FINDINGS

CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FINDINGS

FOR

THE INTERSTATE 10 CORRIDOR PROJECT

SAN BERNARDINO AND LOS ANGELES COUNTIES, CALIFORNIA

DISTRICT 7 – LA – 10 (PM 44.0/48.3)

DISTRICT 8 – SBD – 10 (PM 0.0/R37.0)

The following information is presented to comply with State CEQA Guidelines (Title 14 California Code of Regulations, Chapter 3, Section 15901) and the Department of Transportation and California Transportation Commission Environmental Regulations (Title 21, California Code of Regulations, Chapter 11, Section 1501). Reference is made to the Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) for the project, which is the basic source for the information.

The following impacts have been identified in the FEIR as resulting from the project. Impacts found not to be significant have not been included.

Visual/Aesthetics

Significant Environmental Impacts:

The addition of express lanes on either side of the I-10 corridor is expected to have long-term visual impacts on key viewpoints ranging from moderately low to moderately high after project implementation. Removal of eucalyptus trees and other vegetation within the interchange areas may have an adverse effect on visual quality for local residents and motorists. In addition, the addition of lanes, and construction of structures such as sound walls, retaining walls have the potential to alter the existing visual quality of the corridor.

Findings:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project, which avoid or substantially lessen the significant environmental effect as identified in the FEIR.

Statement of Facts:

The project is located within an urbanized area that is primarily built out. The selected alternative is not anticipated to result in a substantial effect on the existing visual quality or character with the implementation of mitigation measures VA-1 through VA-38 which have been made conditions of approval and included in the Environmental Commitments Record. These measures include aesthetic treatment of walls, landscaping, and extensive tree planting to soften the landscape. With implementation of these measures, the visual

impacts of this project would be reduced to the maximum extent practicable and would not result in a substantial change in overall visual quality for the area.

Biological Resources

Significant Environmental Impacts:

Delhi Sands flower-loving fly (DSF) was observed on two separate occasions at the southeast quadrant of the I-10/ Pepper Avenue interchange between the eastbound on-ramp and at the existing Caltrans ROW line. As such, the project may result in a significant impact to suitable occupied DSF habitat.

In addition, the project will result in 0.25 acre and 0.005 acre of permanent impact to Riversidean Sage Scrub (RSS) and Southern Willow Scrub habitat, respectively.

Findings:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project, which avoid or substantially lessen the significant environmental effect as identified in the FEIR.

Statement of Facts:

Preliminary design plans presented in the draft environmental document have been refined to further minimize permanent and temporary impacts to suitable occupied DSF habitat at the I-10/Pepper Avenue Interchange. In addition to minimization measures, potential impacts to DSF suitable, occupied habitat would be mitigated through compensatory mitigation at a United States Fish and Wildlife Service approved mitigation bank as described in TE-4. The project has completed Section 7 consultation with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service. The project's contribution to direct or indirect impacts to threatened or endangered species would be mitigated through measures AS-1 through AS-6, TE-1 through TE-4, and NC-1 through NC-2. With implementation of these measures, adverse effects to threatened and endangered species are not anticipated.

Measure WET-5 requires that impacts to riparian vegetation communities be compensated by purchasing mitigation credits at a minimum 1:1 impact to mitigation ratio, or as otherwise indicated in the project's 401, 404, and/or 1602 permits. As outlined in NC-1, within the biological study area, Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs) will be designated to include all riparian vegetation communities and RSS vegetation not identified as temporarily or permanently impacted. Furthermore, the Santa Ana River, Warm Creek Channel, and jurisdictional waters within the BSA that are not identified as being temporarily or permanently impacted will be designated as ESAs to avoid further impacts to these resources.

Cultural/Paleontological Resources

Significant Environmental Impacts:

The Area of Potential Effects (APE) contains 11 historical resources. Of these historic resources, only six are CEQA-only historical resources. The project has the potential to

contribute to a significant impact on the historic Euclid Avenue/State Route (SR) 83 because the project would require modification of the medians, curb, and/or mature vegetation that are character-defining features of Euclid Avenue/SR-83. In addition, the Euclid Avenue/I-10 Overcrossing (Bridge No. 540445) would be replaced. While this bridge is not a character-defining feature of Euclid Avenue/SR-83, special attention and consideration must be given to the design and aesthetics of the replacement structure to ensure that the new structure does not impact the setting of the corridor.

In addition to historic resources, the project has the potential to significantly impact paleontological resources during construction; however, because fossils are located subsurface, there is no way to determine the full extent of the effect on fossil resources until excavation is underway.

Findings:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project, which avoid or substantially lessen the significant environmental impact to cultural and paleontological resources as identified in the FEIR.

Statement of Facts:

Mitigation measures CUL-1 through CUL-9 have been made conditions of approval and included in the Environmental Commitments Record. With implementation of these measures, potential impacts to cultural resources resulting from the construction of the project would be less than significant. Caltrans has determined that a finding of No Adverse Effect with Non-standard conditions is appropriate for the undertaking. The project will not result in demolition or material alteration of a historical resource in an adverse manner as defined in Section 15064.5(b)(3) of the CEQA Guidelines. The selected alternative's impacts on cultural resources would be less than significant.

