SUBMITTAL TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE, STATE OF CALIFORNIA

ITEM: 3.45
(ID # 11841)
MEETING DATE:
Tuesday, March 10, 2020

FROM : TLMA-TRANSPORTATION:

SUBJECT: TRANSPORTATION AND LAND MANAGEMENT AGENCY (TLMA)-TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT: Adopt the Final Initial Study with Mitigated Negative Declaration and Approve the Avenue 48 Widening Project; District 4. [$0] (Clerk to File Notice)

RECOMMENDED MOTION: That the Board of Supervisors:

1. Adopt the Final Initial Study with Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Avenue 48 Widening Project and adopt the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program for the project, based on the findings in the Initial Study and the conclusion that the project will not have a significant effect on the environment;
2. Approve the Avenue 48 Widening Project; and
3. Direct the Clerk of the Board to file the Notice of Determination with the County Clerk for posting within five working days.

ACTION:Policy

Patricia Romo, Director of Transportation 2/20/2020

MINUTES OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

On motion of Supervisor Perez, seconded by Supervisor Hewitt and duly carried by unanimous vote, IT WAS ORDERED that the above matter is approved as recommended.

Ayes:	Jeffries, Spiegel, Washington, Perez and Hewitt
Nays:	None
Absent:	None
Date:	March 10, 2020
xc:	Transp.

Kecia R. Harper
Clerk of the Board
By: _____ Deputy

SUBMITTAL TO THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE, STATE OF CALIFORNIA

FINANCIAL DATA	Current Fiscal Year:	Next Fiscal Year:	Total Cost:	Ongoing Cost
COST	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
NET COUNTY COST	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
SOURCE OF FUNDS: No General Funds are used on this project.			**Budget Adjustment:** No	
			For Fiscal Year: 19/20	

C.E.O. RECOMMENDATION: Approve

BACKGROUND:

Summary

Avenue 48 is an east-west major arterial road that carries over 12,000 vehicles per day and commonly experiences traffic delays and congestion. The road connects the City of Coachella, the City of Indio, and the unincorporated area of the County of Riverside. The County of Riverside, in cooperation with the City of Coachella and the City of Indio, proposes to widen Avenue 48 between Van Buren Street to Dillon Road from two lanes to five lanes, install sidewalks, bicycle lanes and a new traffic signal at the intersection of Luzon Street and Avenue 48, and modify the existing traffic signal at the intersection of Dillon Road and Avenue 48.

The Board of Supervisors, on June 20, 2017, Agenda Item 3.41, approved the Reimbursement Agreement between the County of Riverside and the Coachella Valley Association of Governments (CVAG) for funding to prepare the Project Approval/Environmental Document (PA/ED).

The preparation of the environmental documentation for this project is consistent with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The County of Riverside, in cooperation with the Cities of Coachella and Indio, is the Lead Agency for CEQA. As the lead agency under CEQA, the County prepared an Initial Study (IS) with proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) in order to analyze the proposed Project's impacts to the environment.

A Notice of Availability (NOA) for the Draft Initial Study was published in the Desert Sun in English and the La Prensa in Spanish. The NOA was mailed to federal, state and local agencies, tribal governments, utility companies, and to property owners within a 500-foot radius of the project site. The Draft IS/MND was circulated for a 30 day public review period from June 5, 2019 to July 8, 2019. The document was made available for public review at the following locations:

- County Transportation Department Annex Office
- The Coachella and the Indio Public Libraries
- County Transportation Department Project website

A public meeting was held on June 20, 2019, at the Martin Van Buren Elementary School in the City of Indio. The County has prepared responses to public comments received, which have been incorporated into the Final IS/MND. Based on the study's findings, the County of Riverside has determined that the proposed Project will not have a significant effect on the environment because potential effects would be mitigated to a less than significant level through the incorporation of mitigation measures.

The adoption of the Final Initial Study with Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) and the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan (MMRP) will complete the CEQA environmental documentation for the Project.

Final design is currently ongoing and is scheduled for completion in the Fall of 2020. Construction is expected to begin in Winter of 2020.

Impact on Citizens and Businesses

The proposed project on Avenue 48 will alleviate congestion and improve traffic operations.

SUPPLEMENTAL:

Additional Fiscal Information

CVAG will fund 75% of the cost of the engineering and environmental services required to complete the PA/ED phase of the project. The remaining 25% will be shared by the City of Coachella and the County. Discussions with CVAG are on-going to secure TUMF funding for the construction phase. There are no General Funds used in this project.

Attachments:

- Project Vicinity Map
- Notice of Determination – Avenue 48 Widening Project
- Journal Voucher for CDFW & County Clerk Fee
- Avenue 48 Final ISMND
- Appendix F: MMRP
- Appendix G: Comments and Responses
- NOA/NOI to Adopt MND

Jason Farin, Senior Management Analyst 3/4/2020

Gregory P. Priamos, Director County Counsel 2/27/2020

NOTICE OF DETERMINATION
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT

SCH# 2019069015

PROJECT NAME: Avenue 48 Widening Project

DESCRIPTION AND LOCATION: The County of Riverside, in cooperation with the City of Coachella and City of Indio, is proposing to widen Avenue 48 from two lanes to five lanes between Van Buren Street to Dillon Road, a distance of approximately 0.3 mile, to accommodate one additional westbound lane and two additional eastbound lanes with a raised concrete median. In addition, the project will include construction of bicycle lanes and traffic signal, modification to an existing traffic signal, and re-striping of pavement. The project would result in street lights, fences, walls, utility meters, power poles, signs, planters, and mailboxes to be relocated. Right of Way acquisition is anticipated.

1. The project will not have a significant effect on the environment.
2. A Mitigated Negative Declaration was prepared for this project pursuant to the provisions of CEQA.
3. Mitigation measures were made a condition of the approval of this project.
4. A Mitigation Monitoring plan was adopted by the Board of Supervisors.

The Mitigated Negative Declaration may be examined, along with the administrative record, at the County Transportation Department Annex Office 3525 14th Street, Riverside, California 92501.

Mary Zambon — Title: Environmental Project Manager — Date: 1/22/2020
Mary Zambon

Patricia Romo — Title: Director of Transportation — Date: 1/20/2020
Patricia Romo

HEARING BODY OR OFFICER		ACTION ON PROJECT	
XX	Board of Supervisors	X	Approval
_____	Planning Commission	_____	Disapproval

Date: March 10, 2020

Verifying: Deputy Clerk of the Board — Title: — Date: 3/10/2020

Original Negative Declaration/Notice of Determination was routed to County Clerks for posting on.
3/12/2020 Date — KD Initial

For County Clerk Use

3/10/2020 3.45

RIVERSIDE COUNTY CLERK & RECORDER

AUTHORIZATION
TO BILL
BY JOURNAL VOUCHER

-TO BE FILLED IN BY SUBMITTING AGENCY-
537280-20000-3130500000 ZC70040C Z1530

AUTHORIZATION NUMBER: W.O.#ZC70040, Task Code Z1530

AMOUNT: $2,456.75 ($50.00 County Clerk Processing Fee + $ 2,406.75 CDFW MND Filing Fee)

DATE: January 22, 2020

AGENCY: Riverside County Transportation Department

THIS AUTHORIZES THE COUNTY CLERK & RECORDER TO ISSUE A VOUCHER FOR PAYMENT OF ALL FILING AND HANDLING FEES FOR THE ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENT(S).

NUMBER OF DOCUMENTS INCLUDED: One (1)

AUTHORIZED BY: Mary Zambon, Environmental Project Manager

Signature: MZambon

PRESENTED BY: Mohamed Eissa, Assistant Transportation Planner

-TO BE FILLED IN BY COUNTY CLERK-

ACCEPTED BY: _

DATE: _

RECEIPT # (S) _

STATE OF CALIFORNIA - THE RESOURCES AGENCY
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME
ENVIRONMENTAL FILING FEE CASH RECEIPT

Receipt #: 19-162970

State Clearinghouse # (if applicable):

Lead Agency: COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT *Date:* 06/05/2019

County Agency of Filing: RIVERSIDE *Document No:* E-201900640

Project Title: AVENUE 48 WIDENING

Project Applicant Name: COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE TRANSPORTATION *Phone Number:* (951) 955-1506

Project Applicant Address: 3525 14TH STREET, RIVERSIDE, CA 92501

Project Applicant: LOCAL PUBLIC AGENCY

CHECK APPLICABLE FEES:

☐ *Environmental Impact Report*	
☐ *Negative Declaration*	
☐ *Application Fee Water Diversion (State Water Resources Control Board Only)*	
☐ *Project Subject to Certified Regulatory Programs*	
☐ *County Administration Fee*	$0.00
☐ *Project that is exempt from fees (DFG No Effect Determination (Form Attached))*	
☐ *Project that is exempt from fees (Notice of Exemption)*	
Total Received	$0.00

Signature and title of person receiving payment: Deputy

Notes:

ACR 533 (Est. 12/2013)

Public Notice

Notice of Availability of a Draft Initial Study and Intent to Adopt Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration and Announcement of Public Meeting

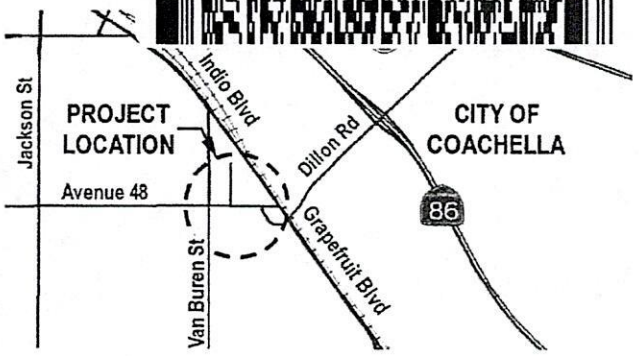
Avenue 48 Widening Project

PUBLIC MEETING: WHERE AND WHEN

Date: June 20, 2019
Time: 6:00 P.M. to 7:30 P.M.
Place: Martin Van Buren Elementary School Multipurpose Room
47733 Van Buren St., Indio, CA 92201

WHAT IS BEING PLANNED?

The County of Riverside Transportation Department (County), in cooperation with the Cities of Coachella and Indio, propose to widen Avenue 48 from two lanes to five lanes from Van Buren Street eastward to Dillon Road (approximately 0.3 mile). Six-foot-wide sidewalks and five-foot-wide bicycle lanes will be constructed in the eastbound and westbound directions of Avenue 48. The project includes re-striping of pavement along an approximately 600-foot-long section of Avenue 48 west of Van Buren Street and along an approximately 500-foot-long section of Avenue 48 east of Dillon Road. A new signal will be constructed at the intersection of Luzon Street and Avenue 48, and the existing signal at the intersection of Dillon Road and Avenue 48 will be modified.



WHY THIS PUBLIC NOTICE?

The County has studied the proposed project and concluded that it would not significantly affect the environment. The report detailing this finding is called an Initial Study. This notice serves to advertise the availability of the Draft Initial Study and your opportunity to read and comment on it, as well as the opportunity to attend the public meeting on June 20, 2019. The meeting will be an open house format; no formal presentation is planned. The Riverside County Board of Supervisors will consider approval of the project and adoption of a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) for the project after July 2019.

WHAT IS AVAILABLE?

The Draft Initial Study with Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Avenue 48 Widening Project will be available for review beginning June 5, 2019. This document will be available for 30 days from June 5, 2019 until July 8, 2019. The document is available for review at the following locations during normal business hours and County's website:

Riverside County Transportation Department, 3525 14th St., Riverside, CA 92501	https://rcprojects.org/ave48/
Coachella Branch Library, 1538 Seventh St., Coachella, CA92236	Indio Branch Library, 200 Civic Center Mall, Indio, CA 92201

WHERE DO YOU COME IN?

Please submit your comments in writing no later than July 8, 2019 to Mohamed Eissa, Riverside County Transportation Department, 3525 14th Street, Riverside, CA 92501. The date we will begin accepting comments is June 5, 2019. Based on findings in the MND, the County has determined that the proposed project will not have a significant effect on the environment because potential effects would be mitigated to a less than significant level through incorporation of mitigation measures. Pursuant to Section 15072(f)(5) of the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines, the project site is not identified on any of the lists enumerated under Section 65962.5 of the California Government Code pertaining to hazardous wastes. Your written comments will be considered in the decision on the project. Notice of said decision will be mailed to any person requesting notification. No decision will be taken until after the review period is complete.

CONTACT

For information about this project or to receive a copy of the Draft Initial Study with Proposed Mitigation for Avenue 48 Widening Project, please contact Mohamed Eissa, Assistant Transportation Planner, Riverside County Transportation, at (951) 955-1506, or MEissa@rivco.org.

Under the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, this document will be made available in alternate formats by contacting the individual noted above.

Aviso Público

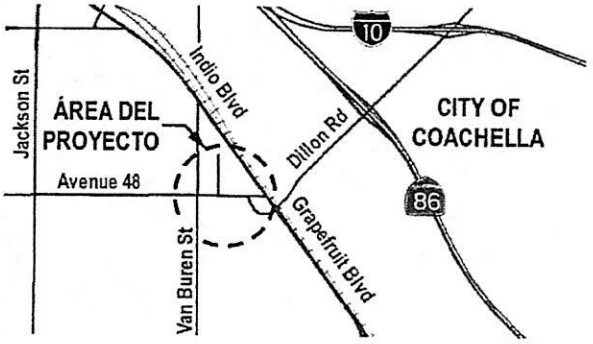
Aviso de Disponibilidad del Estudio Inicial Preliminar y Intento de Adoptar una Declaración Negativa Mitigada y Anuncio de Reunión Pública
Proyecto De Ampliación de Avenue 48

REUNIÓN PÚBLICA: DONDE Y CUANDO

Día: 20 de junio de 2019
Tiempo: 6:00 P.M. a 7:30 P.M.
Local: Martin Van Buren Elementary School Multipurpose Room
47733 Van Buren St., Indio, CA 92201

¿QUÉ SE ESTÁ PLANEANDO?

El Departamento de Transportación del Condado de Riverside (Condado), en cooperación con las Ciudades de Coachella y Indio, propone ampliar Avenue 48 de dos carriles a cinco carriles desde Van Buren Street hacia el este hasta Dillon Road (aproximadamente 0.3 millas). Se construirán banquetas de seis pies de ancho y carriles para bicicletas de cinco pies de ancho en las direcciones este y oeste de Avenue 48. El proyecto también incluye repintando las rayas en el pavimento a lo largo de una sección de aproximadamente 600 pies de largo de Avenue 48 al oeste de Van Buren Street y a lo largo de una sección de aproximadamente 500 pies de largo de Avenue 48 al este de Dillon Road. Se construiría una nueva señal de tráfico en la intersección de Luzon Street y Avenue 48, y se modificaría la señal existente en la intersección de Dillon Road y Avenue 48.



¿POR QUÉ ESTE AVISO?

El Condado ha estudiado el proyecto propuesto y concluyó que no afectaría significativamente el medio ambiente. El reporte que detalla este hallazgo se llama un Estudio Inicial. Este aviso sirve para anunciar la disponibilidad del Estudio Inicial Preliminar y su oportunidad de leer y hacer comentarios, así como la oportunidad de asistir a la reunión pública el 20 de junio de 2019. La reunión pública tendrá un formato de puertas abiertas; no habrá presentación formal. La Junta de Supervisores del Condado de Riverside considerará la aprobación del proyecto y la adopción de una Declaración Negativa Mitigada (MND, por su acrónimo en inglés) para el proyecto después de julio 2019.

¿QUE ESTA DISPONIBLE?

Este Estudio Inicial Preliminar con Propuesta Declaración Negativa Mitigada para el Proyecto de Ampliación de Avenue 48 estará disponible a partir del 5 de junio de 2019. Este documento estará disponible por 30 días desde el 5 de junio de 2019 hasta el 8 de julio de 2019. El documento está disponible para su revisión en los siguientes lugares durante las horas normales de negocio y el sitio web de Condado:

Departamento de Transportación del Condado de Riverside, 3525 14th St., Riverside, CA 92501	https://rcprojects.org/ave48/
Coachella Branch Library, 1538 Seventh St., Coachella, CA 92236	Indio Branch Library, 200 Civic Center Mall, Indio, CA 92201

¿DONDE ENTRA USTED?

Por favor, envíe sus comentarios por escrito a más tardar el 8 de julio de 2019 a Mohamed Eissa, Departamento de Transportación del Condado de Riverside, 3525 14th Street, Riverside, CA 92501. La fecha en que comenzaremos a aceptar comentarios es el 5 de junio de 2019. Basado en los hallazgos del MND, el Condado ha determinado que el proyecto propuesto no tendrá un efecto significativo sobre el medio ambiente porque los efectos potenciales se mitigarían a un nivel menos que significativo a través de la incorporación de las medidas de mitigación. De acuerdo con la Sección 15072 (f) (5) de las Directrices de la Acta de Calidad Ambiental de California, se ha determinado que el sitio del proyecto no está identificado en ninguna de las listas enumeradas en la Sección 65962.5 del Código del Gobierno de California referente a desechos peligrosos. Sus comentarios por escrito serán considerados en la decisión sobre el proyecto. El aviso de dicha decisión será enviado por correo a cualquier persona que solicite una notificación. No se tomará ninguna decisión hasta que se complete el periodo de revisión.

CONTACTO

Para obtener información sobre este proyecto o para recibir una copia del Estudio Inicial Preliminar con Propuesta Declaración Negativa Mitigata para el Proyecto de Ampliación de Avenue 48, por favor comuníquese con Mohamed Eissa, Asistente de Planificador de Transportación, Departamento de Transportación del Condado de Riverside: 3525 14th Street, Riverside, CA 92501, por teléfono a (951) 955-1506, o por correo electrónico a MEissa@rivco.org. Bajo el Acto de Estadounidenses con Discapacidades de 1990, este documento estará disponible en formatos alternativos poniéndose en contacto con la persona mencionada anteriormente.

APPENDIX F

MITIGATION MONITORING AND REPORTING PROGRAM

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) was amended in 1989 to add section 21081.6 to the Public Resources Code. Section 21081.6 (a) (1) states that *"the public agency shall adopt a reporting or monitoring program for the changes made to the project or conditions of project approval, adopted in order to mitigate or avoid significant effects on the environment. The reporting or monitoring program shall be designed to ensure compliance during project implementation."*

Furthermore, Section 21081.6 requires a public agency to adopt a mitigation monitoring and reporting program for assessing and ensuring compliance with any required mitigation measured identified for the proposed project. Section 21081.6 provides general guidelines in implementing mitigation monitoring and reporting programs and mandates that specific reporting and monitoring requirements be defined prior to the close of the public review period for the mitigated negative declaration.

The Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) table below lists those mitigation measures that may be included as conditions of approval for the proposed Avenue 48 Widening Project. These measures correspond to those discussed in the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration. To ensure that the project's mitigation measures would be properly implemented, a monitoring program has been developed that specifies the timing of and responsibility for monitoring each measure. The mitigation measures identified in the Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration have been described in sufficient detail to provide the necessary information to identify the party or parties responsible for carrying out the mitigation. The County would have the primary responsibility for monitoring and reporting the implementation of the mitigation measures, as described.

Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP)
Avenue 48 Widening Project

						VERIFICATION OF COMPLIANCE		
No.	**Section of the Initial Study**	**Task and Description**	**Timing of Implementation**	**Method of Implementation**	**Responsible Party**	**Initials**	**Date**	**Remarks**
AIR QUALITY								
AQ-1	Section 3.1.4	The construction contractor shall comply with Caltrans' Standard Specifications Section 14-9.03 Dust Control of Caltrans' Standard Specifications (2010). Construction of the project would also comply with the South Coast Air Quality Management District's Rule 403 — Fugitive Dust.	During construction	County to verify site plans to ensure incorporation prior to construction. Site inspections during construction to ensure compliance with this measure.	County and Construction Contractor			
AQ-2	Section 3.1.4	The construction contractor shall comply with Section 7-1.02 Emissions Reduction and Section 18 Dust Palliative of Caltrans' Standard Specifications (2010).	During construction	County to conduct site inspections to ensure compliance with this measure.	County and Construction Contractor			
AQ-3	Section 3.1.4	The Wind Erosion Control BMP (WE-1) from Caltrans' Construction Site Best Management Practices Manual will be implemented as follows: • Water shall be applied by means of pressure-type distributors or pipelines equipped with a spray system or hoses and nozzles that will ensure even distribution. • All distribution equipment shall be equipped with a positive means of shutoff. • Unless water is applied by means of pipelines, at least one mobile unit shall be available at all times to apply water or dust palliative to the project. • If reclaimed water is used, the sources and discharge must meet California Department of Health Services water reclamation criteria and the Regional Water Quality Control Board requirements. Non-potable water shall not be conveyed in tanks or drain pipes that will be used to convey potable water and there shall be no connection between potable and non-potable supplies. Non-potable tanks, pipes and other conveyances shall be marked "NON-POTABLE						

						VERIFICATION OF COMPLIANCE		
No.	**Section of the Initial Study**	**Task and Description**	**Timing of Implementation**	**Method of Implementation**	**Responsible Party**	**Initials**	**Date**	**Remarks**
		WATER – DO NOT DRINK." • Materials applied as temporary soil stabilizers and soil binders will also provide wind erosion control benefits.						
BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES								
BIO-1	Section 3.4.3	In order to comply with the MBTA, and relevant sections of the California Fish and Game Code (e.g., Sections 3503, 3503.3, 3511, 3513), if construction occurs between February 1st and August 31st, within three days of the start of any vegetation removal or ground disturbing activities a qualified biologist shall conduct a pre-construction clearance survey for nesting birds to ensure that no nesting birds would be disturbed during construction. The qualified biologist conducting the clearance survey shall document a negative survey with a brief letter report indicating that no impacts to active avian nests or burrows would occur. If an active avian nest is discovered during the pre-construction clearance survey, construction activities should stay outside of a 300-foot buffer around the active nest. For listed and raptor species, this buffer should be expanded to 500 feet. A biological monitor shall be present to delineate the boundaries of the buffer area and monitor the active nest to ensure that nesting behavior is not adversely affected by construction activities as determined by the biologist. Once the young have fledged and left the nest, or the nest otherwise becomes inactive under natural conditions, construction activities within the buffer area can occur.	Prior to construction	County to retain a qualified biologist to conduct pre-construction surveys during appropriate blooming season.	County and Qualified Biologist			
BIO-2	Section 3.4.3	A pre-construction burrowing owl clearance survey shall be conducted to confirm that burrowing owls remain absent and impacts to any occupied burrows that may be located on or within 500 feet of the development footprint do not occur. Two pre-construction clearance surveys shall be conducted 14 to 30 days and 24 hours prior to any vegetation removal or ground-disturbing activities.	During construction	County to conduct site inspections to ensure compliance with this measure.	County and Construction Contractor			

						VERIFICATION OF COMPLIANCE		
No.	**Section of the Initial Study**	**Task and Description**	**Timing of Implementation**	**Method of Implementation**	**Responsible Party**	**Initials**	**Date**	**Remarks**
BIO-3	Section 3.4.3	Best Management Practices (BMPs) will be incorporated into project design and project management to minimize impacts on the environment including the release of pollutants (oils, fuels, etc.). All Temporary BMPs will remain in place until vegetation has been restored to pre-project conditions: • The area of construction and disturbance would be limited to as small an area as feasible to reduce erosion and sedimentation. • Measures would be implemented during land-disturbing activities to reduce erosion and sedimentation. These measures may include mulches, soil binders and erosion control. Blankets, silt fencing, fiber rolls, temporary berms, sediment desilting basins, sediment traps, and check dams. • Existing vegetation would be protected where feasible to reduce erosion and sedimentation. Vegetation would be preserved by installing temporary fencing, or other protection devices, around areas to be protected. • Exposed soils would be covered by loose bulk materials or other materials to reduce erosion and runoff during rainfall events. • Exposed soils would be stabilized, through watering or other measures, to prevent the movement of dust at the project site caused by wind and construction activities such as traffic and grading activities. • All construction roadway areas would be properly protected to prevent excess erosion, sedimentation, and water pollution. • All erosion control measures and storm water control measures would be properly maintained until the site has returned to a pre-construction state. • All disturbed areas would be restored to pre-construction contours and revegetated, either through hydroseeding or other means, with native	Prior to construction	County to retain qualified biologist to conduct burrowing owl survey.	County and Qualified Biologist			

						VERIFICATION OF COMPLIANCE		
No.	**Section of the Initial Study**	**Task and Description**	**Timing of Implementation**	**Method of Implementation**	**Responsible Party**	**Initials**	**Date**	**Remarks**
		species. • All construction materials would be hauled off-site after completion of construction.						
BIO-4	Section 3.4.3	The contractor shall dispose of all food-related trash in closed containers, and shall remove it from the project area each day during the construction period. Construction personnel will not feed or otherwise attract wildlife to the project area.	During construction	County to conduct site inspections to ensure compliance with this measure.	County and Construction Contractor			
BIO-5	Section 3.4.3	The contractor will not apply rodenticides or herbicides in the project area during construction activities.	During construction	County to conduct site inspections to ensure compliance with this measure.	County and Construction Contractor			
BIO-6	Section 3.4.3	Pre-construction environmental awareness training will be provided to all construction workers.	Prior to construction	County will ensure that environmental awareness training will be provided to construction workers prior to the commencement of construction.	Construction Contractor			
BIO-7	Section 3.4.3	If any wildlife is encountered during the course of construction, said wildlife will be allowed to leave the construction area unharmed.	During construction	The Construction Contractor will adhere to the requirements outlined in this measure.	County and Construction Contractor			
BIO-8	Section 3.4.3	Prior to arrival at the project site and prior to leaving the project site, construction equipment that may contain invasive plants and/or seeds will be cleaned to reduce the spreading of noxious weeds.	During construction	County to conduct site inspections to ensure compliance with this measure.	County and Construction Contractor			
CULTURAL RESOURCES/TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES								
CUL-1	Section 3.5.3	Prior to construction, cultural resource awareness and sensitivity training shall be provided to all construction crew members by a Secretary of Interior Standards qualified archaeologist and representative(s) from appropriate Native American Tribe(s) to ensure that the crew members are aware of the need for cultural resource monitoring, the monitoring protocol, and the work cessation and notification protocol.	During construction	The County-appointed archaeological and/or Tribal monitor will adhere to the requirements outlined in this measure should	County-appointed archaeological and/or Tribal monitor			

						VERIFICATION OF COMPLIANCE		
No.	**Section of the Initial Study**	**Task and Description**	**Timing of Implementation**	**Method of Implementation**	**Responsible Party**	**Initials**	**Date**	**Remarks**
				archaeological resources be inadvertently encountered during construction.				
CUL-2	Section 3.5.3	Secretary of Interior Standards qualified monitor and Native American monitor from an appropriate Native American Tribe(s) shall monitor all ground-disturbing activities that extend into undisturbed native soils. In conjunction with the archaeological monitor, the Native American monitor shall have the authority to temporarily divert, redirect or halt the ground disturbance activities to allow identification, evaluation, and potential recovery of cultural resources. If a significant archaeological resource(s) is discovered on the property, ground disturbing activities shall be suspended 100 feet around the resource(s). The archaeological monitor, a representative of the appropriate Native American Tribe(s), and the Riverside County Transportation Department shall confer regarding the appropriate treatment and mitigation of the discovered resource(s). Work shall not resume in the area until mitigation has been completed or it has been determined that the archaeological resource(s) is not significant.	During construction	The County-appointed archaeological and/or Tribal monitor will adhere to the requirements outlined in this measure should human remains be inadvertently encountered during construction.	County-appointed archaeological and/or Tribal monitor			
CUL-3	Section 3.5.3	If human remains are encountered, State Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 states that no further disturbance shall occur until the County Coroner has made a determination of origin and disposition pursuant to PRC Section 5097.98. The County Coroner must be notified of the find immediately. If the remains are determined to be prehistoric, the Coroner would notify the NAHC, which would determine and notify a MLD. With the permission of the landowner or his/her authorized representative, the MLD may inspect the site of the discovery. The MLD shall complete the inspection within 48 hours of notification by the NAHC. The MLD may recommend scientific removal and nondestructive analysis of human remains and items	During construction	The County-appointed archaeological and/or Tribal monitor will adhere to the requirements outlined in this measure should human remains be inadvertently encountered during construction.	County-appointed archaeological and/or Tribal monitor			

						VERIFICATION OF COMPLIANCE		
No.	**Section of the Initial Study**	**Task and Description**	**Timing of Implementation**	**Method of Implementation**	**Responsible Party**	**Initials**	**Date**	**Remarks**
		associated with Native American burials.						
HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS								
HAZ-1	Section 3.8.3	Should the project require disturbance of traffic striping materials, the testing and removal of these materials shall be conducted consistent with Caltrans Standard Special Provisions for *Remove Traffic Stripe and Pavement Markings*.	During construction	Should traffic striping materials be disturbed, a Debris Containment Work Plan and a Lead Compliance Plan will be prepared by the construction contractor.	County and Construction Contractor			
HAZ-2	Section 3.8.3	Any transformer to be relocated/removed during site construction/demolition activities shall be conducted under the purview of the local utility company to identify proper-handling procedures regarding PCBs consistent with Title 22, Division 4.5 of the CCR, and other appropriate regulatory agencies.	During construction	If unknown wastes are discovered during construction the contractor will follow the requirements identified in this measure.	County and Construction Contractor			
HAZ-3	Section 3.8.3	As is the case for any project that proposes excavation, the potential exists for unknown hazardous contamination to be revealed during project construction. If soil contaminated by hazardous waste is discovered during construction, proper hazardous waste handling and emergency procedures under 40 CFR § 262 and Division 4.5 of Title 22 California Code of Regulations shall be followed.	Prior to construction	County to prepare a CCP.	County and Construction Contractor			
HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY								
WAT-1	Section 3.9.3	. The project will require coverage under the Construction General Permit 2009 0009 DWQ NPDES CAS No. CAS 000002 prior to any ground disturbance activities. The Contractor's SWPPP shall describe the Contractor's plan for managing run-on and runoff during each construction phase. The SWPPP shall describe	Prior to Construction	Count to prepare a SWPPP.	County			

						VERIFICATION OF COMPLIANCE		
No.	**Section of the Initial Study**	**Task and Description**	**Timing of Implementation**	**Method of Implementation**	**Responsible Party**	**Initials**	**Date**	**Remarks**
		the BMPs that will be implemented to control erosion, sediment, tracking, construction materials, construction wastes, and non-storm water flows. The SWPPP shall describe installation, operation, inspection, maintenance, and monitoring activities that will be implemented for compliance with the CGP and all applicable federal, state, and local laws, ordinances, statutes, rule and regulations related to the protection of water quality. The project site must be fully stabilized using a combination of native hydroseed mix and/or stabilizing tackifier prior to filing the Notice of Termination.						
NOISE								
NOI-1	Section 3.12.5	Noise control shall conform to the provisions in Section 14-8.02, "Noise Control" of the Standard Specifications and these Special Provisions. Section 14-8.02, "Noise Control," second paragraph, is deleted and replaced with the following: The noise level from the Contractor's operations, between the hours of 9:00 p.m. and 6:00 a.m., shall not exceed 86 dBA LMax at a distance of 50 feet. This requirement in no way relieves the Contractor from responsibility for complying with local ordinances regulating noise level. Said noise level requirement shall apply to all equipment on the job or related to the job, including but not limited to trucks, transit mixers or transient equipment that may or may not be owned by the Contractor. The use of loud sound signals must be avoided in favor of light warnings except those required by safety laws for the protection of personnel. ***Payment*** Full compensation for conforming to the requirements of this Section, "Noise Control," shall be considered as included in the prices paid for the various contract items of work involved and no additional compensation will be allowed therefore.	Prior to construction	County to verify site plans to ensure incorporation prior to construction. Site inspections during construction to ensure compliance with this measure.	County and Construction Contractor			

						VERIFICATION OF COMPLIANCE		
No.	**Section of the Initial Study**	**Task and Description**	**Timing of Implementation**	**Method of Implementation**	**Responsible Party**	**Initials**	**Date**	**Remarks**
NOI-2	Section 3.12.5	During project construction, all vibratory roller equipment operating on the project site shall not be utilized within 42 feet of the nearest sensitive receptor to minimize vibration impacts.	During Construction	Construction Contractor to ensure vibratory roller equipment will not be utilized within 42 feet of the nearest sensitive receptor.	County and Construction Contractor			
TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC								
TRA-1	Section 3.16.3	Temporary impacts to traffic flow as a result of construction activities would be minimized through construction phasing and signage and a traffic control plan (TCP).	Prior to and during construction	County will approve the Traffic Control Plan that addresses the requirements identified in this measure.	County and Construction Contractor			

APPENDIX G

COMMENTS AND RESPONSES

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The County has evaluated the comments received on the Draft Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) during the 30-day public review period for the Avenue 48 Widening Project (Project), which began on June 5, 2019 and ended on July 8, 2019, and has prepared written responses to these comments. This Appendix (Appendix G) contains copies of the comments received associated with the public review process and provides written responses for each of these comments.

Any changes to the text of the Draft IS/MND that resulted during the public review process are presented in Appendix H (Errata) of this Final IS/MND. None of the changes to the Draft IS/MND text represent significant new information, as defined by the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines Section 15088.5, and the conclusion of the Draft IS/MND regarding significant impacts and mitigation measures remain unchanged.

2.0 PUBLIC MEETINGS

During the 30-day public review period for the Project, the County held one Open House and invited public agencies, organizations, and interested persons to attend the Project Open House to make oral or written comments on the Draft IS/MND. One comment was received at the Open House. The public meeting was held as follows:

- June 20, 2019 – Held at Martin Van Buren Elementary School Multipurpose Room, 47733 Van Buren Street, Indio, CA 92201.

3.0 COMMENTS RECEIVED ON DRAFT INITIAL STUDY / MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

During the public review period, the County received four comment letters from agencies, organizations, and individuals. The commenting parties are listed below, along with a correspondence date.

LETTER	COMMENTERS	DATE OF COMMENT
State Agency(s)		
Comment 1	State of California Governor's Office of Planning and Research State Clearinghouse and Planning Unit	July 8, 2019
Organization(s) / Company(s)		
Comment 2	Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians	July 9, 2019
Comment 3	Southern California Gas Company	July 18, 2019
Individual(s)		
Comment 4	Sarah Lopez *(written comment received at Project Open House)*	June 20, 2019

4.0 COMMENTS AND RESPONSES TO COMMENTS

This section includes all written comments on the Draft IS/MND received by the County and the responses to those comments. Responses are prepared for those comments that address the sufficiency of the environmental document regarding the adequate disclosure of environmental impacts and methods to avoid, minimize, or mitigate those impacts. This section is formatted so that the respective comment letters are followed immediately by the corresponding responses. The comment number provided in the right margin of the letter corresponds to the responses provided.

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Comment Letter 1

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
Governor's Office of Planning and Research
State Clearinghouse and Planning Unit

Gavin Newsom
Governor

Kate Gordon
Director

July 8, 2019

Mohamed Eissa
Riverside County
3525 14th Street
Riverside, CA 92501

Subject: Avenue 48 Widening Project
SCH#: 2019069015

Dear Mohamed Eissa:

The State Clearinghouse submitted the above named MND to selected state agencies for review. The review period closed on 7/5/2019, and no state agencies submitted comments by that date. 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 visit: https://ceqanet.opr.ca.gov/2019069015/2 for full details about your project.

1-1

Please call the State Clearinghouse at (916) 445-0613 if you have any questions regarding the environmental review process. If you have a question about the above-named project, please refer to the ten-digit State Clearinghouse number when contacting this office.

Sincerely,

Scott Morgan
Director, State Clearinghouse

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

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Response to Letter 1

State of California Governor's Office of Planning and Research
State Clearinghouse and Planning Unit
Scott Morgan, Director
July 8, 2019

Response 1-1

This comment letter acknowledges that the County has complied with the State Clearinghouse review requirements for draft environmental documents, pursuant to CEQA. No further issues related the Draft IS/MND are raised in the State Clearinghouse letter and, therefore, no further response is required.

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Comment Letter 2

AGUA CALIENTE BAND OF CAHUILLA INDIANS

TRIBAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION

03-082-2017-001

July 09, 2019

[VIA EMAIL TO:meissa@rivco.org]
County of Riverside Transportation and Land Management Agency
Mr. Mohamed Eissa
3525 14th Street
Riverside, California 92501

Re: Avenue 48 Widening Project

Dear Mr. Mohamed Eissa,

The Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians (ACBCI) appreciates your efforts to include the Tribal Historic Preservation Office (THPO) in the Avenue 48 Widening project. The project area is not located within the boundaries of the ACBCI Reservation. However, it is within the Tribe's Traditional Use Area. For this reason, the ACBCI THPO requests the following:

*Copies of any cultural resource documentation (report and site records) generated in connection with this project.

* A copy "Cultural Resource Assessment for the Riverside County Transportation Department's Avenue 48 Widening Project, Cities of Coachella and Indio, Riverside County, California" (2018).

2-1

Again, the Agua Caliente appreciates your interest in our cultural heritage. If you have questions or require additional information, please call me at (760)699-6956. You may also email me at ACBCI-THPO@aguacaliente.net.

Cordially,

Lacy Padilla
Archaeologist
Tribal Historic Preservation Office
AGUA CALIENTE BAND
OF CAHUILLA INDIANS

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Response to Letter 2

Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians
Lacy Padilla, Archaeologist
July 9, 2019

Response 2-1

The comment acknowledges the County's efforts to include the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians (ACBCI) Tribal Historic Preservation Office (THPO) in the proposed Project. The commenter states that the Project area is not located within the boundaries of the ACBCI Reservation; however, the site is located within the Tribe's Traditional Use Area. Therefore, the ACBCI THPO requested the following information:

- Copies of any cultural resource documentation (report and site records) generated in connection with this project.
- A copy of the "Cultural Resource Assessment for the Riverside County Transportation Department's Avenue 48 Widening Project, Cities of Coachella and Indio, Riverside County, California" (2018).

The *Cultural Resource Assessment for the Riverside County Transportation Department's Avenue 48 Widening Project, Cities of Coachella and Indio, Riverside County, California* including Appendices (which contain the site records) was transmitted to the THPO via UPS overnight for delivery on July 12, 2019.

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SoCalGas
A Sempra Energy utility*

Southern California
Gas Company
1981 W. Lugonia Ave
Redlands, CA 92374
Attn: Planning Dept. - M.L.8031
1-800-427-2200

Date: 07/18/2019

ATTN: Mohamed Eissa,
RIVCO

The purpose of this letter is to inform you that SoCalGas has received notice of the upcoming Avenue 48 Widening Project in the City of Coachella. We look forward to receiving the plans for our review. Using the SCG SE Region Utility Request email below can get this request to our mapping department for you to obtain Atlas maps with our facilities, if you haven't already, and they have their own requirements on which they will inform you.

Public safety is our highest priority and it is extremely important that you utilize the Underground Service Alert (Dig Alert) One-Call System, 811, before beginning any construction or excavation project. A physical excavation of the utility in question would be the most accurate way of obtaining location information. We request that our facilities be Protected In Place.

It is the responsibility of the City, County, Developer, or Engineering Firm, to determine if a conflict exists between the proposed development and our facilities. If, for any reason, there are SoCalGas facilities in conflict, and a request to be relocated is needed, it is important to send the request in writing. Please include all required information below:

- A Signed "Notice to Owner" request on Official Letterhead from the City, County, and/or company.
- Name, Title and Project Number.
- Address, Location, Start Date, Parameters & Scope of Entire Job/Project.
- Copy of Thomas Guide Page and/or Google Map Screenshot Highlighting Project Area.
- Requestor Company's Contact Name, Title, Phone Number, Email, and other pertinent information.

3-1

Please furnish us with "signed" final plans and subsequent plan revisions as soon as they are available. A minimum of twelve (12) weeks is needed to analyze plans and to design required alterations to any conflicting SoCalGas facilities. Please keep us informed of any and all pre-construction meetings, construction schedules, etc., so that our work can be scheduled accordingly.

Contact information below If you have any questions or require additional information.
SCGSERegionRedlandsUtilityRequest@semprautilities.com

Sincerely,

William Kennedy
Planning Associate
SoCalGas
909-335-3949
wkennedy@semprautilities.com

Antonio Morales
Planning Associate
SoCalGas
909-335-7561
AMorales2@semprautilities.com

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Response to Letter 3

Southern California Gas Company
William Kennedy, Planning Associate
Antonio Morales, Planning Associate
July 18, 2019

Response 3-1

The comment letter is acknowledged. The County will coordinate with the Southern California Gas Company prior to and during construction activities.

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Comment Letter 4

AVENUE 48
WIDENING PROJECT

NAME: SABAH LOPEZ

ADDRESS: 81-618 JENNIFER CT INDIO, CA 92201

EMAIL:

REPRESENTING: AVE 48 PROPERTY OWNER

DO YOU WISH TO BE ADDED TO THE PROJECT MAILING LIST?

☒ **YES** ☐ **NO**

HOW DID YOU HEAR ABOUT THIS MEETING OR PROJECT?

