NOISE											
IMPACT NOI-1: RESULT IN NOISE LEVELS THAT EXCEED THE COMMUNITY TYPE CNEL THRESHOLDS IDENTIFIED IN TABLE 13-4 OR INCREASE NOISE LEVELS MORE THAN 1.5 DB AT LOCATIONS CURRENTLY IN EXCEEDANCE OF THE CNEL THRESHOLDS FOR CENTER AND CORRIDOR COMMUNITIES OR MORE THAN 3 DB AT LOCATIONS CURRENTLY IN EXCEEDANCE OF THE CNEL THRESHOLDS OVER BASELINE CONDITIONS FOR THE OTHER COMMUNITY TYPES.	Land Use	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	Mitigation Measure NOI-1: Employ measures to reduce noise from new land uses and transportation projects.
	Transpo.	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	

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REG	CCC	EC	DC	RRC	LNID	PLA	SAC	YOL			
Impact Statement											
IMPACT NOI-2: RESULT IN EXCESSIVE VIBRATION AND GROUNDBORNE NOISE.	Land Use	N/A									Mitigation Measure NOI-2: Employ vibration-reducing measures on new and expanded rail systems.
	Transpo.	N/A									
IMPACT NOI-3: RESULT IN CONSTRUCTION IMPACTS THAT WOULD INCREASE NOISE LEVELS ABOVE THE COMMUNITY TYPE CNEL THRESHOLDS IDENTIFIED IN TABLE 13-4, RESULT IN INCREASES OF MORE THAN 1.5 DB AT LOCATIONS CURRENTLY IN EXCEEDANCE OF THE CNEL THRESHOLDS FOR CENTER AND CORRIDOR COMMUNITIES OR MORE THAN 3 DBA AT LOCATIONS CURRENTLY IN EXCEEDANCE OF THE CNEL THRESHOLDS OVER BASELINE CONDITIONS FOR THE OTHER COMMUNITY TYPES; OR RESULT IN EXCESSIVE LEVELS OF VIBRATION AND GROUNDBORNE NOISE.	Land Use	N/A									Mitigation Measure NOI-3: Reduce noise, vibration, and groundborne noise generated by construction activities.
	Transpo.	N/A									
POPULATION AND HOUSING											
IMPACT POP-1: DISPLACE SUBSTANTIAL NUMBERS OF EXISTING PEOPLE OR HOUSING, NECESSITATING THE CONSTRUCTION OF REPLACEMENT HOUSING ELSEWHERE.	Land Use										
	Transpo.										

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		A.	B. Localized					C. High Frequency Transit Areas			Mitigation*	
REG	CCC	EC	DC	RRC	LNID	PLA	SAC	YOL				
Impact Statement			REG	CCC	EC	DC	RRC	LNID	PLA	SAC	YOL	
PUBLIC SERVICES AND RECREATION												
IMPACT PS-1: IMPEDE ACHIEVEMENT OF ACCEPTABLE LEVELS OF SERVICE, INCLUDING CAPITAL CAPACITY, PROGRAMMING, EQUIPMENT, AND PERSONNEL, FOR POLICE PROTECTION, FIRE PROTECTION, EMERGENCY RESPONSE, SCHOOL, LIBRARY, SOCIAL, PARKS AND RECREATION, AND/OR OTHER PUBLIC SERVICES, AND INCLUDING INCREASED USE OF PARKS AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES SUCH THAT SUBSTANTIAL PHYSICAL DETERIORATION WOULD OCCUR OR BE ACCELERATED.		Land Use										Mitigation Measure PS-1: Ensure adequate public service and utilities will be available to comply with applicable service levels.
		Transpo.										
IMPACT PS-2: RESULT IN IMPACTS ASSOCIATED WITH THE CONSTRUCTION OF NEW OR THE EXPANSION OF EXISTING FACILITIES REQUIRED TO MAINTAIN ACCEPTABLE LEVELS OF SERVICE FOR POLICE PROTECTION, FIRE PROTECTION, EMERGENCY, SCHOOL, LIBRARY, SOCIAL, PARK AND RECREATION SERVICES, AND/OR OTHER PUBLIC SERVICES.		Land Use										Mitigation Measure PS-2: Implement the construction-related mitigation measures identified in other chapters of this EIR.
		Transpo.										
TRANSPORTATION												
IMPACT TRN-1: SUBSTANTIALLY INTERFERE WITH ACHIEVEMENT OF VMT REDUCTIONS CONSISTENT WITH CARB’S 2017 SCOPING PLAN.		Land Use										Mitigation Measure TRN-1: Strategies to reduce VMT from existing and proposed land use development.
		Transpo.										
IMPACT TRN-2: CAUSE COMBINED BICYCLE, WALK, AND TRANSIT PERSON TRIPS PER CAPITA TO BE LOWER THAN THE BASELINE AVERAGE IN THE APPLICABLE SUB-AREA, AND CAUSE A DECLINE IN THE BICYCLE, WALK, AND TRANSIT PERSON TRIPS PER CAPITA THAT IS LOWER THAN THE BASELINE REGIONAL AVERAGE.		Land Use										None required.
		Transpo.										
IMPACT TRN-3: CAUSE AVERAGE TRANSIT PASSENGER BOARDINGS PER VEHICLE SERVICE HOUR TO BE LOWER THAN THE BASELINE AVERAGE FOR TRANSIT SERVICE PROVIDED IN THE RELEVANT SUB-AREA .		Land Use										None required.
		Transpo.										