To reduce potential direct impacts to paleontological resources, a Paleontological Mitigation Plan, as described in mitigation measure PAL-1, will be required. With the implementation of PAL-1, the selected alternative's impacts on paleontological resources would be less than significant.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials

Significant Environmental Impacts:

Full and partial acquisitions of properties are required to construct the project. Some of these properties are considered Recognized Environmental Conditions (RECs). In addition, other properties and structures that may be affected by the project may contain Leaking Underground Storage Tanks (LUSTs), aboveground storage tanks (AST), lead-based paint (LBP), aerially deposited lead (ADL) and asbestos-containing materials (ACM). As a result, property acquisition and/or disturbance of existing structures without further investigation could result in a significant hazard to the public.

Findings:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project, which avoid or substantially lessen the significant environmental effect as identified in the FEIR.

Statement of Facts:

After the public review of the draft environmental document, additional hazardous waste/ materials studies were conducted to further identify potential health and safety risks associated with RECs. Additional studies prepared include: LUST/AST, LBP, ADL and ACM studies, which provided additional information, extent and disposition of hazardous materials/waste that could be encountered during the construction of the project. The additional investigations provided specific information about the current status of the RECs and will be used by the project to appropriately manage and handle hazardous materials and follow appropriate disposal procedures. The project will incorporate procedures for safe handling and disposal of hazardous materials, and additional investigation which are addressed in Measures HAZ-1 through HAZ-10 of the FEIR. With the implementation of Measures HAZ-1 through HAZ-10, the selected alternative's potential impacts related to hazardous waste/ materials located within the project area and properties to be acquired or demolished would be less than significant.

Noise

Significant Environmental Impacts:

The traffic noise analysis for the project area indicates that residential land uses, park and recreation facilities, schools and motels would be impacted by the preferred alternative (i.e., the noise level would approach or exceed the respective FHWA NAC). Future Design Year (2045) Build noise levels would increase by 0-dB to 6-dB from existing noise conditions. The proposed project would not cause a substantial noise increase (i.e. 12-dB). Without additional barrier protection, the noise analysis results indicate that the proposed project would raise noise levels in some areas from 0 to 5 dB compared to the Design Year (2045) No Build Alternative.

Temporary construction noise impacts are anticipated at areas located immediately adjacent to the proposed project alignment. In addition, it is possible that certain construction activities would cause intermittent localized concern from vibration in the project area. During certain construction phases, processes such as earth moving with bulldozers, the use of vibratory compaction rollers, impact pile driving, demolition, or pavement breaking may cause construction-related vibration impacts such as human annoyance or, in some cases, building damage.

Findings:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project, which avoid or substantially lessen the significant environmental effect as identified in the FEIR.

Statement of Facts:

With consideration of the abatement measures as required in N-1, predicted noise impacts range from a 4-dB increase to a 10-dB decrease from existing conditions compared to the build alternative with abatement. Predicted increases in noise from existing conditions compared to the future build alternative with abatement would not be perceptible and

considered less than significant. Future conditions under the selected alternative with abatement would result in beneficial noise reductions compared to the future no build noise impacts for 252 receptors. After conducting soundwall surveys, it was determined that 26 soundwalls would be constructed as part of the project. In addition, with implementation of measures N-2 through N-4, the project's effects related to construction noise and vibration would be less than significant.

Public Services

Significant Environmental Impacts:

Proposed mainline improvements would necessitate replacement of 13 structures and modification of another 62 structures over a 60-month duration, which would result in construction-related delays such as temporary traffic delays; road, lane, and/or ramp closures; or detours; along I-10, I-15, I-215, and SR-210, and at interchanges, as well as on the surrounding arterials, including SR-83 and SR-38, and could result in significant effects on emergency response.

Findings:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project, which avoid or substantially lessen the significant environmental effect as identified in the FEIR.

Statement of Facts:

None of the temporary closures that have been identified would result in any substantial impact on emergency access or response times. A Final TMP (Mitigation Measure T-1) will be prepared in coordination with local jurisdictions and emergency service providers (e.g., CHP, local police, fire, paramedics) to identify emergency service routes that serve hospitals, fire/police stations, emergency shelters, emergency command centers, and other facilities that provide essential services in times of emergency within the study area. All emergency service routes would be maintained during construction, or alternate routes would be provided. Mitigation Measure UT-3 requires emergency service providers to be alerted in advance of any temporary road closures and construction delays, so that they have adequate time to make appropriate accommodations to ensure prompt emergency response times to fulfill their responsibilities and defined service objectives. In addition to T-1 and UT-3, Mitigation Measures COM-1, COM-3, COM-4, and COM-5 would further minimize potential project impacts on acceptable service ratios, response times, or other performance objectives for public services. With the implementation of the aforementioned mitigation measures, the selected alternative's potential impacts on police and fire emergency response would be less than significant.