BY MAIL

PLEASE DROP COMMENTS IN THE COMMENT BOX, MAIL OR EMAIL TO:

MOHAMED EISSA
ASSISTANT TRANSPORTATION PLANNER
RIVERSIDE COUNTY TRANSPORTATION DEPARTMENT
3525 14TH STREET, RIVERSIDE, CA 92501
MEISSA@RIVCO.ORG

MEETING ACCOMMODATIONS:

IF YOU ARE LIMITED IN YOUR ABILITY TO COMMUNICATE IN ENGLISH, WERE YOUR COMMUNICATION NEEDS ADEQUATELY MET? ☐ **YES** ☐ **NO** ☑ **NOT APPLICABLE**

IF YOU WERE IN NEED OF A REASONABLE ACCOMMODATION AT THIS MEETING AS A RESULT OF A DISABILITY, WERE YOUR NEEDS ADEQUATELY MET? ☐ **YES** ☐ **NO** ☑ **NOT APPLICABLE**

IF YOU CHECKED NO TO EITHER OF THE TWO QUESTIONS ABOVE, PLEASE EXPLAIN HOW YOUR NEEDS COULD BE BETTER MET IN THE FUTURE:

TO ACCOMMODATE PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES, THIS CARD WILL BE MADE AVAILABLE IN ALTERNATE FORMATS UPON REQUEST.

FOLD

I WOULD LIKE TO MAKE THE FOLLOWING COMMENTS TO BE FILED IN THE RECORD:
(PLEASE PRINT)

THANK YOU! FOR THIS PROJECT
WILL BETTER OUR COMMUNITY.

4-1

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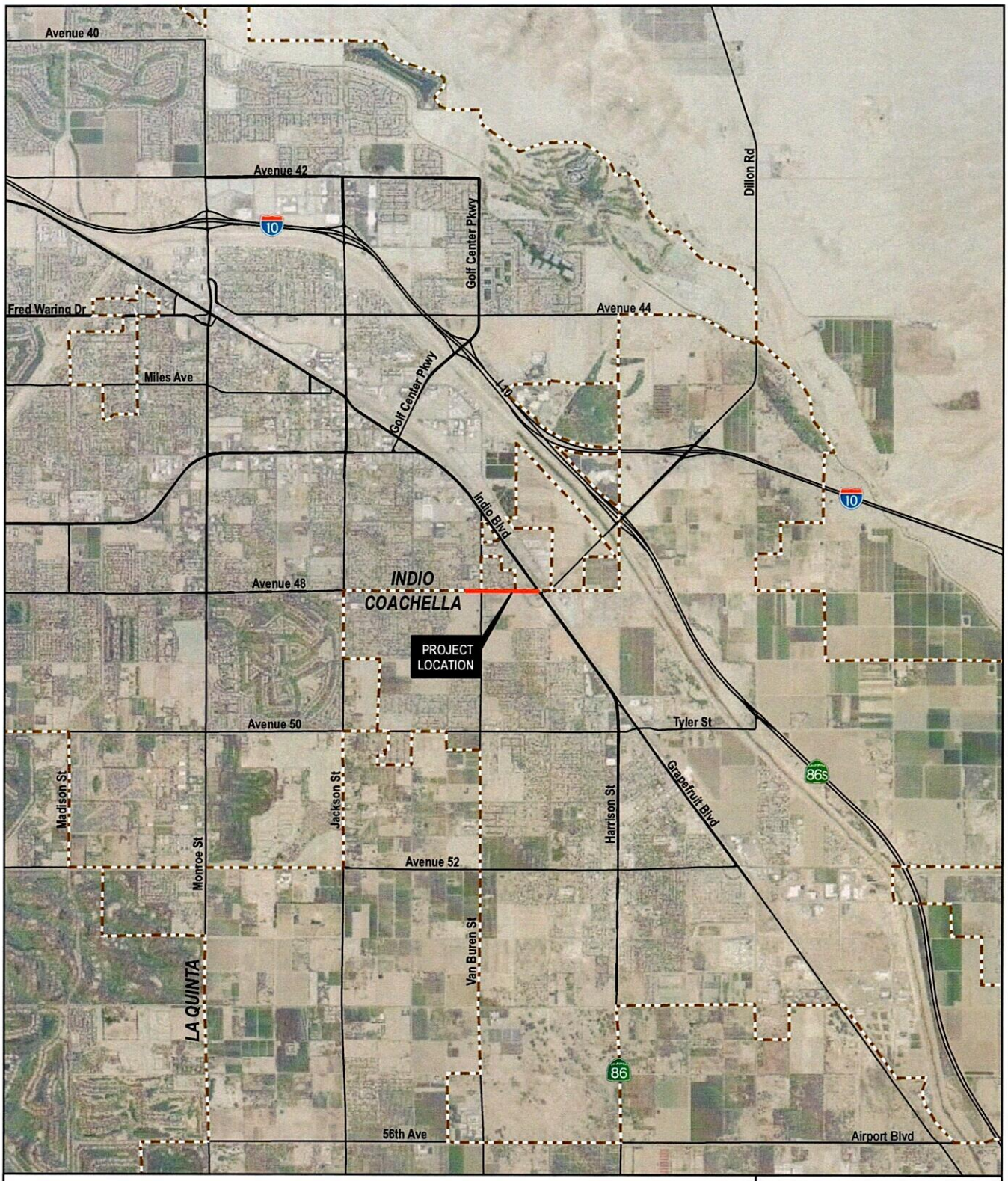
Response to Letter 4

Sarah Lopez
June 20, 2019

Response 4-1

The commenter expresses support for the proposed Project. The comment is acknowledged and has been incorporated into the Final IS/MND.



Legend

- Project Location
- City Boundary

Background Image:
USDA NAIP Imagery, 2016.

0 1
Miles

FIGURE 2-2

SITE VICINITY

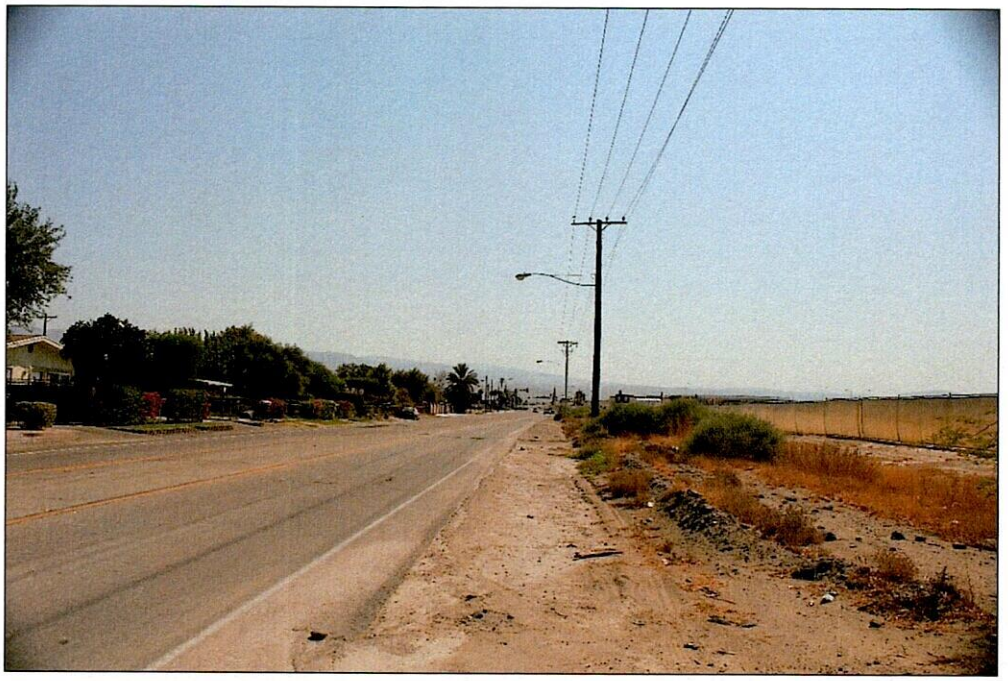
COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE

AVENUE 48 WIDENING PROJECT

Avenue 48 Widening Project

County of Riverside, California

Final Initial Study with Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration



Prepared by the County of Riverside

January 2020

Final Mitigated Negative Declaration

Project Proponent:	County of Riverside Transportation Department 3525 14th Street Riverside, CA 92501
Project Title:	Avenue 48 Widening Project
Project Location:	The project is located along Avenue 48 beginning approximately 600 feet west of Van Buren Street extending eastward to Indio Boulevard, for a total distance of approximately 0.5 mile, in the City of Coachella, the City of Indio, and in unincorporated County of Riverside.
Project Description:	The County of Riverside, in cooperation with the City of Coachella and the City of Indio, propose to widen Avenue 48 from two lanes to five lanes between Van Buren Street to Dillon Road, a distance of approximately 0.3 mile, to accommodate one additional westbound lane and two additional eastbound lanes with a raised concrete median – this widening would result in the acquisition of additional right-of-way and utility relocations. In addition, six-foot-wide sidewalks and five-foot-wide bicycle lanes would be constructed in the eastbound and westbound directions of Avenue 48. The proposed project would also include the re-striping of pavement along an approximately 600-foot-long section of Avenue 48 west of Van Buren Street and along an approximately 500-foot-long section of Avenue 48 east of Dillon Road extending to Indio Boulevard. A signal would also be constructed at the intersection of Luzon Street and Avenue 48, and the existing signal at the intersection of Dillon Road and Avenue 48 would be modified to accommodate the
Findings	Pursuant to the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the County of Riverside has determined that the proposed Project would not have a significant effect on the environment. Following an Initial Study and assessment of possible adverse impacts, the proposed Project was determined not to have a significant impact on the environment with the inclusion of mitigation measures, which reduces potential adverse impacts to less than significant levels. Therefore, the County of Riverside has prepared a Mitigated Negative Declaration with mitigation measures in accordance with the provisions of CEQA.
Mitigation Measures:	Refer to the Sections 3.1 through 3.20 of this Initial Study, and to Appendix F (Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program).

A copy of the Initial Study is available for review at the following location: Riverside County Transportation Department, 3525 14th Street, Riverside, 92501.

Signature: Mohamed Eissa Date: 01/22/2020

Mohamed Eissa
Assistant Transportation Planner
Riverside County Transportation Department

Signature: Mary Zambon Date: 1/22/2020

Mary Zambon

Environmental Project Manager, Environmental Compliance
Riverside County Transportation Department

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FIGURES

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Appendix A: Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Data
Appendix B: Special-Status Species and Their Potential to Occur Within the Survey Area
Appendix C: Cultural Resources Records Search
Appendix D: Noise Data
Appendix E: Distribution List
Appendix F: Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program
Appendix G: Comments and Responses
Appendix H: Errata

LIST OF TECHNICAL STUDIES – VOLUME 2 (BOUND SEPARATELY)

- Air Quality/Greenhouse Gas Emissions Technical Memorandum
- Habitat Assessment and Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan Consistency Analysis
- Cultural Resource Assessment
- Phase I Environmental Site Assessment
- Transportation Improvement Project NPDES Data Form
- Noise Study Report

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

$\mu g/m^3$	micrograms per cubic meter
AB	Assembly Bill
ACMs	asbestos-containing materials
ADA	American with Disabilities Act
ADT	average daily trips
ALUC	Airport Land Use Commission
ANSI	American National Standards Institute
AQMP	Air Quality Management Plan
ASTM	American Society for Testing and Materials
Basin	South Coast Air Basin
bgs	below ground surface
BMP	Best Management Practice
°C	Celsius
CAAQS	California Ambient Air Quality Standards
Cal/EPA	California Environmental Protection Agency
CalEEMod	California Emissions Estimator Model
Caltrans	California Department of Transportation
CAP	Climate Action Plan
CARB	California Air Resources Board
CBC	California Building Code
CCAA	California Clean Air Act
CCP	Construction Contingency Plan
CCR	California Code of Regulations
CDC	California Department of Conservation
CDFW	California Department of Fish and Wildlife
CEC	California Energy Commission
CEESP	California Long-Term Energy Efficiency Strategic Plan
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
CERCLA	Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations
CGP	Construction General Permit
CH_4	Methane
CHRIS	California Historical Resources Information System
City	City of Coachella
CNDDB	California Natural Diversity Database
CNEL	community noise equivalent level
CNPS	California Native Plant Society
CO	carbon monoxide
CO_2	carbon dioxide
CO_2eq	carbon dioxide equivalent
County	County of Riverside Transportation Department
CREC	Conditional Recognized Environmental Condition
CRHR	California Register of Historic Resources
CRIT	Colorado River Indian Tribes
CRMP	Cultural Resource Mitigation Monitoring Plan
CVAG	Coachella Valley Association of Governments
CVMSHCP	Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan
CWA	Clean Water Act
dB	decibels

dBA	A-weighted decibels
DBESP	Determination of Biologically Equivalent or Superior Preservation
DEH	County of Riverside Department of Environmental Health
DPR	Department of Parks and Recreation
DTSC	Department of Toxic Substances Control
EAPs	Energy Action Plans
EDR	Environmental Data Resources, Inc.
EIC	Eastern Information Center
EIR	Environmental Impact Report
EMFAC	Emissions Factors Model
EO	Executive Order
ESA	Endangered Species Act
°F	Fahrenheit
FCAA	Federal Clean Air Act
FEMA	Federal Emergency Management Agency
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
FIRM	Flood Insurance Rate Maps
FMMP	Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program
GHG	greenhouse gas
GIS	Geographic Information System
GLO	General Land Office
HFC	hydrofluorocarbons
HREC	Historical Recognized Environmental Condition
I-10	Interstate 10
ICU	intersection capacity utilization
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
IRP	Installation Restoration Program
IS/MND	Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration
JPR	Joint Project Review
LCFS	Low Carbon Fuel Standard
LBP	lead based paints
L_{dn}	day-night average noise level
L_{eq}	equivalent continuous sound level
LOS	level of service
LST	local significance threshold
LUFT	leaking underground fuel tank
LUST	leaking underground storage tank
M	magnitude
MBTA	Migratory Bird Treaty Act
MLD	Most Likely Descendant
MND	Mitigated Negative Declaration
MPH	miles per hour
MRZs	Mineral Resource Zones
MS4s	municipal separate storm sewer system
MSHCP	Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan
msl	mean sea level
MT	metric tons
$MTCO_2$	Metric tons of carbon dioxide
$MTCO_2eq$	Metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent
N_2O	nitrous oxide
NAAQS	National Ambient Air Quality Standards

NAHC	Native American Heritage Commission
NCCP	Natural Community Conservation Plan
NHTSA	National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
NO_2	nitrogen dioxide
NOI	Notice of Intent
NO_X	nitrogen oxides
NPDES	National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
NRCS	Natural Resources Conservation Service
NRHP	National Register of Historic Places
NWI	National Wetland Inventory
O_3	ozone
OPR	Office of Planning and Research
OSHA	Occupational Safety and Health Administration
OUs	operable units
P_b	lead
PCBs	Polychlorinated biphenyls
PFC	perfluorocarbons
PM_{10}	particulate matter up to 10 microns
$PM_{2.5}$	particulate matter up to 2.5 microns
ppb	parts per billion
ppm	parts per million
PPV	peak particle velocity
PRC	California Public Resource Code
RACT	Reasonably Available Control Technology
RCFD	Riverside County Fire Department
RCPG	Regional Comprehensive Plan and Guide
ROG	reactive organic gas
ROW	right-of-way
RPS	Renewable Portfolio Standard
RTP/SCS	Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy
RWQCB	Regional Water Quality Control Board
SB	Senate Bill
SCAG	Southern California Association of Governments
SCAQMD	South Coast Air Quality Management District
SF_6	sulfur hexafluoride
SIP	State Implementation Plan
SLF	sacred land file
SMARTS	Storm Water Multiple Application and Report Tracking System
SO_2	sulfur dioxide
SO_X	sulfur oxide
SP	service population
SR-111	State Route 111
SR-86	State Route 86
SRA	source receptor area
SSAB	Salton Sea Air Basin
SWPPP	Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan
SWRCB	State Water Resources Control Board
THPO	Tribal Preservation Officer
TCP	Traffic Control Plan
TPH	Total Petroleum Hydrocarbons
U.S.	United States

USACE	United States Army Corps of Engineers
U.S.C.	United States Code
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture
USEPA	United States Environmental Protection Agency
USFWS	United States Fish and Wildlife Service
USGS	United States Geological Survey
USTs	underground storage tanks
VMT	vehicle-miles traveled
VOC	volatile organic compounds

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

The County of Riverside Transportation Department (County), in cooperation with the City of Coachella and the City of Indio, propose to widen Avenue 48 from two lanes to five lanes between Van Buren Street to Dillon Road, a distance of approximately 0.3 mile, to accommodate one additional westbound lane and two additional eastbound lanes with a raised concrete median (hereinafter referred to as "project"). In addition, six-foot-wide sidewalks and five-foot-wide bicycle lanes would be constructed in the eastbound and westbound directions of Avenue 48. The proposed project would also include the re-striping of pavement along an approximately 600-foot-long section of Avenue 48 west of Van Buren Street and along an approximately 500-foot-long section of Avenue 48 east of Dillon Road extending to Indio Boulevard. In addition to the roadway improvements, street lights, fences, walls, utility meters, power poles, signs, planters, and mailboxes would be relocated. Driveways and parking may be affected for some businesses and residences within the project limits adjacent to Avenue 48. A signal would also be constructed at the intersection of Luzon Street and Avenue 48. In addition, the signal at the intersection of Dillon Road and Avenue 48 would be modified to accommodate the new improvements. The proposed improvements would be coordinated with the property owners to minimize impacts. Appropriate construction signage would be utilized to ensure public safety and ease of traffic flow during construction activities.

The County has entered into a funding agreement with Coachella Valley Association of Governments (CVAG) for preparation of the project development work, environmental studies, environmental documentation, and preliminary engineering design.

1.2 Purpose

Pursuant to Section 15063(c) of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, the County, as the Lead Agency, is required to undertake the preparation of an Initial Study to determine if the proposed action would have a significant effect on the environment. The purpose of the Initial Study is to: (1) provide the Lead Agency with information to use as the basis for deciding whether to prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) or a Negative Declaration; (2) enable the Lead Agency to modify a project, mitigating adverse impacts before an EIR is prepared, thereby enabling the project to qualify for a Negative Declaration; (3) assist in the preparation of an EIR, if one is required; (4) facilitate environmental assessment early in the design of a project; and (5) provide documentation of the factual basis for the finding in the Negative Declaration that a project will not have a significant effect on the environment; (6) eliminate unnecessary EIRs; and (7) determine whether a previously prepared EIR could be used with the project. This Initial Study is an informational document providing an environmental basis for subsequent discretionary actions that may be required from other responsible agencies.

1.3 Statutory Requirements and Authority

The CEQA statute is codified at California Public Resources Code Section 21000 et seq., whereas the CEQA Guidelines are codified at the California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3, Section 15000 et seq. The CEQA Guidelines Section 15063(d) identifies specific disclosure requirements for inclusion in an Initial Study. Pursuant to those requirements, an Initial Study shall include: (1) a description of the proposed project, including the location of the project; (2) an identification of the environmental setting; (3) an identification of environmental effects by use of a checklist, matrix, or other method, provided that entries on a checklist or other form are briefly explained to indicate that there is some evidence to support the entries; (4) a discussion of ways to mitigate significant effects identified, if any; (5) an examination of whether the proposed project is compatible with existing zoning, plans, and

other applicable land use controls; and (6) the name of the person or persons who prepared or participated in the preparation of the Initial Study.

The mitigation measures included in this Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) are designed to reduce or eliminate the potentially significant environmental impacts described herein. Where a mitigation measure described in this document has been previously incorporated into the project, either as a specific feature of design or as a mitigation measure, this is noted in the discussion. Mitigation measures are structured in accordance with the criteria in Section 15370 of the CEQA Guidelines.

1.4 Scope of the Initial Study

This Initial Study evaluates the proposed project's effects on the following resource topics:

- Aesthetics
- Agriculture and Forestry Resources
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Energy
- Geology and Soils
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Land Use and Planning
- Mineral Resources
- Noise
- Population and Housing
- Public Services
- Recreation
- Transportation
- Tribal Cultural Resources
- Utilities and Service Systems
- Wildfire
- Mandatory Findings of Significance

1.5 Impact Terminology

The following terminology is used to describe the level of significance of impacts:

- A finding of no impact is appropriate if the analysis concludes that the project would not affect the particular topic area in any way.
- An impact is considered less than significant if the analysis concludes that it would cause no substantial adverse change to the environment and requires no mitigation.
- An impact is considered less than significant with mitigation incorporated if the analysis concludes that it would cause no substantial adverse change to the environment with the inclusion of environmental commitments or other enforceable measures that have been agreed to by the applicant.
- An impact is considered potentially significant if the analysis concludes that it could have a substantial adverse effect on the environment. For the proposed project, no impacts were determined to be potentially significant.

1.6 Project Permits and Approvals

The proposed project may require subsequent oversight, approvals, or permits from other public agencies in order to be implemented. Other such agencies are referred to as "Responsible Agencies" and "Trustee Agencies." Pursuant to Sections 15381 and 15386 of the CEQA Guidelines, as amended, Responsible Agencies and Trustee Agencies are defined as follows:

- **Responsible Agency** is a public agency that proposes to carry out or approve a project, for which a lead agency is preparing or has prepared an EIR or Negative Declaration. For the purposes of CEQA, the term "responsible agency" includes all public agencies other than the lead agency that have discretionary approval power over the project (Section 15381).