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Impact Statement		REG	CCC	EC	DC	RRC	LNID	PLA	SAC	YOL	
IMPACT TRN-4: CAUSE INTERFERENCE WITH EXISTING OR PLANNED BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN FACILITIES.	Land Use										None required.
	Transpo.										
IMPACT TRN-5: CAUSE A DISRUPTION TO THE MOVEMENT OF AGRICULTURAL PRODUCTS ON RURAL ROADWAYS.	Land Use										Mitigation Measure TRN-2: Strategies to support the movement of agricultural products on rural roadways near growth areas.
	Transpo.										
IMPACT TRN-6: CAUSE A DISRUPTION TO AVIATION ACCESS OR SERVICE.	Land Use										None required.
	Transpo.										
IMPACT TRN-7: CAUSE A DISRUPTION TO GOODS MOVEMENT INTO OR THROUGH THE SACOG REGION.	Land Use										None required.
	Transpo.										
IMPACT TRN-8: CAUSE A DISRUPTION TO THE ONGOING OPERATIONS OF THE APPLICABLE REGIONAL OR LOCAL AREA TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM DUE TO CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITIES.	Land Use										Mitigation Measure TRN-3: Apply best practice strategies to reduce the localized impact from construction activities on the transportation system.
	Transpo.										

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Impact Statement		REG	CCC	EC	DC	RRC	LNID	PLA	SAC	YOL	
IMPACT TRN-9: RESULT IN INCONSISTENCY WITH PROJECT DESIGN STANDARDS RELATED TO TRAFFIC SAFETY.	Land Use										None required.
	Transpo.										
UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS											
IMPACT USS-1: INCREASE DEMAND FOR SURFACE OR GROUNDWATER IN EXCESS OF AVAILABLE SUPPLIES DURING NORMAL, DRY, OR MULTIPLE DRY YEARS.	Land Use										Mitigation Measure USS-1: Implement Mitigation Measure PS-1.
	Transpo.										Mitigation Measure USS-2: Implement water conservation strategies.
IMPACT USS-2: EXCEED THE CAPACITY OF EXISTING WATER STORAGE, CONVEYANCE, DISTRIBUTION, AND TREATMENT FACILITIES SUCH THAT THE CONSTRUCTION OF NEW, EXPANDED, OR RELOCATED FACILITIES THAT COULD CAUSE SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS IS REQUIRED.	Land Use										Mitigation Measure USS-3: Implement the construction- and operational-related mitigation measures identified in other chapters of this EIR.
	Transpo.										Mitigation Measure USS-4: Implement Mitigation Measure USS-1 Mitigation Measure USS-5: Implement Mitigation Measure USS-2

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REG	CCC	EC	DC	RRC	LNID	PLA	SAC	YOL			
Impact Statement											
IMPACT USS-3: EXCEED THE CAPACITY OF EXISTING UTILITY INFRASTRUCTURE, INCLUDING WASTEWATER TREATMENT, FIRE FLOWS, SOLID WASTE, ELECTRIC POWER, NATURAL GAS, AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS SUCH THAT THE CONSTRUCTION OF NEW, EXPANDED, OR RELOCATED FACILITIES THAT COULD CAUSE SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS IS REQUIRED.	Land Use										Mitigation Measure USS-6: Implement Mitigation Measure USS-1.
	Transpo.										Mitigation Measure USS-7: Implement Mitigation Measure USS-2.
IMPACT USS-4: GENERATE SOLID WASTE IN EXCESS OF STATE OR LOCAL STANDARDS OR OTHERWISE CONFLICT WITH FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL MANAGEMENT AND REDUCTION STATUTES AND REGULATIONS RELATED TO SOLID WASTE, INCLUDING SOLID WASTE REDUCTION GOALS.	Land Use										None required.
	Transpo.										

*Only a summary of mitigation is provided in this table. See the applicable chapter (as modified by changes identified in Chapter 4 of the Final EIR) for a full list and description of all identified mitigation measures by impact.