Transportation/Traffic

Significant Environmental Impacts:

A. Future Selected Alternative Compared to Existing Condition

Freeway Mainline - An increase in the volume/capacity (v/c) ratio of a freeway segment is an indication of a cumulative traffic impact on the freeway mainline. Under the selected alternative, in 2025 and in 2040, LOS F conditions are generally anticipated during peak

hours in the GP lanes. Under the existing condition, LOS conditions range from LOS B to F. Under the selected alternative, in 2025, v/c ratios range from 0.01 to 0.31 greater than existing conditions. In 2045, v/c ratios range from 0.10 to 0.58 greater than existing conditions. Based on the increases in freeway GP lane v/c ratios, there is a cumulative impact on the freeway mainline.

Intersections - Under the selected alternative, in 2045, one intersection (Parkford Drive and Ford Street) is projected to have a significant cumulative impact. The PM peak hour indicate that the intersection is projected to operate at LOS F.

To assess the significance of cumulative impact of the selected alternative to the freeway mainline and intersection, a comparison of the future selected alternative to future no build conditions was conducted to determine whether the project contributions to are considered cumulatively significant.

B. Future Selected Alternative Compared to Future No Build

Freeway Mainline - A comparison of selected alternative in 2025 and 2040 to the No Build Alternative in 2025 and 2040 identifies the contribution of the selected alternative to cumulative impacts. There is no difference in the LOS letter grade of F anticipated on I-10 between the LA/SB county line and Ford Street under both the selected alternative and No Build Alternative in general purpose lanes during peak hours in 2025 and 2045, except for LOS D anticipated in 2025 during the morning peak hour EB between the LA/SB county line and Haven Avenue and LOS D anticipated in 2045 during the evening peak hour WB between California Street and Ford Street. The peak-hour v/c ratios for the general purpose lanes in 2025 are anticipated to be 0.18 lower to 0.15 higher under the selected alternative than the No Build Alternative. In 2045, the v/c ratios are anticipated to be 0.17 lower to 0.11 higher under the selected alternative than under the No Build Alternative. As such, because the segments of I-10 between the LA/SB county line and Ford Street are forecasted to operate at LOS F under the No Build Alternative, the cumulative contribution of the selected alternative to the performance or LOS of the freeway mainline is less than significant.

Intersections – At the intersection of Parkford Drive/ Ford Street, the future No Build Alternative and the selected alternative would operate at LOS F during the PM peak hour. As such, though there is a significant cumulative impact to the Parkford Drive/ Ford Street intersection, a comparison of the future No Build Alternative has shown that implementation of the project would not result in a significant cumulative contribution at that intersection location by worsening the LOS performance.

Findings:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project, which avoid or substantially lessen the significant environmental effect as identified in the FEIR.

Statement of Facts:

The project would not contribute a significant cumulative impact to the I-10 freeway mainline and intersection of Parkford Drive/ Ford Street. As described in mitigation measure T-2, incorporation of TSM/TDM elements would reduce the project's impacts to

less than significant. In addition, reasonably foreseeable projects discussed in the FEIR would be required to address potential impacts through mitigation.

Mandatory Findings of Significance:

Significant Environmental Impacts:

As discussed in the Biological Resources discussion above, the project may result in a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on DSF. In addition, the project will result in 0.25 acre and 0.005 acre of permanent impact to Riversidean Sage Scrub (RSS) and Southern Willow Scrub habitat, respectively.

The project may result in cumulatively considerable effects for the following environmental resources: aesthetics/visual, biological resources, cultural resources, hazards and hazardous materials, noise, and public services.

Findings:

Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project, which avoid or substantially lessen the significant environmental effect as identified in the FEIR.

Statement of Facts:

The project's individual and cumulative contribution to direct or indirect impacts to biological resources would be mitigated through measures AS-1 through AS-6, TE-1 through TE-4, WET-5, and NC-1 through NC-2. These measures require the project to conduct appropriate biological surveys prior to construction, delineate environmentally sensitive areas to avoid impacts to biological resources, and purchase mitigation credits to off-set impacts to sensitive habitat and jurisdictional waters.

Identified mitigation measures pursuant to CEQA that reduce impacts to less than significant including, VA-1 through VA-38, AS-1 through AS-6, TE-1 through TE-7, NC-1, CUL-1 through CUL-9, PA-1, HAZ-1 through HAZ-10, COM-1, COM-3, COM-4 and COM-5, N-1 through N-4, UT-3, T-1 and T-2 will ensure that potential project impacts would not result in cumulatively considerable effects for the following environmental resources: aesthetics/visual, biological resources, cultural resources, hazards and hazardous materials, noise, and public services.

Similarly, the reasonably foreseeable projects discussed in Section 3.6 of the FEIR would be required to address potential impacts through mitigation as part of project approvals required by the implementing jurisdiction in which they are located.