- **Trustee Agency** is a state agency having jurisdiction by law over natural resources affected by a project that are held in trust for the people of the State of California (Section 15386).

The County is the CEQA Lead Agency and the Cities of Indio and Coachella are the Responsible Agencies under CEQA, as they are the public agencies which may use this CEQA document, along with other information that may be presented during the project review process, for associated permits or approvals.

No jurisdictional drainage and/or wetland features were observed within the project boundaries. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in impacts to United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) or the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) jurisdictional areas and no regulatory approvals would be required from these agencies.

The project site is located within the jurisdiction of the Colorado River Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB), Region 7. Because project-related construction would disturb more than one acre of ground, the County would be required to electronically file a Notice of Intent (NOI) with the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB), as required by Section 402 of the CWA, Adopted Order 2009-0009-DWQ Construction General Permit (as amended by 2012-006-DWQ; NPDES No. CAS000002), and by the California Porter-Cologne Water Quality Protection Act, as amended 2016.

The County would secure the necessary permits to authorize construction of the proposed project. Potential permits and approvals for the project are listed below:

State Water Resources Control Board

- National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) General Construction Permit (including Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan)

1.7 Initial Study Organization and Contents

This Initial Study is organized into five separate sections that are identified as follows:

Section 1.0, Introduction – Introduces the project, its purpose and statutory basis for the document.

Section 2.0, Project Description – Describes the location, objectives, and principal elements of the project.

Section 3.0, Environmental Evaluation – Contains analyses and evidence employed by the Lead Agency to arrive at the determination required in the CEQA Environmental Checklist.

Section 4.0, List of Preparers – A list of persons who contributed to the preparation of the IS/MND.

Section 5.0, References – A list of references utilized for the preparation of the IS/MND.

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2.0 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

2.1 Project Location

As shown in Figure 2-1, Regional Location, and Figure 2-2, Site Vicinity, the project site is located along Avenue 48 beginning approximately 600 feet west of Van Buren Street extending eastward to Indio Boulevard, for a total distance of approximately 0.5 mile, in the City of Coachella, the City of Indio, and in unincorporated County of Riverside. The project site is situated within developing areas of the City of Coachella, the City of Indio, and the County; to the west of Indio Boulevard and State Route 86 (SR-86); south of Interstate 10 (I-10); and northwest of the Salton Sea. The roadway is surrounded by single-family residential, commercial, retail/restaurant, institutional uses, and vacant land.

2.2 Project Objectives

The proposed project would alleviate congestion and improve traffic operations through the project area. The additional eastbound and westbound travel lanes are expected to enhance the level of service (LOS) and relieve traffic congestion in the area. Avenue 48 is an east-west major arterial road that is commonly traveled. It carries over 12,000 vehicles per day and can commonly experience traffic delays and congestion. The road connects the City of Coachella, the City of Indio, and the unincorporated area of the County of Riverside. Widening the lanes would relieve traffic congestion on Avenue 48 while improving vehicular traffic circulation and access for motorists, residents, businesses, emergency service providers, nearby institutions such as schools, and public transportation. The project would be consistent with the County's and the City of Coachella's and City of Indio's General Plans to meet current and future traffic demands and improve the traffic operations for this corridor.

2.3 Proposed Project

The County, in cooperation with the City of Coachella and the City of Indio, propose to widen Avenue 48 from two lanes to five lanes between Van Buren Street to Dillon Road, a distance of approximately 0.3 mile, to accommodate one additional westbound lane and two additional eastbound lanes with a raised concrete median. In addition, six-foot-wide sidewalks and five-foot-wide bicycle lanes would be constructed in the eastbound and westbound directions of Avenue 48. The proposed project would also include the re-striping of pavement along an approximately 600-foot-long section of Avenue 48 west of Van Buren Street and along an approximately 500-foot-long section of Avenue 48 east of Dillon Road extending to Indio Boulevard. In addition to the roadway improvements, street lights, fences, walls, utility meters, power poles, signs, planters, and mailboxes would be relocated. Driveways and parking may be affected for some businesses and residences within the project limits adjacent to Avenue 48. A signal would also be constructed at the intersection of Luzon Street and Avenue 48. In addition, the signal at the intersection of Dillon Road and Avenue 48 would be modified to accommodate the new improvements (refer to Figure 2-3). The proposed improvements would be coordinated with the property owners to minimize impacts. Appropriate construction signage would be utilized to ensure public safety and ease of traffic flow during construction activities.

The County has entered into a funding agreement with CVAG for preparation of the development work, environmental studies, environmental documentation, and preliminary engineering design.

Project construction would occur within the existing roadway right-of-way (ROW) of Avenue 48 between Van Buren Street and Dillon Road, with the exception of five partial parcel acquisitions: one at the northeast corner of the intersection of Avenue 48 and Van Buren Street (APN 603-073-017); one at the northeast corner of the intersection of Avenue 48 and Bataan Street (APN 603-082-006); two at the southwest and southeast corners of the intersection of Avenue 48 and Luzon Street (APNs 603-220-062 and 603-220-066); and one at the southwest corner of the intersection of Avenue 48 and Dillon Road (APN 603-220-064). No full parcel acquisitions would be required as part of the project. Refer to Table 2-1 for the potential partial ROW acquisitions along Avenue 48.

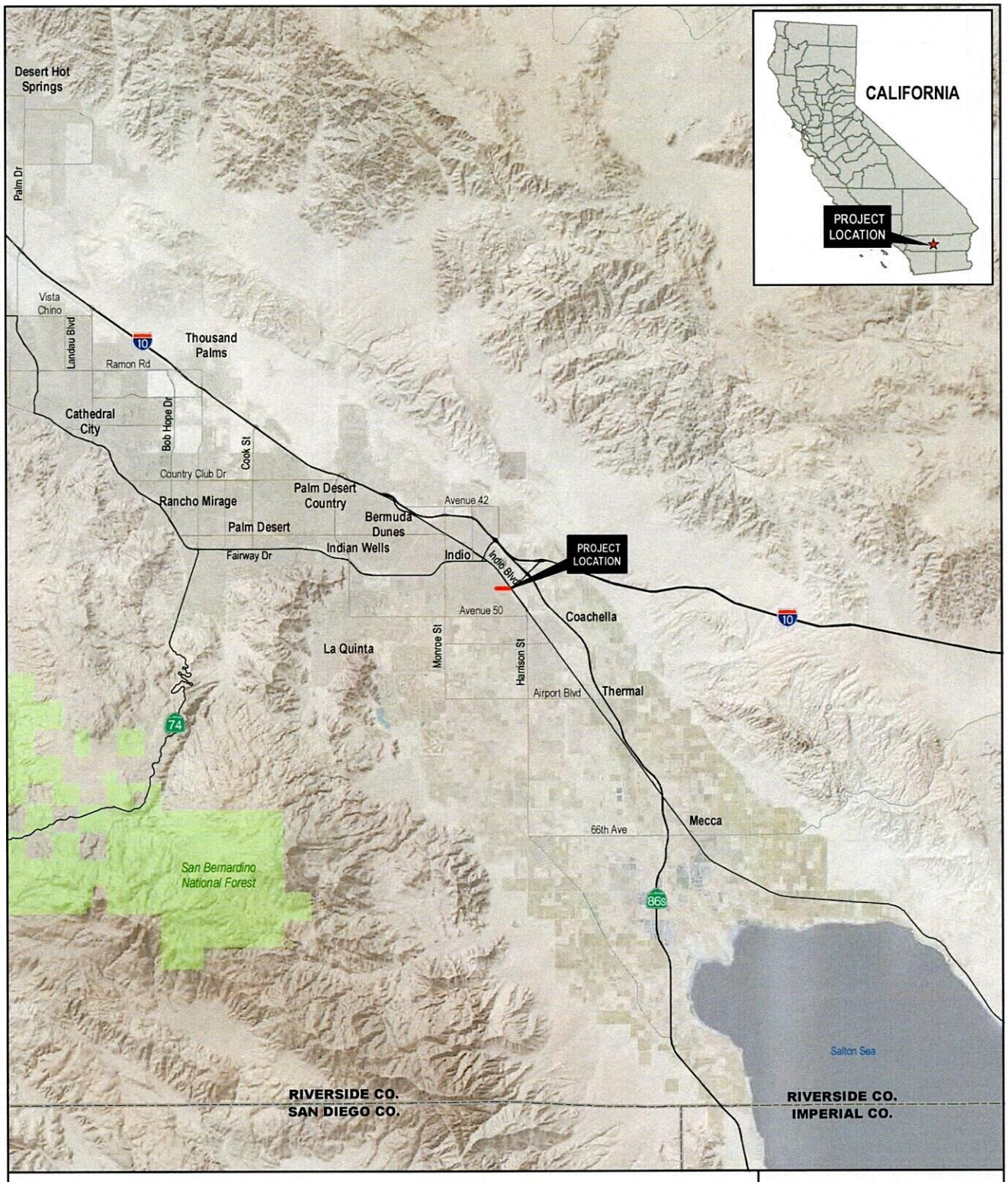
TABLE 2-1 POTENTIAL PARTIAL RIGHT-OF-WAY ACQUISITIONS

ASSESSOR PARCEL NUMBER	PARTIAL RIGHT-OF-WAY ACQUISITION (ACRE)
603-073-017	0.002
603-082-006	0.023
603-220-062	0.008
603-220-066	0.048
603-220-064	0.004

2.4 Project Construction

Construction of the proposed project is anticipated to occur over a six-month period – project construction is depending on availability of funding. Project construction associated with the road widening would include demolition, grading, paving, and roadway construction. Construction equipment would include excavators, concrete/industrial saws, rubber-tired dozers, graders, rollers, scrapers, paving equipment, forklifts, cranes, welders, generator sets, and air compressors.

Temporary lane closures and striping would occur during project construction; however, two-way travel along Avenue 48 through the project corridor would be maintained during construction activities with at least one travel lane open in each direction at all times. During final design, construction and traffic management plans would be prepared to minimize disruption to the public.



Legend

Project Location

0 1 2 3 4 5
Miles

Background Image:
USDA NAIP Imagery, 2016.

FIGURE 2-1

REGIONAL LOCATION

COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE

AVENUE 48 WIDENING PROJECT

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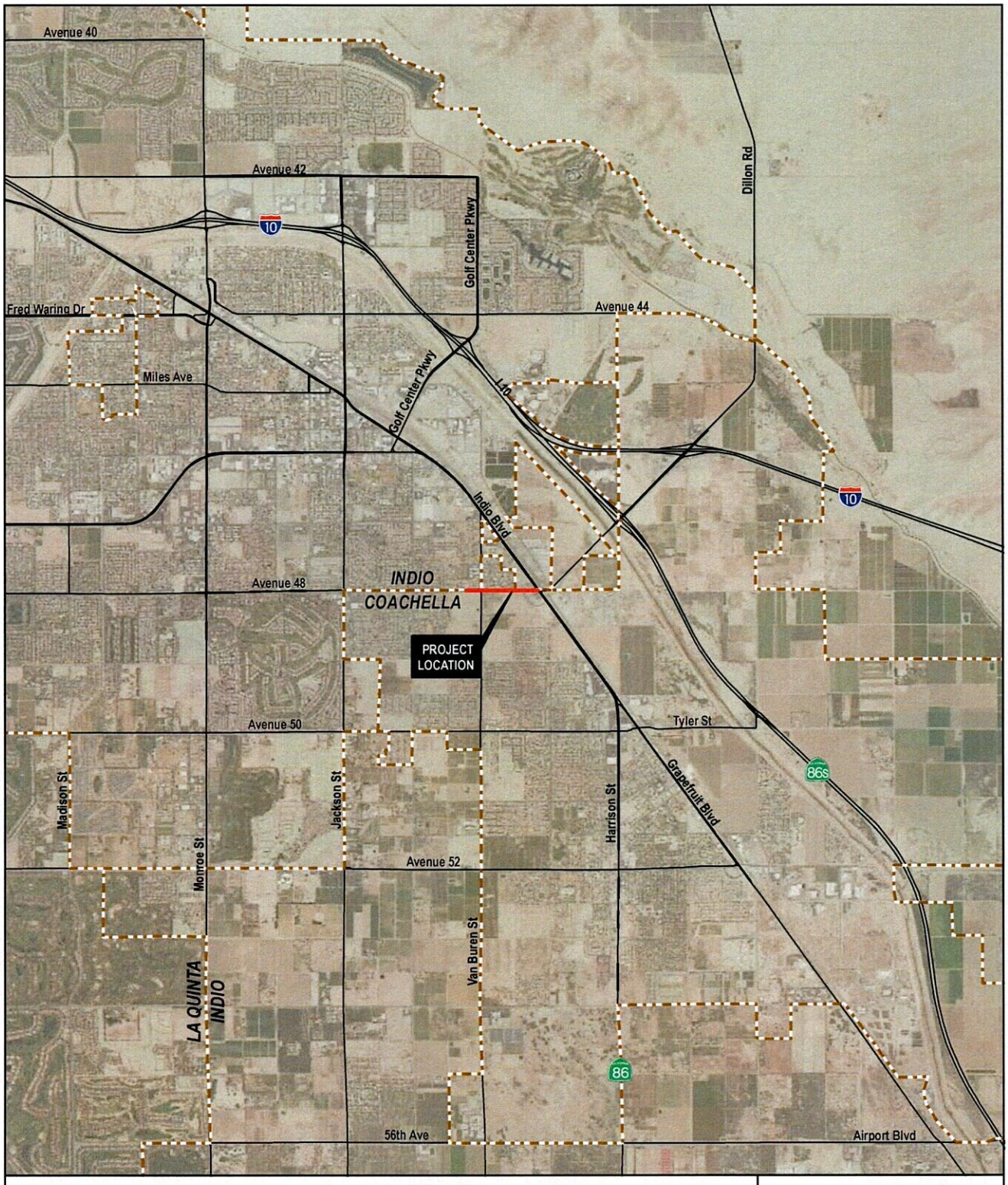

Legend

- Project Location
- City Boundary

Background Image:
USDA NAIP Imagery, 2016.

0 1
Miles

FIGURE 2-2

SITE VICINITY

COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE

AVENUE 48 WIDENING PROJECT

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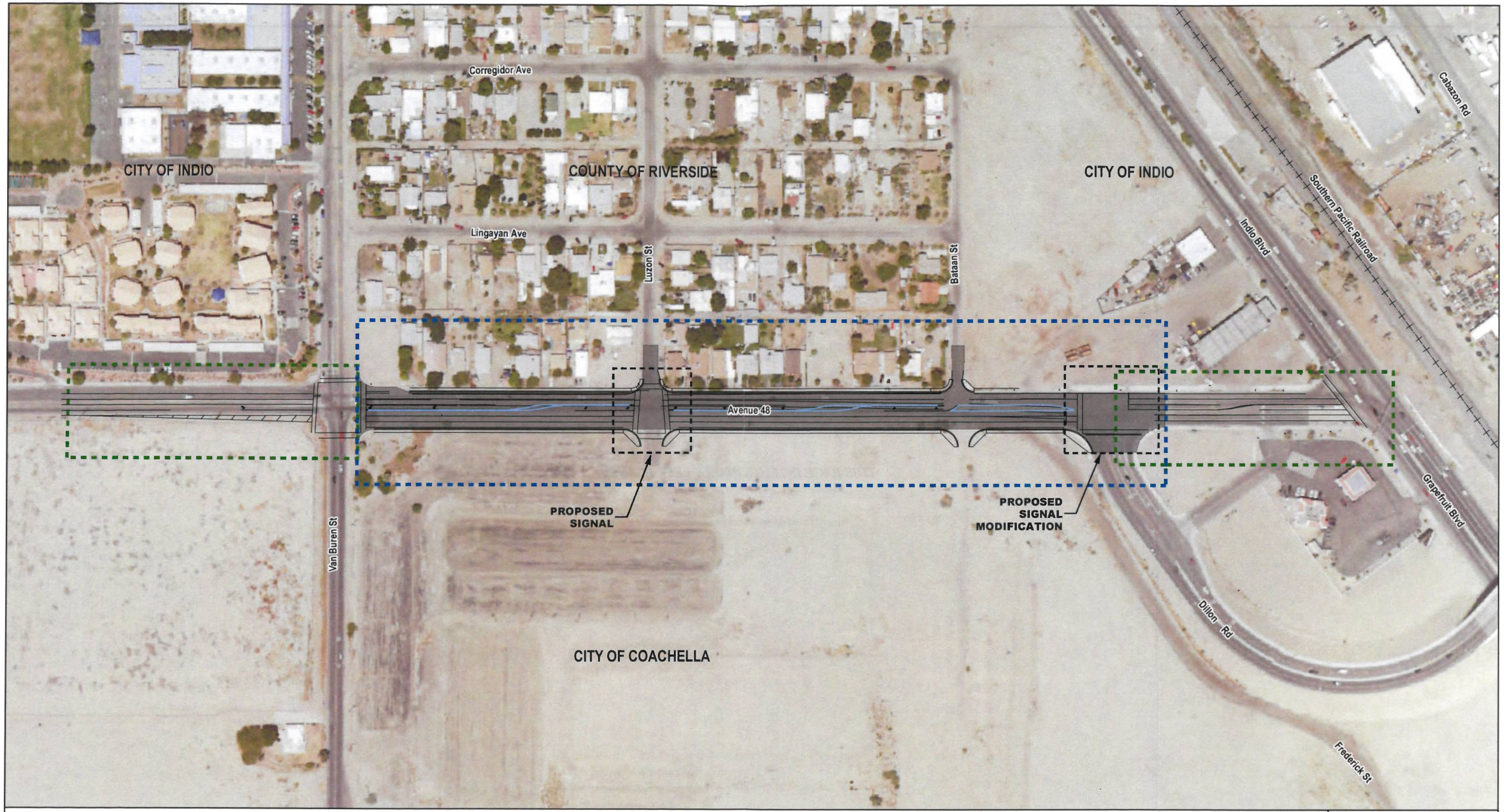

LEGEND

- RAISED MEDIAN
- RE-STRIPE
- WIDENING
- APPROXIMATE PAVEMENT LIMITS

0 100 200
Feet

FIGURE 2-3

PROJECT FEATURES

COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE

AVENUE 48 WIDENING PROJECT

Source: Michael Baker International, 2018

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3.0 ENVIRONMENTAL EVALUATION

The following analysis of potential project impacts is based on the Environmental Checklist and available information, including technical reports and conceptual design plans. A brief explanation for each question in the Environmental Checklist is provided to adequately support each impact determination. The answers take into account the whole of the action involved, including off-site as well as on-site, cumulative as well as project-level, indirect as well as direct, and construction as well as operational impacts. Where determined that an impact is potentially significant, mitigation measures have been incorporated to reduce the impacts to less than significant levels (refer to Appendix F, Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program). The environmental resources potentially affected by the proposed project are presented below and organized according to the format of the checklist.

3.1 Aesthetics

	POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT IMPACT	LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION	LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT	NO IMPACT
Except as provided in Public Resources Code Section 21099, would the Project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) 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 point). If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?	☐	☐	☒	☐
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	☐	☐	☒	☐

3.1.1 Affected Environment

The proposed project is located along Avenue 48, between Van Buren Street eastward to Dillon Road, approximately 0.5 mile, in the City of Coachella, the City of Indio, and in unincorporated County of Riverside. The City of Coachella and the City of Indio are desert communities located in the eastern portion of Coachella Valley. Coachella Valley is defined as a low and relatively flat desert basin bounded by mountainous terrain. The mountain ranges surrounding the project area include the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains to the southwest and west, and the Little San Bernardino Mountains to the north and northeast. The surrounding mountains range from 3,000 to 9,000 feet, with peaks ranging to over 111,000 feet (San Gorgonio peak) the Chocolate Mountains (up to 2,988 feet) are located more than 10 miles to the southeast of the City of Coachella and do not contribute aesthetically to the project area (City of Coachella 2014). The predominant aesthetic and scenic resources of the project area are open spaces to the east (Little San Bernardino Mountains "Bajada" and Mecca Hills), the distant mountain ranges to the west (San Jacinto and Santa Rosa Mountains), and the agricultural open spaces along the west side of the

All-American Canal (which forms the base of the Mecca Hills in the southeast sphere). There are several natural rock outcroppings in the hillside areas that provide a native desert appearance as viewed from the Valley floor. The viewsheds from the upper portions of the Indio Hills and Mecca Hills towards the south include views of the Salton Sea (City of Coachella 2014).

The project site is situated within developing areas of the City of Coachella, the City of Indio, and the County, to the west of Indio Boulevard, west of SR-86, and south of I-10. The roadway is surrounded by single-family residential, commercial, retail/restaurant, institutional uses, and vacant land. Avenue 48 is specified as a major arterial roadway running east-west. It becomes Dillon Road after crossing over SR-86 and continues east to I-10. Avenue 48 provides key access to SR-86 and I-10 for the County, the City of Coachella, and the City of Indio.

3.1.2 Impact Assessment

Would the Project:

a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?

No Impact. The proposed project would not obstruct any scenic views from the surrounding area, nor is the project located adjacent to or near any officially-designated scenic vistas; therefore, no impacts to a scenic vista would occur and no mitigation is required.

b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?

No Impact. Based on review of the General Plans for the City of Coachella, the City of Indio, the County, and the Caltrans website, there are currently no state-designated scenic highways within the project area (Caltrans 2018). In addition, there are no unique or scenic resources, including trees and rock outcroppings, within or adjacent to the project site. SR-111, located in the vicinity of the project site to east, is designated as an "Eligible State Scenic Highway – Not Officially Designated" (Caltrans 2018); however, the proposed project would not affect the characteristics of SR-111 that qualify it as an Eligible State Scenic Highway. Therefore, no impacts would occur to designated scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway, and no mitigation is required.

c) 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 point). If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?

Less Than Significant Impact. A project is considered to have a significate aesthetic impact if consequent features of the project design are incompatible with and/or obstruct views of regional and project viewsheds. The proposed project site is located within relatively urban and developing area in the City of Coachella, the City of Indio, and the County.

The visual character of the proposed project will be compatible with the existing visual character of the project area. The widening of Avenue 48 would result in similar visual conditions compared to a no-project scenario. The road widening would continue along the current alignment of the existing facility, and remain consistent with the existing visual character. The visual quality of the existing corridor would remain consistent with pre-construction conditions, and would not be significantly altered by the proposed project. The visual character and quality of the proposed project would be similar to the existing visual character and quality of the project area. Because the project does not substantially change

the existing land uses and adds a minor amount of new paved surfaces along an existing roadway alignment, the visual character within and adjacent to the project the area would not change substantially. The project would not conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality.

Construction of the proposed project would temporarily change views experienced by drivers, pedestrians, and other people in the project area since construction equipment would be visible from neighboring areas; however, these impacts are temporary and therefore not considered substantial. Overall visual impacts resulting from the proposed project are anticipated to be less than significant, and therefore no mitigation is required.

d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?

Less Than Significant Impact. The proposed project would result in the installation of a new signal at the intersection of Luzon Street and Avenue 48; however, the introduction of one new signal would not create a substantial light source. No new street lighting is proposed; only relocated. Should nighttime construction become necessary, construction-related lighting would be directed downward and toward the work area, oriented away to from adjacent land uses and consist of the minimal wattage necessary. Substantial permanent changes to the existing visual character and quality, including light and glare in the project area, are not anticipated to occur, and light and glare impacts would be less than significant.

The proposed project is located approximately 45 miles northeast of the Palomar Observatory; because of the project's proximity to the Palomar Observatory Planning area, project-related night lighting (e.g., lighting used during construction) would be subject to the requirements of Riverside County Ordinance No. 665 regulating light pollution. Impacts would be considered less than significant with adherence to the County's requirements regarding County Ordinance No. 665.

3.1.3 Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are proposed.

3.2 Agricultural and Forest Resources

	POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT IMPACT	LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION	LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT	NO IMPACT
In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Dept. of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state's inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment project and the Forest Legacy Assessment project; and the forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board.				
Would the Project:				
a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?	☐	☐	☐	☒
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	☐	☐	☐	☒
e) 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 conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	☐	☐	☐	☒

3.2.1 Regulatory Environment

Williamson Act – The California Legislature passed the California Land Conservation Act of 1965, better known as the Williamson Act, to preserve agricultural and open space lands by discouraging premature and unnecessary conversion to urban uses. Under the Williamson Act, private landowners contract with counties and cities to voluntarily restrict their land to agricultural and compatible open-space uses. The vehicle for these agreements is a rolling term 10-year contract (i.e., unless either party

files a "notice of nonrenewal," the contract is automatically renewed). In return, restricted parcels are assessed for property tax purposes at a rate consistent with their actual use, rather than potential market value. A majority of the funding for County and local implementation of the Williamson Act provisions is provided by the State. State subvention of revenue was recently reduced significantly and so counties were given options in regards to Williamson Act contracts under recent changes to State law [Senate Bill (SB) 863].

The Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program – The Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program (FMMP), within the California Department of Conservation (CDC), maps activity from the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) on a continuing basis. The FMMP produces maps and statistical data used for analyzing impacts on California's agricultural resources (CDC, 2016). The FMMP's Important Farmland Map for Riverside County includes six farmland categories, as follows:

Prime Farmland – The best combination of physical and chemical features able to sustain long-term agricultural production. This land has the soil quality, growing season, and moisture supply needed to produce sustained high yields. Land must have been used for irrigated agricultural production at some time during the four years prior to the mapping date.

Unique Farmland – Consists of lesser quality soils used for the production of the State's leading agricultural crops. This land is usually irrigated, but may include non-irrigated orchards or vineyards as found in some climatic zones in California. Land must have been cropped at some time during the four years prior to the mapping date.

Farmland of Local Importance – Cultivated farmland having soils which meet the criteria for prime or statewide, except that the land is not presently irrigated.

Farmland of Local Potential – Consists of prime or statewide soils which are presently not irrigated or cultivated.

Grazing Land – Land on which the existing vegetation is suited to the grazing of livestock.

Other Land – Land not included in any other mapping category. Common examples include low density rural developments; brush, timber, wetland, and riparian areas not suitable for livestock grazing; confined livestock, poultry or aquaculture facilities; strip mines, borrow pits; and water bodies smaller than forty acres. Vacant and nonagricultural land surrounded on all sides by urban development and greater than 40 acres is mapped as Other Land.

3.2.2 Affected Environment

The project vicinity is predominantly surrounded by residential and commercial properties, primarily comprised of developed and disturbed lands. The project area has been heavily disturbed from development, grading activities, and anthropogenic disturbances. As a result, undisturbed native plant communities are no longer present within the project area. Vegetation occurring within the project area includes ornamental/landscaped plant species associated with the existing residential/commercial developments, and non-native and ruderal/weedy plant species within the disturbed areas.

3.2.3 Impact Assessment

Would the Project:

a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?

No Impact. No Prime Farmland or Unique Farmland has been designated within or adjacent to the project area. The 2016 CDC's FMMP designates the vacant land adjacent to and south of the project site as "Farmland of Local Importance" (CDC 2016). The City of Coachella's Agricultural Resources section of the General Plan (Figure 4.2-1, Important Farmland in Coachella) also designates this area as "Farmland of Local Importance" (City of Coachella 2015). However, the City of Coachella General Plan Map designates this area as Low Density Residential and General Commercial. Because the City of Coachella has designated this land for residential and commercial development, and given the existing soil conditions, lack of crops, and lack of agriculture-use zoning, the FMMP-designated parcels are precluded from meeting the definition of "Farmland of Statewide Importance." Therefore, the project would not convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (farmland) to non-agricultural use. Therefore, no impact in this regard would occur and no mitigation is required.

b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?

No Impact. There are no agricultural land uses or property under Williamson Act contract on or adjacent to the project site. The proposed project would not conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use of a Williamson Contract. Therefore, no impacts would occur and no mitigation is required.

c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))?

No Impact. The project site does not contain designated forest land or timberland as defined in *Public Resources Code* (Sections 12220[g] and 4526, respectively) and would not result in the loss of forest land or the conversion of forest land to non-forest use. Therefore, no impacts to forest land or timberland would result from project implementation, and no mitigation is required.

d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

No Impact. The project site is an existing roadway surrounded by single-family residential, commercial, retail/restaurant, institutional uses, and vacant land. There are no areas zoned as forest land or timberland within or adjacent to the project boundaries. The proposed project would not conflict with existing zoning for forest land or timberland. Therefore, no impact would occur and no mitigation is required.

e) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in the conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?

No Impact. The proposed project would not result in the conversion of farmland to non-agricultural uses and there are no forest lands or timberland on the project site or in the vicinity of the proposed project. No impact would occur and no mitigation is required.

3.2.4 Mitigation Measures

No mitigation measures are proposed.

3.3 Air Quality

	POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT IMPACT	LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION	LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT	NO IMPACT
Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management district or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the Project:				
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	☐	☒	☐	☐
b) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non- attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?	☐	☒	☐	☐
c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	☐	☒	☐	☐
d) Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?	☐	☒	☐	☐

Information in this section is based on the *Avenue 48 Widening Project –Air Quality / Greenhouse Gas Emissions Technical Memorandum* prepared by Michael Baker International (2018a).

3.3.1 Regulatory Environment

Federal Clean Air Act

The Federal Clean Air Act (FCAA) (1977 amendments - 42 United States Code [U.S.C.] §7401 *et. seq.*) states that the federal government is prohibited from engaging in, supporting, providing financial assistance for, licensing, permitting, or approving any activity that does not conform to an applicable State Implementation Plan (SIP). Federal actions relating to transportation plans, programs, and projects developed, funded, or approved under 23 U.S.C. of the Federal Transit Act (40 U.S.C. §1601 *et. seq.*) are covered under separate regulations for transportation conformity.

In the 1990 FCAA amendments, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) included provisions requiring federal agencies to ensure that actions undertaken in nonattainment or attainment-maintenance areas are consistent with applicable SIPs. The process of determining whether or not a federal action is consistent with an applicable SIP is called conformity.

The General Conformity Rule applies only to federal actions that result in emissions of "nonattainment or maintenance pollutants," or their precursors, in federally designated nonattainment or maintenance areas. The General Conformity Rule establishes a process to demonstrate that federal actions would be consistent with applicable SIPs and would not cause or contribute to new violations of the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS), increase the frequency or severity of existing violations of the NAAQS, or delay the timely attainment of the NAAQS. The emissions thresholds that trigger requirements of the conformity rule for federal actions emitting nonattainment or maintenance pollutants, or their precursors are defined in 40 CFR § 93.153(b). The General Conformity Rule does not apply to

federal actions in areas designated as nonattainment of only the California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS).

California Clean Air Act

The California Air Resources Board (CARB) administers air quality policy in California. The CAAQS were established in 1969 pursuant to the Mulford-Carrell Act. These standards are generally more stringent and apply to more pollutants than the NAAQS (i.e., visibility reducing particulates, hydrogen sulfide, and sulfates). The California Clean Air Act (CCAA), which was approved in 1988, requires that each local air district prepare and maintain an air quality management plan (AQMP) to achieve compliance with CAAQS. These AQMPs also serve as the basis for preparation of the SIP for the state of California.

CARB also administers the state's mobile source emissions control program and oversees air quality programs established by state statute, such as Assembly Bill (AB) 2588, the Air Toxics "Hot Spots" Information and Assessment Act of 1987.

California State Implementation Plan

The 1990 amendments to the FCAA set new deadlines for attainment based on the severity of the pollution problem and launched a comprehensive planning process for attaining the NAAQS. The promulgation of the national eight-hour ozone standard and the fine particulate matter up to 2.5 microns ($PM_{2.5}$) standards in 1997 resulted in additional statewide air quality planning efforts. In response to new federal regulations, SIPs also began to address ways to improve visibility in national parks and wilderness areas.

SIPs are not single documents, but rather a compilation of new and previously submitted plans, programs, district rules, state regulations and federal controls. Many of California's SIPs rely on the same core set of control strategies, including emission standards for cars and heavy trucks, fuel regulations, and limits on emissions from consumer products. State law makes CARB the lead agency for all purposes related to the SIP. Local air districts and other agencies prepare SIP elements and submit them to CARB for review and approval. CARB then forwards SIP revisions to the EPA for approval and publication in the Federal Register. The CFR Title 40, Chapter I, Part 52, Subpart F, Section 52.220 lists all of the items which are included in the California SIP.

South Coast Air Quality Management District

The SCAQMD's *2016 Air Quality Management Plan for the South Coast Air Basin* (2016 AQMP) is a regional blueprint for achieving air quality standards and healthful air in the South Coast Air Basin (Basin) and those portions of the Salton Sea Air Basin (SSAB) that are under SCAQMD's jurisdiction. The 2016 AQMP represents a new approach, focusing on available, proven, and cost-effective alternatives to traditional strategies, while seeking to achieve multiple goals in partnership with other entities promoting reductions in greenhouse gases (GHGs) and toxic risk, as well as efficiencies in energy use, transportation, and goods movement. The most effective way to reduce air pollution impacts is to reduce emissions from mobile sources. The AQMP relies on a regional and multi-level partnership of governmental agencies at the federal, state, regional, and local level. These agencies (USEPA, CARB, local governments, Southern California Association of Governments [SCAG] and the SCAQMD) are the primary agencies that implement the AQMP programs. The 2016 AQMP incorporates the latest scientific and technical information and planning assumptions, including SCAG's latest *Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy* (RTP/SCS), updated emission inventory methodologies for various source categories, and SCAG's latest growth forecasts. The 2016 AQMP includes integrated strategies and measures to meet the NAAQS. The 2016 AQMP was adopted by the SCAQMD Governing Board on March 3, 2017.

The AQMP identifies candidate control measures to reduce fugitive dust from the five major sources. Specifically, SCAQMD Rules 402 and 403 require that air pollutant emissions shall not be a nuisance off-site, and that fugitive dust be controlled with the best available control measures to reduce dust so that it does not remain visible in the atmosphere beyond the property line of the proposed project. The applicability of the control measures depends on site-specific factors, including wind conditions, soil type, crop type, and condition of the surrounding area. Based on the candidate control measures and input from SCAG, within the AQMP, the SCAQMD recommends control measures, which include but are not limited to the following: requiring watering of all active construction projects; requiring the chemical treatment of unattended construction areas; prohibiting all construction grading activities on days when the wind gusts exceed or are forecast to exceed 25 miles per hour (mph); requiring construction trucks to maintain at least two feet of freeboard; requiring all trucks hauling dirt, sand, soil, or other loose dirt material to be covered; and encouraging the planting of vegetative ground cover as soon as possible on construction sites. Should the recommended measures fail to achieve the level of control specified in the AQMP, the AQMP also provides supplementary (contingency) control measures including minimal track-out, curb and gutter/storm drain improvements, chemical stabilization of unpaved road shoulders, control of emissions from agricultural activities, and control of emissions from turf overseeding activities.

Management of Air Quality Criteria Pollutants

Pursuant to the FCAA, the USEPA has established NAAQS for the following air pollutants: carbon monoxide, ozone, nitrogen dioxide, sulfur dioxide, particulate matter less than 10 and 2.5 microns in diameter, and lead. These pollutants are referred to as criteria pollutants because numerical criteria have been established for each pollutant, which define acceptable levels of exposure. A discussion of each criteria pollutant is provided below.

Carbon Monoxide (CO). CO is an odorless, colorless toxic gas that is emitted by mobile and stationary sources as a result of incomplete combustion of hydrocarbons or other carbon-based fuels. In cities, automobile exhaust can cause as much as 95 percent of all CO emissions.

CO replaces oxygen in the body's red blood cells. Individuals with a deficient blood supply to the heart, patients with diseases involving heart and blood vessels, fetuses (unborn babies), and patients with chronic hypoxemia (oxygen deficiency) as seen in high altitudes are most susceptible to the adverse effects of CO exposure. People with heart disease are also more susceptible to developing chest pains when exposed to low levels of carbon monoxide.

Ozone (O_3). Ozone occurs in two layers of the atmosphere. The layer surrounding the earth's surface is the troposphere. The troposphere extends approximately 10 miles above ground level, where it meets the second layer, the stratosphere. The stratospheric (the "good" ozone layer) extends upward from about 10 to 30 miles and protects life on earth from the sun's harmful ultraviolet rays. "Bad" ozone is a photochemical pollutant, and needs volatile organic compounds (VOCs), nitrogen oxides (NO_X), and sunlight to form; therefore, VOCs and NO_X are ozone precursors. To reduce ozone concentrations, it is necessary to control the emissions of these ozone precursors. Significant ozone formation generally requires an adequate amount of precursors in the atmosphere and a period of several hours in a stable atmosphere with strong sunlight. High ozone concentrations can form over large regions when emissions from motor vehicles and stationary sources are carried hundreds of miles from their origins.

While ozone in the upper atmosphere (stratosphere) protects the earth from harmful ultraviolet radiation, high concentrations of ground-level ozone (in the troposphere) can adversely affect the human respiratory system and other tissues. Ozone is a strong irritant that can constrict the airways, forcing the respiratory system to work hard to deliver oxygen. Individuals exercising outdoors, children, and people with pre-existing lung disease such as asthma and chronic pulmonary lung disease are considered to be the most susceptible to the health effects of ozone. Short-term exposure (lasting for a few hours) to ozone at

elevated levels can result in aggravated respiratory diseases such as emphysema, bronchitis and asthma, shortness of breath, increased susceptibility to infections, inflammation of the lung tissue, increased fatigue, as well as chest pain, dry throat, headache, and nausea.

Nitrogen Dioxide (NO_2). Nitrogen oxides are a family of highly reactive gases that are a primary precursor to the formation of ground-level ozone, and react in the atmosphere to form acid rain. NO_2 (often used interchangeably with NO_X) is a reddish-brown gas that can cause breathing difficulties at elevated levels. Peak readings of NO_2 occur in areas that have a high concentration of combustion sources (e.g., motor vehicle engines, power plants, refineries, and other industrial operations). NO_2 can irritate and damage the lungs, and lower resistance to respiratory infections such as influenza. The health effects of short-term exposure are still unclear. However, continued or frequent exposure to NO_2 concentrations that are typically much higher than those normally found in the ambient air may increase acute respiratory illnesses in children and increase the incidence of chronic bronchitis and lung irritation. Chronic exposure to NO_2 may aggravate eyes and mucus membranes and cause pulmonary dysfunction.

Coarse Particulate Matter (PM_{10}). PM_{10} refers to suspended particulate matter, which is smaller than 10 microns or ten one-millionths of a meter. PM_{10} arises from sources such as road dust, diesel soot, combustion products, construction operations, and dust storms. PM_{10} scatters light and significantly reduces visibility. In addition, these particulates penetrate into lungs and can potentially damage the respiratory tract. On June 19, 2003, the CARB adopted amendments to the statewide 24-hour particulate matter standards based upon requirements set forth in the Children's Environmental Health Protection Act (Senate Bill [SB] 25).

Fine Particulate Matter ($PM_{2.5}$). Due to recent increased concerns over health impacts related to fine particulate matter (particulate matter 2.5 microns in diameter or less), both State and federal $PM_{2.5}$ standards have been created. Particulate matter impacts primarily affect infants, children, the elderly, and those with pre-existing cardiopulmonary disease. In 1997, the USEPA announced new $PM_{2.5}$ standards. Industry groups challenged the new standard in court and the implementation of the standard was blocked. However, upon appeal by the USEPA, the United States Supreme Court reversed this decision and upheld the USEPA's new standards. On January 5, 2005, the USEPA published a Final Rule in the Federal Register that designates the Basin as a nonattainment area for federal $PM_{2.5}$ standards. On June 20, 2002, CARB adopted amendments for statewide annual ambient particulate matter air quality standards. These standards were revised/established due to increasing concerns by CARB that previous standards were inadequate, as almost everyone in California is exposed to levels at or above the current State standards during some parts of the year, and the statewide potential for significant health impacts associated with particulate matter exposure was determined to be large and wide-ranging.

Sulfur Dioxide (SO_2). SO_2 is a colorless, irritating gas with a rotten egg smell; it is formed primarily by the combustion of sulfur-containing fossil fuels. Sulfur dioxide is often used interchangeably with sulfur oxide (SO_X) and lead. Exposure of a few minutes to low levels of SO_2 can result in airway constriction in some asthmatics.

The USEPA has revised the NAAQS several times since their original implementation and will continue to do so as the health effects of exposure to air pollution are better understood. As previously stated, states with air quality that did not achieve the NAAQS were required to develop and maintain SIPs. These plans constitute a federally enforceable definition of the state's approach (or "plan") and schedule for the attainment of the NAAQS. Air quality management areas were designated as "attainment," "nonattainment," or "unclassified" for individual pollutants depending on whether or not they achieve the applicable NAAQS and CAAQS for each pollutant. It is important to note that because the NAAQS and CAAQS differ in many cases, it is possible for an area to be designated attainment by the USEPA (meets NAAQS) and nonattainment by CARB (does not meet CAAQS) for the same pollutant. The NAAQS and the CAAQS are summarized in Table 3-1.

TABLE 3-1 NATIONAL AND CALIFORNIA AMBIENT AIR QUALITY STANDARDS

POLLUTANT	AVERAGING TIME	CALIFORNIA STANDARDS[1]		FEDERAL STANDARDS[2]		
		Concentration[3]	Method[4]	Primary[3,5]	Secondary[3,6]	Method[7]
Ozone (O_3)[8]	1 Hour	0.09 ppm (180 µg/m³)	Ultraviolet Photometry	--	Same as Primary Standard	Ultraviolet Photometry
	8 Hour	0.070 ppm (137 µg/m³)		0.070 ppm (137 µg/m³)		
Respirable Particulate Matter (PM_{10})	24 Hour	50 µg/m³	Gravimetric or Beta Attenuation	150 µg/m³	Same as Primary Standard	Inertial Separation and Gravimetric Analysis
	Annual Arithmetic Mean	20 µg/m³		--		
Fine Particulate Matter ($PM_{2.5}$)[9]	24 Hour	No Separate State Standard		35 µg/m³	Same as Primary Standard	Inertial Separation and Gravimetric Analysis
	Annual Arithmetic Mean	12 µg/m³	Gravimetric or Beta Attenuation	12.0 µg/m³	15 µg/m³	
Carbon Monoxide (CO)	1 Hour	20 ppm (23 mg/m³)	Non-Dispersive Infrared Photometry (NDIR)	35 ppm (40 mg/m³)	None	Non-Dispersive Infrared Photometry (NDIR)
	8 Hour	9.0 ppm (10 mg/m³)		9 ppm (10 mg/m³)		
	8 Hour (Lake Tahoe)	6 ppm (7 mg/m³)		--	--	
Nitrogen Dioxide (NO_2)[10]	1 Hour	0.18 ppm (339 µg/m³)	Gas Phase Chemiluminescence	100 ppb (188 µg/m³)	Same as Primary Standard	Gas Phase Chemiluminescence
	Annual Arithmetic Mean	0.030 ppm (57 µg/m³)		0.053 ppm (100 µg/m³)		
Sulfur Dioxide (SO_2)[11]	1 Hour	0.25 ppm (655 µg/m³)	Ultraviolet Fluorescence	75 ppb (196 µg/m³)	--	Ultraviolet Fluorescence; Spectrophotometry (ParaosaniSline Method)
	3 Hour	--		--	0.5 ppm (1,300 µg/m³)	
	24 Hour	0.04 ppm (105 µg/m³)		0.14 ppm (for certain areas)	--	
	Annual Arithmetic Mean	--		0.30 ppm (for certain areas)	--	
Lead[12,13] (P_b)	30 Day Average	1.5 µg/m³	Atomic Absorption	--	--	High Volume Sampler and Atomic Absorption
	Calendar Quarter	--		1.5 µg/m³	Same as Primary Standard	
	Rolling 3-Month Average[10]	--		0.15 µg/m³		
Visibility Reducing Particles[14]	8 Hour	Extinction coefficient of 0.23 per kilometer – visibility of ten miles or more (0.07 – 30 miles or more for Lake Tahoe) due to particles when relative humidity is less than 70 percent. Method: Beta Attenuation and Transmittance through Filter Tape.		**No Federal Standards**		
Sulfates	24 Hour	25 µg/m³	Ion Chromatography			
Hydrogen Sulfide	1 Hour	0.03 ppm (42 µg/m³)	Ultraviolet Fluorescence			

POLLUTANT	AVERAGING TIME	CALIFORNIA STANDARDS[1]		FEDERAL STANDARDS[2]		
		Concentration[3]	Method[4]	Primary[3,5]	Secondary[3,6]	Method[7]
Vinyl Chloride[12]	24 Hour	0.01 ppm (26 µg/m³)	Gas Chromatography			

1. California standards for ozone, carbon monoxide (except Lake Tahoe), sulfur dioxide (1 and 24 hour), nitrogen dioxide, suspended particulate matter – PM_{10}, $PM_{2.5}$, and visibility reducing particles, are values that are not to be exceeded. All other are not to be equaled or exceeded. California ambient air quality standards are listed in the Table of Standards in Section 70200 of Title 17 of the California Code of Regulations.
2. National standards (other than ozone, particulate matter, and those based on annual averages or annual arithmetic mean) are not to be exceeded more than once a year. The ozone standard is attained when the fourth highest eight hour concentration in a year, averaged over three years, is equal to or less than the standard. For PM_{10}, the 24 hour standard is attained when the expected number of days per calendar year with a 24-hour average concentration above 150 micrograms per cubic meter (µg/m³) is equal to or less than one. For $PM_{2.5}$, the 24 hour standard is attained when 98 percent of the daily concentrations, averaged over three years, are equal to or less than the standard. Contact USEPA for further clarification and current federal policies.
3. Concentration expressed first in units in which it was promulgated. Equivalent units given in parentheses are based upon a reference temperature of 25 degrees Celsius (°C) and a reference pressure of 760 torr. Most measurements of air quality are to be corrected to a reference temperature of 25°C and a reference pressure of 760 torr; ppm in this table refers to parts per million (ppm) by volume, or micromoles of pollutant per mole of gas.
4. Any equivalent procedure which can be shown to the satisfaction of CARB to give equivalent results at or near the level of the air quality standard may be used.
5. National Primary Standards: The levels of air quality necessary, with an adequate margin of safety to protect the public health.
6. National Secondary Standards: The levels of air quality necessary to protect the public welfare from any known or anticipated adverse effects of a pollutant.
7. Reference method as described by the USEPA. An "equivalent method" of measurement may be used but must have a "consistent relationship to the reference method" and must be approved by the USEPA.
8. On October 1, 2015, the national 8-hour ozone primary and secondary standards were lowered from 0.075 to 0.070 ppm.
9. On December 14, 2012, the national annual $PM_{2.5}$ primary standard was lowered from 15 µg/m³ to 12.0 µg/m³. The existing national 24-hour $PM_{2.5}$ standards (primary and secondary) were retained at 35 µg/m³, as was the annual secondary standard of 15 µg/m³. The existing 24-hour PM_{10} standards (primary and secondary) of 150 µg/m³ also were retained. The form of the annual primary and secondary standards is the annual mean, averaged over 3 years.
10. To attain this standard, the 3-year average of the 98th percentile of the daily maximum 1-hour average at each monitor within an area must not exceed 0.100 ppm (effective January 22, 2010).
11. On June 2, 2010, a new 1-hour SO_2 standard was established and the existing 24-hour and annual primary standards were revoked. To attain the 1-hour national standard, the 3-year average of the annual 99th percentile of the 1-hour daily maximum concentrations at each site must not exceed 75 ppb. The 1971 SO_2 national standards (24-hour and annual) remain in effect until one year after an area is designated for the 2010 standard, except that in areas designated nonattainment for the 1971 standards, the 1971 standards remain in effect until implementation plans to attain or maintain the 2010 standards are approved. Note that the 1-hour national standard is in units of parts per billion (ppb). California standards are in units of parts per million (ppm). To directly compare the 1-hour national standard to the California standard the units can be converted to ppm. In this case, the national standard of 75 ppb is identical to 0.075 ppm.
12. CARB has identified lead and vinyl chloride as "toxic air contaminants" with no threshold level of exposure for adverse health effects determined. These actions allow for the implementation of control measures at levels below the ambient concentrations specified for these pollutants.
13. National lead standard, rolling 3-month average: final rule signed October 15, 2008.
14. In 1989, CARB converted both the general statewide 10-mile visibility standard and the Lake Tahoe 30-mile visibility standard to instrumental equivalents, which are "extinction of 0.23 per kilometer" and "extinction of 0.07 per kilometer" for the statewide and Lake Tahoe Air Basin standards, respectively.

Source: California Air Resources Board, Ambient Air Quality Standards (May 4, 2016), https://www.arb.ca.gov/research/aaqs/aaqs2.pdf, accessed March 7, 2018.

Air Quality Thresholds

Under CEQA, the SCAQMD is an expert commenting agency on air quality within its jurisdiction or impacting its jurisdiction. Under the FCAA, the SCAQMD has adopted federal attainment plans for O_3 and PM_{10}. The SCAQMD reviews projects to ensure that they would not: (1) cause or contribute to any new violation of any air quality standard; (2) increase the frequency or severity of any existing violation of any air quality standard; or (3) delay timely attainment of any air quality standard or any required interim emission reductions or other milestones of any Federal attainment plan.

The *CEQA Air Quality Handbook* also provides significance thresholds for both construction and operation of projects within the SCAQMD jurisdictional boundaries. If the SCAQMD thresholds are exceeded, a potentially significant impact could result. However, ultimately the lead agency determines the thresholds of significance for impacts. If a project proposes development in excess of the established thresholds, as outlined in Table 3-2, a significant air quality impact may occur and additional analysis is warranted to fully assess the significance of impacts.

TABLE 3-2 SOUTH COAST AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT DISTRICT EMISSIONS THRESHOLDS

PHASE	POLLUTANT (LBS/DAY)					
	ROG	NO_X	CO	SO_X	PM_{10}	$PM_{2.5}$
Construction	75	100	550	150	150	55
Operational	55	55	550	150	150	55

lbs/day = pounds per day; ROG = reactive organic gases; NO_X = nitrogen oxides; CO = carbon monoxide; SO_X = sulfur oxides; PM_{10} = particulate matter up to 10 microns; $PM_{2.5}$ = particulate matter up to 2.5 microns.

Source: Michael Baker International 2018a.

Local Carbon Monoxide Standards

In addition, the significance of localized project impacts depends on whether ambient CO levels in the vicinity of the project are above or below State and federal CO standards, as follows:

- If the project causes an exceedance of either the State one-hour or eight-hour CO concentrations, the project would be considered to have a significant local impact.
- If ambient levels already exceed a State or federal standard, then project emissions would be considered significant if they increase one-hour CO concentrations by 1.0 parts per million (ppm) or more, or eight-hour CO concentrations by 0.45 ppm or more.

Localized Significance Thresholds

Localized Significance Thresholds (LSTs) were developed in response to SCAQMD Governing Boards' Environmental Justice Enhancement Initiative. The SCAQMD provided the *Final Localized Significance Threshold Methodology* (dated July 2008) for guidance. The LST methodology assists lead agencies in analyzing localized impacts associated with project-specific level proposed projects. The SCAQMD provides the LST lookup tables for one-, two-, and five-acre projects emitting CO, NO_X, or PM_{10}. The LST methodology and associated mass rates are not designed to evaluate localized impacts from mobile sources traveling over the roadways. The SCAQMD recommends that any project over five acres in size should perform air quality dispersion modeling to assess impacts to nearby sensitive receptors.

Cumulative Emissions Thresholds

The 2016 AQMP was prepared to accommodate growth, meet State and Federal air quality standards, and minimize the fiscal impact that pollution control measures have on the local economy. According to the SCAQMD *CEQA Air Quality Handbook*, project-related emissions that fall below the established construction and operational thresholds should be considered less than significant unless there is pertinent information to the contrary. If a project exceeds these emission thresholds, the SCAQMD *CEQA Air Quality Handbook* states that the significance of a project's contribution to cumulative impacts should be determined based on whether the rate of growth in average daily trips exceeds the rate of growth in population.

3.3.2 Affected Environment

The project site lies within the northeastern portion of the SSAB, which is under the jurisdiction of the SCAQMD and CARB. The SCAQMD sets and enforces air pollutant regulations for stationary sources in the SSAB, while CARB is charged with controlling motor vehicle emissions. The SSAB is composed of the eastern portions of Riverside County, and all of Imperial County.

The southeastern edge of the SSAB is bounded by the Colorado River. The western boundary follows the ridge line of a series of high mountain ranges: the San Gabriel, San Bernardino, and San Jacinto ranges, which form both a physical and climatological barrier between the Salton Sea and South Coast Air Basins. The SSAB, including the Coachella Valley, has a desert climate characterized by low annual rainfall, low humidity, hot days, and very cool nights. The mean annual precipitation in the Coachella Valley averages approximately three inches, most of which occurs between October and January. Temperature in the area varies greatly between summer and winter, ranging from 30 degrees Fahrenheit (°F) in winter to over 100°F in the summer. Relative humidity is generally low in the summer, with particularly dry afternoons. These clear, dry conditions result in intense solar radiation that, combined with high temperatures, is highly conducive to photochemical smog formation.

Wind direction and speed (which in turn affect atmospheric stability) are the most important climatological elements affecting the ambient air quality within the project area. The on-shore dominant daytime wind pattern (from the west) occurs between 12:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m., following the peak travel period (6:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m.) in the Los Angeles/Orange County area. Consequently, during periods of low inversions and low wind speeds, the photochemical smog formed in these areas is transported downwind into Riverside County and San Bernardino County. Within the vicinity of the project site the wind direction is generally in a southeast direction. The Coachella Valley rarely experiences the summer temperature inversions that frequently "cap" polluted air layers in the Los Angeles basin area. However, inversions can form during cold nights with mild winds (typically during winter months), but are usually removed during daytime heating. When these desert inversions form, they may trap pollutants near low level emission sources such as freeways or parking lots.

Attainment Status

The SSAB is an unclassified/attainment area for CO, NO_2, SO_2, and $PM_{2.5}$ for both State and federal standards. The SSAB is a nonattainment area for O_3 and PM_{10} under both State and federal standards; refer to Table 3-3.

TABLE 3-3 SALTON SEA AIR BASIN AIR QUALITY ATTAINMENT STATUS

POLLUTANT	STATE	FEDERAL
Carbon Monoxide (CO)	Attainment	Unclassified/Attainment
Ozone (O_3) (1-hour standard)	Extreme Nonattainment	Revoked June 2005
Ozone (O_3) (8-hour standard)	Nonattainment	Severe 15 Nonattainment
Nitrogen Dioxide (NO_2)	Attainment	Unclassified/Attainment
Sulfur Dioxide (SO_2)	Attainment	Unclassified
Particulate Matter <10 microns (PM_{10})	Nonattainment	Serious Nonattainment[1]
Particulate Matter <2.5 microns ($PM_{2.5}$)	Attainment	Attainment
Lead	Attainment	Attainment
Sulfates	Attainment	--
Hydrogen Sulfides	Unclassified	--
Visibility Reducing Particles	Unclassified	--

Notes:
1. The USEPA eliminated the annual PM_{10} standard in its final rule revision in October 2006.

Source: Michael Baker International 2018a.

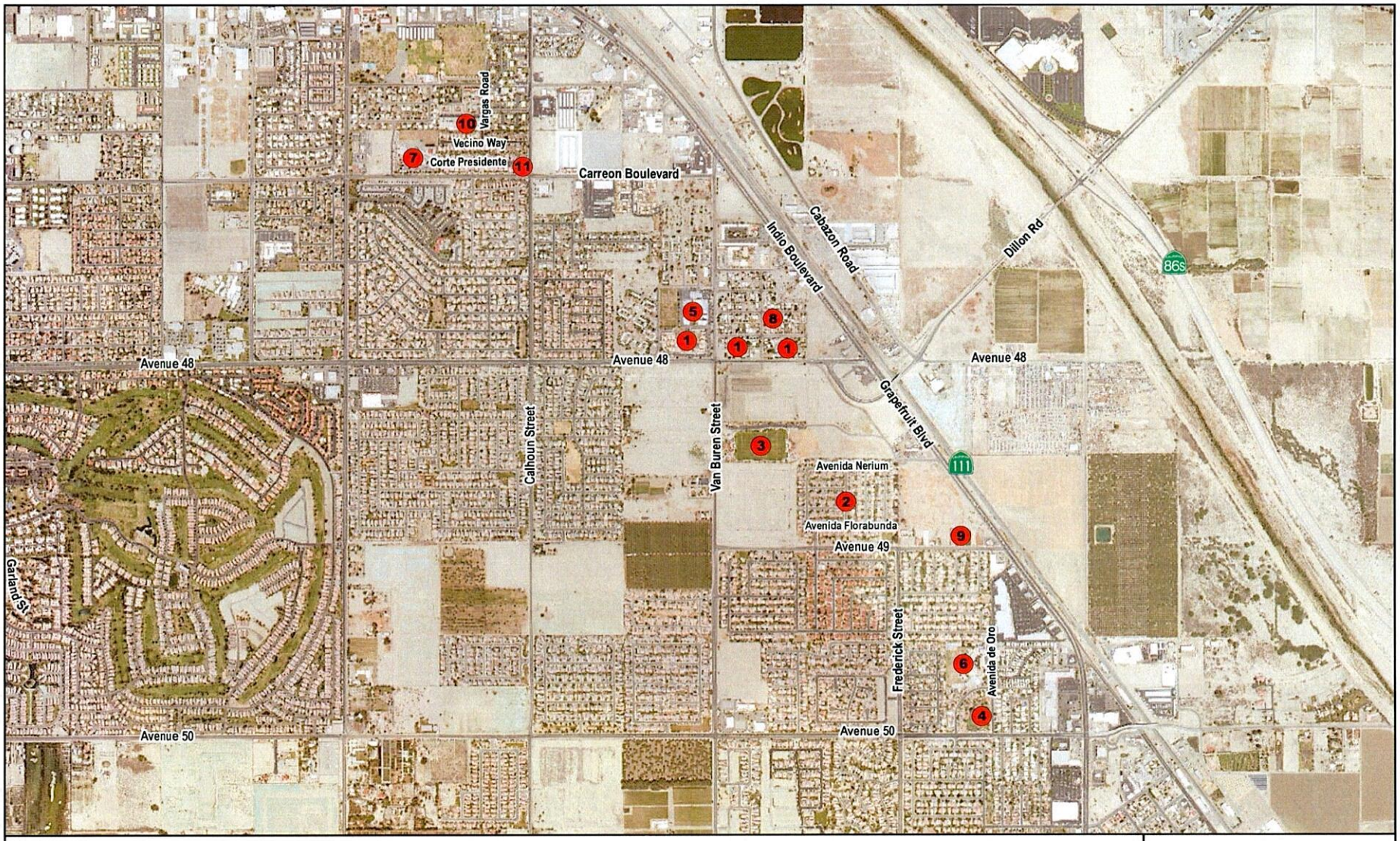
Sensitive Receptors

Sensitive receptors are more susceptible to the effects of air pollution than the general public. Sensitive receptors that are in proximity to localized sources of toxics and CO are of particular concern. Some land uses are considered more sensitive to changes in air quality than others, depending on the population groups and the activities involved. The following types of people are most likely to be adversely affected by air pollution, as identified by CARB: children under 14, elderly over 65, athletes, and people with cardiovascular and chronic respiratory diseases. Locations that may contain a high concentration of these sensitive population groups are called sensitive receptors and include residential areas, hospitals, day-care facilities, elder-care facilities, elementary schools, and parks. Existing sensitive receptors located in the project vicinity surrounding the roadway include single-family residential uses, parks, schools, and places of worship. Sensitive receptors are listed in Table 3-4 and shown in Figure 3-1.

TABLE 3-4 SENSITIVE RECEPTORS

TYPE	NAME	DISTANCE FROM PROJECT SITE (FEET)[1]	DIRECTION FROM PROJECT SITE	LOCATION	CORRESPONDING # ON FIGURE 3-1
Residential	Residential Uses	Adjoining	North	Residential neighborhood north of Avenue 48	1
		1,398	South	Residential neighborhood south of Avenue 48	2
Parks	Rancho Las Flores, City of Coachella Park	999	South	Avenue 48, Coachella, CA 92236	3
	De Oro Park	5,262	Southeast	Coachella, CA 92236	4
Schools	Martin Van Buren Elementary School	478	North	47733 Van Buren Street, Indio, CA 92201	5
	Cesar Chavez Elementary School	4,226	Southeast	49601 Avenida De Oro, Coachella, CA 92236	6
	Theodore Roosevelt Elementary	4,417	Northwest	83200 Dr. Carreon Blvd., Indio, CA 92201	7
Places of Worship	New Seasons Church	560	North	84155 Corregidor Avenue, Indio, CA 92201	8
	Islamic Society of Coachella	2,846	Southeast	84650 Avenue 49, Coachella, CA 92236	9
	First Assembly of God	3,452	Northwest	46601 Vargas Road, Indio, CA 92201	10
	Apostolic Church of Indio	4,328	Northwest	46923 Calhoun Street, Indio, CA 92201	11

Note: Distances are measured from the exterior project boundary only and not from individual activity areas within the interior of the project site.
Source: Michael Baker International 2018a.



Legend

- Sensitive Air Quality Receptor

0 1,000 2,000
Feet

FIGURE 3-1

SENSITIVE AIR QUALITY RECEPTORS

COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE

AVENUE 48
WIDENING PROJECT

Source: Michael Baker International, 2018

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3.3.3 Impact Assessment

Would the Project:

a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?

Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation. According to the *CEQA Air Quality Handbook*, in order to determine consistency with the SCAQMD AQMP the following two criteria (i.e., Criterion 1 and Criterion 2, as described below) must be addressed.

Criterion 1

With respect to the first criterion, SCAQMD methodologies require that an air quality analysis for a project include forecasts of project emissions in relation to contributing to air quality violations and delay of attainment.

a) Would the project result in an increase in the frequency or severity of existing air quality violations?

Since the consistency criteria identified under the first criterion pertain to pollutant concentrations, rather than to total regional emissions, an analysis of the project's pollutant emissions relative to localized pollutant concentrations is used as the basis for evaluating project consistency. As discussed in Checklist Response 3.3.3 (c) below, localized concentrations of CO, NO_X, PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$ during project construction would not exceed the SCAQMD's LSTs. In addition, the project would not generate new vehicle trips and therefore would not warrant a CO hotspot analysis. Therefore, the proposed project would not result in an increase in the frequency or severity of existing air quality violations. It is noted that because reactive organic gases (ROG) are not a criteria pollutant, there is no ambient standard or localized threshold for ROGs. Due to the role ROG plays in O_3 formation, it is classified as a precursor pollutant and only a regional emissions threshold has been established.

b) Would the project cause or contribute to new air quality violations?

As discussed in Checklist Response 3.3.3 (c) below, the proposed project would result in emissions that would be below the SCAQMD thresholds. Therefore, the proposed project would not have the potential to cause or affect a violation of the ambient air quality standards.

c) Would the project delay timely attainment of air quality standards or the interim emissions reductions specified in the AQMP?

As discussed below, the project's short-term construction and long-term operational emissions for CO, NO_x, ROG, PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$ would not exceed the applicable SCAQMD thresholds. In addition, the project's localized construction-related emissions would be below SCAQMD LSTs, resulting in a less than significant impact to sensitive receptors (discussed in Checklist Response 3.3.3 (c) below). Therefore, the proposed project would not delay the timely attainment of air quality standards or 2016 AQMP emissions reductions.

Criterion 2

With respect to the second criterion for determining consistency with SCAQMD and SCAG air quality policies, it is important to recognize that air quality planning within the Basin focuses on attainment of ambient air quality standards at the earliest feasible date. Projections for achieving air quality goals are based on assumptions regarding population, housing, and growth trends. Thus, the SCAQMD's second criterion for determining project consistency focuses on whether or not the proposed project exceeds the assumptions utilized in preparing the forecasts presented in the AQMP. Determining whether or not a project exceeds the assumptions reflected in the AQMP involves the evaluation of the three criteria outlined below. The following discussion provides an analysis of each of these criteria.

a) *Would the project be consistent with the population, housing, and employment growth projections utilized in the preparation of the AQMP?*

A project is consistent with the AQMP in part if it is consistent with the population, housing, and employment assumptions that were used in the development of the AQMP. In the case of the 2016 AQMP, four sources of data form the basis for the projections of air pollutant emissions: the *City of Coachella General Plan*, *County of Riverside General Plan,* SCAG's *Growth Management* Chapter of the *Regional Comprehensive Plan and Guide* (RCPG), and SCAG's *2016-2040* RTP/SCS. The RTP/SCS also provides socioeconomic forecast projections of regional population growth.

The proposed project involves widening Avenue 48 within the City of Coachella, the City of Indio, and the County of Riverside, which is not considered a trip generating land use. According to the *City of Coachella General Plan Mobility Element*, Avenue 48 is designated as a major arterial with enhanced bicycle facilities which could have a ROW up to 132 feet, including up to six travel lanes, a sidewalk and bike lane in each direction of the roadway, and a median. Arterial streets are designed for through traffic to which access from abutting properties is limited. They provide the highest traffic carrying capacity in the roadway system with the highest speeds and limited interference with traffic flow by driveways. The proposed project would provide three additional travel lanes (one additional westbound lane and two additional eastbound lanes with a raised concrete center median) within the project limits. The project would relieve traffic congestion, increase mobility, and accommodate existing traffic conditions in the area, consistent with the *City of Coachella General Plan Mobility Element* and the *County of Riverside General Plan Circulation Element*. Therefore, the proposed project would be considered consistent with the current City and County *General Plans*. Furthermore, the project does not involve any uses that would increase population beyond what is considered in the *City of Coachella General Plan* and *County of Riverside General Plan* and, therefore, would not affect City-wide and County-wide plans for population growth at the project site. Thus, the proposed project is consistent with the types, intensity, and patterns of land use envisioned for the site vicinity in the RCPG. The population, housing, and employment forecasts, which are adopted by SCAG's Regional Council, are based on the local plans and policies applicable to both the City of Coachella and the City of Indio; these are used by SCAG in all phases of implementation and review. Additionally, as SCAQMD has incorporated these same projections into the 2016 AQMP, it can be concluded that the proposed project would be consistent with the projections.

b) *Would the project implement all feasible air quality mitigation measures?*

The project would be required to comply with applicable emission reduction measures identified by SCAQMD and FCAA. These measures have been included as Mitigation Measures AQ-1 through AQ-2. The project therefore meets this 2016 AQMP consistency criterion.

c) *Would the project be consistent with the land use planning strategies set forth in the AQMP?*

The proposed project would serve to implement various City of Coachella (General Plan Goal 11, and Policies 11.1, 11.3, 11.8, 11.9, 11.10, 11.20, and 11.21), County of Riverside (General Plan Policies AQ1.1 through AQ1.10, AQ2.1 through 2.3, AQ12.2 and AQ12.3, AQ16.16.1 and 16.3) and SCAG's RTP/SCS (e.g., use watering trucks to minimize dust) policies. The proposed project is located within a developed portion of the City of Coachella and the County of Riverside, and would relieve traffic congestion in the area and allow for more efficient mobility. The project site is located along Avenue 48 in the vicinity of residential, commercial, and institutional uses.

In conclusion, the determination of AQMP consistency is primarily concerned with the long-term influence of a project on air quality in the Basin. The proposed project would not result in a long-term impact on the region's ability to meet State and federal air quality standards. As discussed above, the proposed project's long-term influence would also be consistent with the goals and policies of the 2016 AQMP and is, therefore, considered consistent with the SCAQMD's 2016 AQMP.

Short-Term Construction Emissions

Future construction of the project site would generate short-term air quality impacts. The project involves construction activities associated with demolition, grading, paving, and roadway construction. The project would be constructed over approximately six months. Construction equipment would include excavators, concrete/industrial saws, rubber-tired dozers, graders, rollers, pavers, paving equipment, tractors/loaders/backhoes, and air compressors. Exhaust emission factors for typical diesel-powered heavy equipment are based on the California Emissions Estimator Model (CalEEMod) program defaults. Variables factored into estimating the total construction emissions include the level of activity, length of construction period, number of pieces and types of equipment in use, site characteristics, weather conditions, number of construction personnel, and the amount of materials to be transported on- or off-site. The analysis of daily construction emissions has been prepared utilizing CalEEMod (refer to the Air Quality/Greenhouse Gas Emissions Technical Memorandum for the CalEEMod outputs and results). Table 3-5 presents the anticipated daily short-term construction emissions.

TABLE 3-5 CONSTRUCTION-RELATED AIR EMISSIONS

CONSTRUCTION EMISSIONS	POLLUTANT (POUNDS/DAY)[1]					
	ROG	NO_X	CO	SO_2	PM_{10}	$PM_{2.5}$
2019						
Unmitigated Emissions	3.59	36.34	22.56	0.04	7.88	4.72
Mitigated Emissions[2]	3.59	36.34	22.56	0.04	4.37	2.81
SCAQMD Thresholds	*75*	*100*	*550*	*150*	*150*	*55*
Is Threshold Exceeded After Mitigation?	***No***	***No***	***No***	***No***	***No***	***No***

ROG = reactive organic gases; NO_X = nitrogen oxides; CO = carbon monoxide; SO_2 = sulfur dioxide; PM_{10} = particulate matter up to 10 microns; $PM_{2.5}$ = particulate matter up to 2.5 microns

Notes:
1. Emissions were calculated using the California Emissions Estimator Model, as recommended by the SCAQMD.
2. The reduction/credits for construction emission mitigations are based on mitigation included in CalEEMod and as typically required by the SCAQMD through Rule 403. The mitigation includes the following: properly maintain mobile and other construction equipment; replace ground cover in disturbed areas quickly; water exposed surfaces three times daily; cover stock piles with tarps; water all haul roads twice daily; and limit speeds on unpaved roads to 15 mph.

Refer to Appendix A, *Air Quality/Greenhouse Gas Emissions Data.*

Source: Michael Baker International 2018a.

Emitted pollutants would include ROG, CO, NO_X, PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$. ROG emissions would be the greatest during the demolition phase of construction. The largest amount of CO and NO_X emissions would occur during the demolition phase. PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$ emissions would occur from fugitive dust (due to earthwork and excavation) and from construction equipment exhaust. The majority of PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$ emissions would be generated by fugitive dust from earthwork activities. Exhaust emissions from construction activities include emissions associated with the transport of machinery and supplies to and from the project site, emissions produced on-site as the equipment is used, and emissions from trucks transporting materials to and from the site.

As indicated in Table 3-5, construction-related emissions would not exceed the established SCAQMD thresholds for criteria pollutants. During construction activities, the project would also be required to comply with standard SCAQMD regulations, such as Rule 402 (Nuisance) and Rule 403 (Dust Control) in compliance with Mitigation Measure AQ-1. In addition, the project would be required to implement Reasonably Available Control Technology (RACT) for construction equipment, as the SSAB is designated nonattainment for PM_{10}. Implementation of Mitigation Measures AQ-1 through AQ-3 would ensure compliance with standard SCAQMD and federal regulations, resulting in a less than significant short-term air quality impact.

Naturally Occurring Asbestos

Asbestos is a term used for several types of naturally occurring fibrous minerals that are a human health hazard when airborne. The most common type of asbestos is chrysotile, but other types such as tremolite and actinolite are also found in California. Asbestos is classified as a known human carcinogen by State, Federal, and international agencies and was identified as a toxic air contaminant by the CARB in 1986. Asbestos can be released from serpentinite and ultramafic rocks when the rock is broken or crushed. At the point of release, the asbestos fibers may become airborne, causing air quality and human health hazards. These rocks have been commonly used for unpaved gravel roads, landscaping, fill projects, and other improvement projects in some localities. Asbestos may be released to the atmosphere due to vehicular traffic on unpaved roads, during grading for development projects, and at quarry operations. All of these activities may have the effect of releasing potentially harmful asbestos into the air. Natural weathering and erosion processes can act on asbestos bearing rock and make it easier for asbestos fibers to become airborne if such rock is disturbed.

According to the United States Geological Survey (USGS), Reported Historic Asbestos Mines, Historic Asbestos Prospects, and Other Natural Occurrences of Asbestos in California, there are no reported natural occurrences of asbestos found within the project area. Additionally, according to the Department of Conservation Division of Mines and Geology, *A General Location Guide for Ultramafic Rocks in California – Areas More Likely to Contain Naturally Occurring Asbestos Report*, serpentinite and ultramafic rocks are not known to occur within the project area. Furthermore, implementation of the proposed project would not involve the demolition of any structures associated with asbestos-containing materials (ACMs). Therefore, there would be no impact in this regard.

Long-Term (Operational) Emissions

Long-term air quality impacts would consist of mobile source emissions generated from project-related traffic. The proposed project would provide three additional travel lanes within the Avenue 48 project limits (one additional westbound lane and two additional eastbound lanes) to relieve traffic congestion, increase mobility, and accommodate existing traffic conditions in the area. However, the proposed improvements would also attract additional traffic. Table 3-6 depicts the average daily traffic (ADT) volumes along the project corridor during Existing (2017), Opening Year (2019), and Horizon Year (2038) Without Project and With Project conditions. As indicated in Table 3-6, Avenue 48 would experience ADT growth without the project between the existing and 2038 analysis years due to general growth in the area. With implementation of the project, Avenue 48 would experience additional traffic due to the proposed additional travel lanes in 2038. Although additional trips would occur along Avenue 48 after project implementation due to general growth in the area, the project would relieve existing and forecast traffic congestion in the project area. The project is not considered a trip-generating land use, and overall vehicular traffic circulation would improve for motorists, residents, businesses, emergency service providers, nearby institutions such as schools, and public transportation.

TABLE 3-6 AVENUE 48 AVERAGE DAILY TRAFFIC

AVENUE 48 ROADWAY SEGMENT	TOTAL ADT	PERCENT TRUCKS	TRUCK ADT
Existing Conditions (2017)			
Van Buren Street to Dillon Road	11,893	3.80%	452
Dillon Road to Indio Blvd.	12,205	3.80%	464
Total	**24,098**	--	**916**
Opening Year (2019)[1]			
Van Buren Street to Dillon Road	12,272	3.80%	466
Dillon Road to Indio Blvd.	12,739	3.80%	484
Total	**26,011**	--	**950**
Horizon Year (2038) Without Project			
Van Buren Street to Dillon Road	22,780	1.90%	433
Dillon Road to Indio Blvd. Indio Blvd.	35,458	5.90%	2,092
Total	**58,238**	--	**2,525**
Horizon Year (2038) With Project			
Van Buren Street to Dillon Road	29,403	1.80%	529
Dillon Road to Indio Blvd.	41,140	5.20%	2,139
Total	**70,543**	--	**2,669**
- Net Change from Build to No Build	12,305	--	144

Notes:
1. Opening Year With Project and Without Project traffic volumes would be the same.

Source: Michael Baker International 2018a.

Table 3-6 also depicts the percentage of trucks and truck daily volumes that would travel along Avenue 48. Table 3-6 indicates that truck volumes would increase in the Horizon Year primarily due to increases in overall traffic and general growth in the area. In the Horizon Year, truck volumes would decrease along Avenue 48 between Van Buren Street and Dillon Road. However, truck volumes would increase along Avenue 48 between Dillon Road and Indio Boulevard. When comparing Horizon Year 2038 Without Project and With Project conditions, the percentage of trucks would decrease. However, the overall ADT and number of trucks would increase by 12,305 and 144 ADT, respectively, due to the added roadway capacity. It should be noted that the total number of daily trucks during Horizon Year With Project conditions would be 2,669, which is far below the 10,000 daily truck screening level used by Caltrans for particulate matter hotspots.

Table 3-7 depicts the air quality emissions associated with the traffic volumes during the Existing (2017), Opening Year (2019), and Horizon Year (2038) Without Project, and Horizon Year (2038) With Project scenarios. As indicated in Table 3-7, operational emissions would not exceed SCAQMD thresholds. Additionally, the proposed roadway improvement would not generate any stationary source emissions. Therefore, impacts in this regard would be less than significant.

TABLE 3-7 OPERATIONAL (MOBILE) EMISSIONS

OPERATIONAL SCENARIO	POLLUTANT (POUNDS/DAY)[1]					
	ROG	NO_X	CO	SO_2	PM_{10}	$PM_{2.5}$
Existing Conditions (2017)	0.60	5.67	17.04	0.05	0.64	0.28
Opening Year (2019)[2]	0.52	4.81	15.09	0.06	0.65	0.28
Horizon Year (2038) Without Project	0.91	3.35	19.13	0.08	1.28	0.52
Horizon Year (2038) With Project[3]	1.14	4.18	23.83	0.10	1.60	0.65
SCAQMD Thresholds	55	55	550	150	150	55
Is Threshold Exceeded After Mitigation?	***No***	***No***	***No***	***No***	***No***	***No***

ROG = reactive organic gases; NO_X = nitrogen oxides; CO = carbon monoxide; SO_2 = sulfur dioxide; PM_{10} = particulate matter up to 10 microns; $PM_{2.5}$ = particulate matter up to 2.5 microns
Notes:
1. Emissions were calculated using EMFAC2014.
2. Opening Year With Project and Without Project traffic volumes would be the same.
3. Year 2038 With Project emissions include a total net increase of 12,305 ADT, and a net increase of 144 ADT for trucks.
Refer to Appendix A, *Air Quality/Greenhouse Gas Emissions Data.*

Source: Michael Baker International 2018a.

b) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard?

Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation.

Cumulative Construction Impacts

As discussed above in Checklist Response 3.3.3 (a), the project's short-term construction and long-term operational emissions for CO, NO_x, ROG, PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$ would not exceed the applicable SCAQMD thresholds. With respect to cumulative Basin-wide conditions, the SCAQMD has developed strategies to reduce criteria pollutant emissions outlined in the 2016 AQMP pursuant to FCAA mandates. As such, the proposed project would comply with SCAQMD Rule 403 requirements, and implement all feasible mitigation measures (Mitigation Measures AQ-1 and AQ-2). Rule 403 requires that fugitive dust be controlled with the best available control measures in order to reduce dust so that it does not remain visible in the atmosphere beyond the property line of the proposed project. In addition, the proposed project would comply with adopted 2016 AQMP emissions control measures. Per SCAQMD rules and mandates, as well as the CEQA requirement that significant impacts be mitigated to the extent feasible, these same requirements (i.e., Rule 403 compliance, the implementation of all feasible mitigation measures, and compliance with adopted AQMP emissions control measures) would also be imposed on construction projects throughout the Basin, which would include related projects.

Compliance with SCAQMD rules and regulations would minimize the project's construction-related emissions and ensure that impacts are reduced to a less than significant level. Thus, it can be reasonably inferred that the project-related construction emissions, in combination with those from other projects in the area, would not substantially deteriorate the local air quality. Impacts would be less than significant with implementation of Mitigation Measures AQ-1 and AQ-2.

Cumulative Long-Term Impacts

As discussed previously, the proposed project would not result in long-term air quality impacts, as the proposed roadway widening is not considered a trip generating land use and the project would improve traffic conditions in the study area in cooperation with the *City of Coachella General Plan Mobility Element* and the *County of Riverside Circulation Element*. Additionally, adherence to SCAQMD rules and regulations would alleviate potential impacts related to cumulative conditions on a project-by-project

basis. Emission reduction technology, strategies, and plans are constantly being developed. As a result, the proposed project would not contribute a cumulatively considerable net increase of any nonattainment criteria pollutant. Therefore, cumulative operational impacts associated with implementation of the proposed project would be less than significant.

c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentration?

Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation. As noted above, sensitive receptors are defined as facilities or land uses that include members of the population that are particularly sensitive to the effects of air pollutants, such as children, the elderly, and people with illnesses. Examples of these sensitive receptors are residences, schools, hospitals, and daycare centers. The CARB has identified the following groups of individuals as the most likely to be affected by air pollution: the elderly over 65, children under 14, athletes, and persons with cardiovascular and chronic respiratory diseases such as asthma, emphysema, and bronchitis.

Sensitive receptors closest to the project site include the adjoining residential uses to the north, additionally the next closest sensitive receptor, Martin Van Buren Elementary School is located approximately 480 feet north of the roadway respectively, and New Seasons Church is approximately 560 feet north of the roadway. In order to identify impacts to sensitive receptors, the SCAQMD recommends addressing LSTs for construction operational impacts. It is noted that LSTs are applicable to stationary sources only. The project consists of roadway improvements; therefore, only localized construction emissions have been analyzed below.

Localized Significance Thresholds

Localized Construction Emissions

LSTs were developed in response to SCAQMD Governing Boards' Environmental Justice Enhancement Initiative (I-4). The SCAQMD provided the *Final Localized Significance Threshold Methodology* (dated June 2003 [revised 2008]) for guidance. The LST methodology assists lead agencies in analyzing localized impacts associated with project-specific level proposed projects. The SCAQMD provides the LST lookup tables for one, two, and five acre projects emitting CO, NO_X, $PM_{2.5}$, or PM_{10}. The LST methodology and associated mass rates are not designed to evaluate localized impacts from mobile sources traveling over the roadways. The localized analysis relative to vehicle trips is presented under the Carbon Monoxide Hotspot analysis below. The SCAQMD recommends that any project over five acres should perform air quality dispersion modeling to assess impacts to nearby sensitive receptors. The SCAQMD monitors air quality at 37 monitoring stations throughout the Basin. Each monitoring station is located within a Source Receptor Area (SRA). The communities within an SRA are expected to have similar climatology and ambient air pollutant concentrations. The project is located within SRA 30, Coachella Valley.

The SCAQMD guidance on applying CalEEMod to LSTs specifies the amount of acres a particular piece of equipment would likely disturb per day. The project would disturb approximately five acres; therefore, the LSTs for the largest acreage (five acres) were conservatively utilized for the construction LST analysis. It should be noted that an operational LST analysis was not prepared, as the project would not result in stationary source operational emissions. The closest sensitive receptors to the project site are residential uses adjoining the project site to the north, a school which is approximately 478 feet (or 146 meters) away from the project site and lastly, a church which is located approximately 560 feet (or 171 meters) from the project site. These sensitive land uses may be potentially affected by air pollutant emissions generated during on-site construction activities. LSTs are provided for distances to sensitive receptors of 25, 50, 100, 200, and 500 meters. As the nearest sensitive uses are directly adjacent to the project site, the LST values for 25 meters were conservatively utilized.

Table 3-8 shows the construction-related emissions for NO_X, CO, PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$ compared to the LSTs for SRA 30, Coachella Valley. As shown in Table 3-8, construction emissions would not exceed the LSTs. Therefore, localized significance impacts from construction would be less than significant with implementation of Mitigation Measures AQ-1 and AQ-2.

TABLE 3-8 LOCALIZED SIGNIFICANCE OF EMISSIONS

SOURCE	POLLUTANT (POUNDS/DAY)			
	NO_X	CO	PM_{10}	$PM_{2.5}$
2019				
Total On-Site Construction Emissions[1,2]	35.78	22.10	4.00	2.70
Localized Significance Threshold[3]	*270*	*2,292*	*14*	*8*
Thresholds Exceeded?	***No***	***No***	***No***	***No***

Notes:
1. The Demolition Phase represents the worst-case scenario for NO_X and CO.
2. The Grading Phase represents the worst-case scenario for PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$.
3. The Localized Significance Threshold was determined using Appendix C of the SCAQMD *Final Localized Significant Threshold Methodology* guidance document for pollutants NO_X, CO, PM_{10}, and $PM_{2.5}$. The Localized Significance Threshold was based on the anticipated daily acreage disturbance for construction (5-acre threshold was conservatively used), the distance to sensitive receptors, and the source receptor area (SRA 30).

Refer to Appendix A, *Air Quality/Greenhouse Gas Emissions Data.*

Source: Michael Baker International 2018a.

Carbon Monoxide Hotspots

CO emissions are a function of vehicle idling time, meteorological conditions, and traffic flow. Under certain extreme meteorological conditions, CO concentrations near a congested roadway or intersection may reach unhealthful levels (i.e., adversely affecting residents, school children, hospital patients, and the elderly). The SCAQMD requires a quantified assessment of CO hotspots when a project increases the volume-to-capacity ratio (also called the intersection capacity utilization [ICU]) by 0.02 (two percent) for any intersection with an existing level of service LOS D or worse. Because traffic congestion is highest at intersections where vehicles queue and are subject to reduced speeds, these hot spots are typically produced at intersections.

As noted previously, the project involves widening Avenue 48 and would not generate new vehicle trips. Although additional trips would occur as a result of the project, the proposed roadway improvements would relieve existing and forecasted traffic congestion in the project area consistent with the *City of Coachella General Plan Mobility Element* and the *County of Riverside Circulation Element*. Therefore, it would not increase the ICU of nearby intersections to warrant a CO hotspot analysis.

d) Result in other emissions (such as those leading to odors) adversely affecting a substantial number of people?

Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation. According to the SCAQMD *CEQA Air Quality Handbook*, land uses associated with odor complaints typically include agricultural uses, wastewater treatment plants, food processing plants, chemical plants, composting, refineries, landfills, dairies, and fiberglass molding. The proposed project does not include any uses identified by the SCAQMD as being associated with odors.

Construction activities associated with the project may generate detectable odors from heavy-duty equipment exhaust and asphalt paving. Construction-related odors would be short-term in nature and cease upon project completion. In addition, Mitigation Measures AQ-1 and AQ-2 would further reduce

construction emissions. As such, any impacts to existing adjacent land uses would be short-term and would be less than significant.

3.3.4 Mitigation Measures

AQ-1 The construction contractor shall comply with Caltrans' Standard Specifications Section 14-9.03 Dust Control of Caltrans' Standard Specifications (2010). Construction of the project would also comply with the South Coast Air Quality Management District's Rule 403-Fugitive Dust.

AQ-2 The construction contractor shall comply with Section 7-1.02 Emissions Reduction and Section 18 Dust Palliative of Caltrans' Standard Specifications (2010).

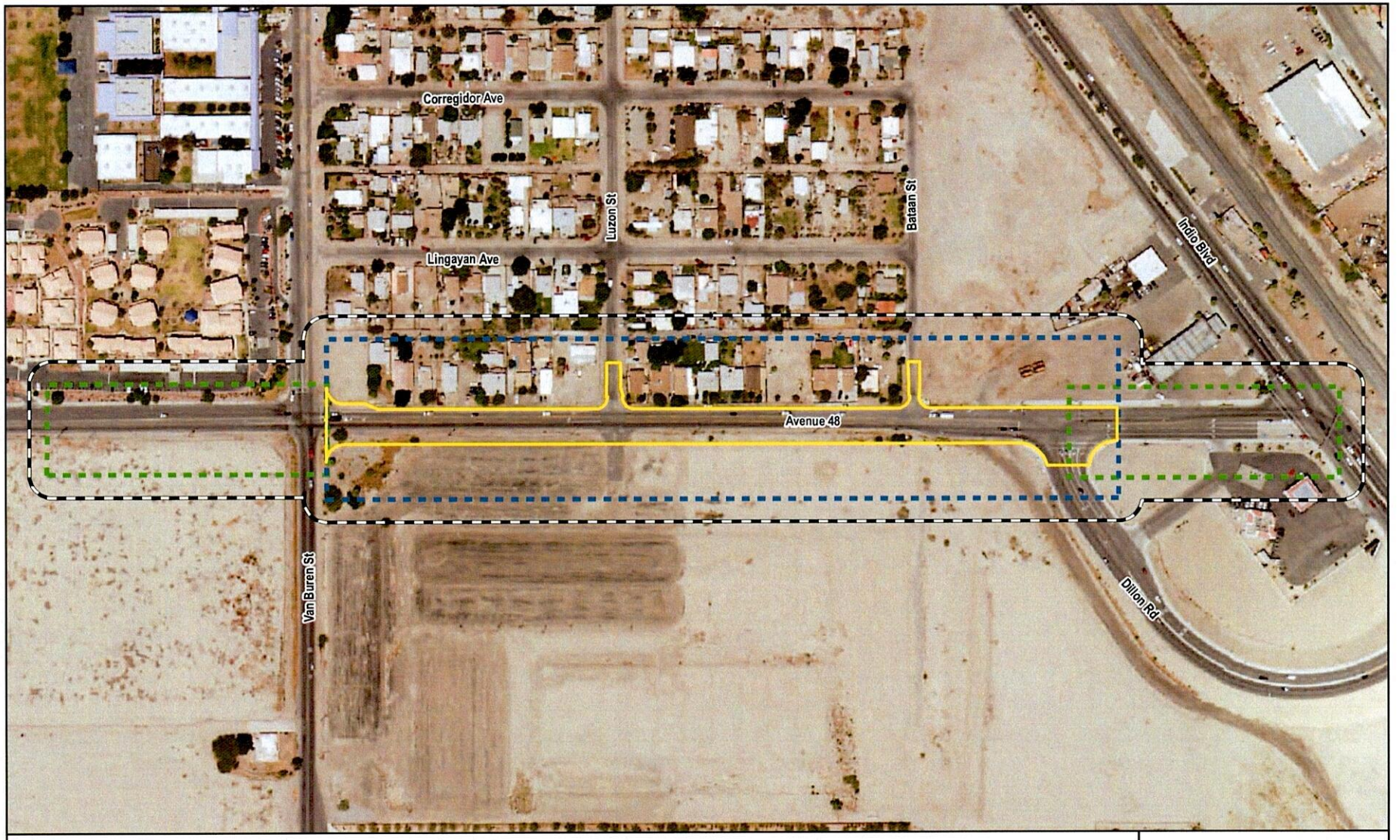
AQ-3 The Wind Erosion Control BMP (WE-1) from Caltrans' Construction Site Best Management Practices Manual will be implemented as follows:

- Water shall be applied by means of pressure-type distributors or pipelines equipped with a spray system or hoses and nozzles that will ensure even distribution.
- All distribution equipment shall be equipped with a positive means of shutoff.
- Unless water is applied by means of pipelines, at least one mobile unit shall be available at all times to apply water or dust palliative to the project.
- If reclaimed water is used, the sources and discharge must meet California Department of Health Services water reclamation criteria and the Regional Water Quality Control Board requirements. Non-potable water shall not be conveyed in tanks or drain pipes that will be used to convey potable water and there shall be no connection between potable and non-potable supplies. Non-potable tanks, pipes and other conveyances shall be marked "NON-POTABLE WATER – DO NOT DRINK."
- Materials applied as temporary soil stabilizers and soil binders will also provide wind erosion control benefits.

3.4 Biological Resources

	POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT IMPACT	LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT WITH MITIGATION	LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT	NO IMPACT
Would the Project:				
a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	☐	☒	☐	☐
b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or US Fish and Wildlife Service?	☐	☐	☐	☒
c) Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	☐	☐	☐	☒
d) 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?	☐	☐	☐	☒
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	☐	☐	☐	☒
f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?	☐	☐	☒	☐

The information in this section is based on the *Habitat Assessment and Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan Consistency Analysis*, prepared by Michael Baker International, Inc. (2018b) and the associated biological field surveys conducted in July 2017 to inventory and evaluate the condition of the habitat within the "survey area" (refer to Figure 3-2). The habitat assessment was conducted to characterize existing on-site conditions and assess the potential for occurrence of special-status plant and wildlife species within the survey area project. The habitat assessment was augmented by a review of the California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB), Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (CVMSHCP), and other electronic databases to assess the potential for special-status plant and animal species within the survey area.



Legend

- Survey Area
- Road Widening Area
- Road Re-Stripe Area
- Approximate Pavement Limits

0 150 300
Feet

FIGURE 3-2

BIOLOGICAL SURVEY AREA

COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE

AVENUE 48 WIDENING PROJECT

Source: Michael Baker International, 2018

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3.4.1 Affected Environment

On-site and surrounding land uses (e.g., residential and commercial development on the north side of Avenue 48) have eliminated naturally occurring habitats within the survey area, thereby reducing the suitability of the habitat to support special-status plant and wildlife species. The survey area has been heavily disturbed from development and anthropogenic disturbances. As a result, undisturbed native plant communities are no longer present within the survey area.

Topography and Soils

The project site is located at an approximate elevation of 40 feet below mean sea level (msl) and generally slopes from west to east. The project site is relatively flat with no areas of significant topographic relief. Based on the NRCS USDA Web Soil Survey, the project site is underlain by the following soil units: Gilman silt loam (0 to 2 percent slopes) and Indo very fine sandy loam (refer to Figure 3-3). Surface soils within the existing roadway ROW have been mechanically disturbed from existing development and no longer provide native soils that have the potential to support special-status plant species.

Vegetation

The survey area supports land cover types that would be classified as disturbed and developed. As a result, no plant communities would be affected from project activities. Disturbed areas refer to unpaved or dirt areas that are routinely exposed to anthropogenic disturbances and typically do not support native vegetation or comprise a plant community. Surface soils within these areas are generally devoid of vegetation and have been heavily disturbed/compacted from existing land uses. Disturbed areas on-site generally encompass the vacant fields on the southwest portion of the survey area, undeveloped lots adjacent to the residential and commercial developments, and the road shoulder of Avenue 48. Developed areas generally encompass all buildings, as well as paved, impervious surfaces. Within the survey area, developed areas encompass the residential and commercial developments within the survey area, and the paved roads (e.g., Van Buren Street, Avenue 48, and Dillon Road).

Vegetation occurring within the survey area includes ornamental/landscaped plant species associated with the existing residential developments, and non-native and ruderal/weedy plant species within the disturbed areas. Plants species observed within the disturbed areas within the survey area include tumbleweed (*Salsola tragus*), prickly lettuce (*Lactuca serriola*), puncture vine (*Tribulus terrestris*), red brome (*Bromus madritensis*), horseweed (*Erigeron bonariensis*), salt cedar (*Tamarix ramosissima*), common sunflower (*Helianthus annuus*), big saltbush (*Atriplex lentiformis*), and Palmer's pigweed (*Amaranthsu palmeri*) (refer to Figure 3-4).

Wildlife Corridors and Linkages

The project site is not located within any Conservation Areas, Preserves, Cores, or Linkages identified in the CVMSHCP (refer to Figure 3-5).

3.4.2 Impact Assessment

Would the Project:

a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or indirectly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?

Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation. The CNDDB Rarefind 5 and the California Native Plant Society (CNPS) Electronic Inventory of Rare and Endangered Vascular Plants of California were

queried for reported locations of special-status plant and wildlife species as well as special-status plant communities in the Indio USGS 7.5-minute quadrangle, which encompasses the project site and survey area. The literature search identified nine special-status plant species and 14 special-status wildlife species as having potential to occur within the Indio USGS 7.5-minute quadrangle. No special-status plant communities have been recorded in the Indio USGS 7.5-minute quadrangle. Special-status plant and wildlife species were evaluated for their potential to occur within the survey area based on habitat requirements, availability and quality of suitable habitat, and known distributions. Species determined to have the potential to occur within the general vicinity of the project site are presented in Appendix B of this IS/MND.

Special-Status Plant Species

Nine special-status plant species have been recorded in the CNDDB and CNPS in the Indio USGS 7.5-minute quadrangle (refer to Appendix B). No special-status plant species were observed on-site during the habitat assessment. On-site and surrounding land uses have eliminated naturally occurring habitats within the survey area, reducing the suitability of the habitat to support special-status plant species. Surface soils within the survey area have been mechanically disturbed from existing development and no longer provide native soils that have the potential to support special-status plant species. Based on habitat requirements for specific species and the availability and quality of on-site habitats, it was determined that no special-status plant species are expected to occur within the survey area.

Special-Status Wildlife Species

Fourteen special-status wildlife species have been recorded in the CNDDB and other electronic databases in the Indio USGS 7.5-minute quadrangle (refer to Appendix B). No special-status wildlife species were observed on-site during the habitat assessment. The survey area consists of existing developed and heavily disturbed areas that have been subject to a high level of anthropogenic disturbances. These disturbances have eliminated the natural plant communities that once occurred on-site resulting in a majority of the survey area consisting of ornamental landscaped plant species associated with existing developments and heavily disturbed areas. Based on habitat requirements for specific species and the availability and quality of on-site habitats, it was determined that no special-status wildlife species are expected to occur within the survey area.

Nesting birds are protected pursuant to the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) and California Fish and Game Code (Sections 3503, 3503.3, 3511, and 3513) prohibit the take, possession, or destruction of birds, their nests or eggs). Project construction may temporarily affect the movement of migratory bird species and their breeding success. Their active nests could be directly or indirectly impacted such that nest abandonment resulting in death of eggs or young occurs. Disturbance from construction activities, such as noise, human presence, and habitat alteration due to the trimming of trees and clearing of native vegetation, could affect the nesting habits of the special-status and migratory bird species. Implementation of the avoidance and minimization measures as described in Mitigation Measure BIO-1 would ensure that impacts to migratory bird species would be less than significant.

Although it was determined that burrowing owl is presumed absent from the study area, because burrowing owls are a species that is known for its ability to move into and out of areas across seasons and years, it is recommended that a pre-construction burrowing owl clearance survey be conducted prior to any ground disturbance or vegetation removal activities to ensure that burrowing owls remain absent and impacts do not occur to any occupied burrows that may be located on or within 500 feet of the project site. Implementation of the avoidance and minimization measures as described in Mitigation Measure BIO-2 would ensure that impacts to burrowing owl would be less than significant.

Legend

- Survey Area
- GeA Gilman Silt Loam, 0 to 2% Slopes
- Is Indio Very Fine Sandy Loam

0 150 300
Feet

FIGURE 3-3

SOILS

COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE

AVENUE 48
WIDENING PROJECT

Source: Michael Baker International, 2018

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Legend

- Survey Area
- Disturbed (4.7 Acres)
- Developed (15.8 Acres)
- Currently Under Development (5.4 Acres)

0 150 300
Feet

FIGURE 3-4

VEGETATION

COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE

AVENUE 48
WIDENING PROJECT

Source: Michael Baker International, 2018

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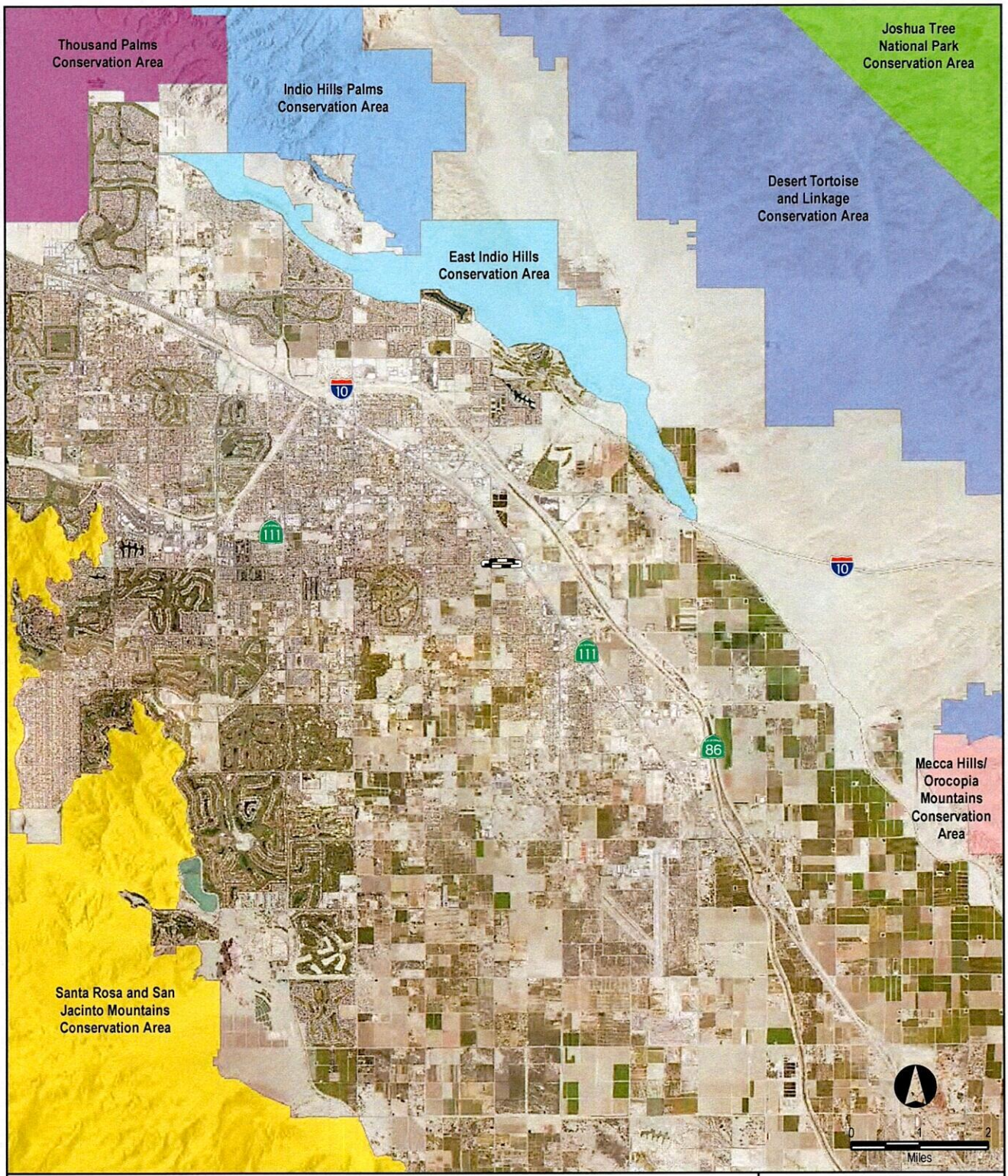

Legend

- Survey Area
- Desert Tortoise and Linkage Conservation Area
- East Indio Hills Conservation Area
- Indio Hills Palms Conservation Area
- Joshua Tree National Park Conservation Area
- Mecca Hills/Orocopia Mountains Conservation Area
- Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains Conservation Area
- Thousand Palms Conservation Area

FIGURE 3-5

CVMSHCP CONSERVATION AREAS

COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE

AVENUE 48 WIDENING PROJECT

Source: Michael Baker International, 2018

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Special-Status Plant Communities

According to the CNDDB, no special-status plant communities have been reported in the Indio USGS 7.5-minute quadrangle. Based on the results of the field survey, no native plant communities or special-status plant communities occur within the survey area. The survey area supports land cover types that would be classified as disturbed and developed. Vegetation occurring within the survey area includes ornamental/landscaped plant species associated with the existing residential developments, and non-native and ruderal/weedy plant species within the disturbed areas.

Critical Habitat

The project site is not located within federally-designated Critical Habitat (refer to Figure 3-6, Critical Habitat). The closest designated Critical Habitat is located approximately 5.7 miles southwest of the project site for Peninsular bighorn sheep (*Ovis canadensis nelsoni*).

b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?

No Impact. No jurisdictional drainages and/or wetland features were observed within the survey area during the habitat assessment. Therefore, implementation of the proposed project would not result in impacts to USACE, RWQCB, or CDFW jurisdictional areas, including riparian habitat or other sensitive natural communities, and regulatory approvals would not be required. No impact would occur and no mitigation is required.

c) Have a substantial adverse effect on state or federally protected wetlands (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?

No Impact. No state or federally-protected wetlands occur within the project area. Therefore, the proposed project would not impact such features and no mitigation is required.

d) 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?

No Impact. The survey area is bordered by existing development and undeveloped (vacant) parcels which have removed natural plant communities from the surrounding area. As a result, implementation of the proposed project would not disrupt or have any adverse effects on any migratory corridors or linkages in the surrounding area. Furthermore, the project site is not located within any Conservation Areas, Preserves, Cores, or Linkages identified in the CVMSHCP (refer to Figure 3-5). Therefore, there would be no impacts associated with the movement of wildlife species, migratory corridors, or native wildlife nursery sites, and no mitigation is required.

e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?

No Impact. The proposed project would not conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources; therefore, no mitigation is required in this regard.