

PM Conformity Hot Spot Analysis – Project Summary for Interagency Consultation

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|---|--|--|----------------------------------|--------------|
| <b>RTIP ID#</b> <i>(required)</i> RIV170901   |  |  |                                  |              |
| <b>TCWG Consideration Date</b> September 28, 2021   |  |  |                                  |              |
| <p><b>Project Description</b> <i>(clearly describe project)</i><br/>                 The Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC), in cooperation with the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), is proposing to construct new lanes along Interstate 15 (I-15) between Post Mile (PM) 21.2 and PM 38.1 in Riverside County, California. The primary component of the I-15 Express Lanes Project Southern Extension Project (Project) would be the addition of two tolled express lanes in both the northbound and southbound directions within the median of I-15 from State Route 74 (SR-74) (Central Avenue) (PM 22.3) in the City of Lake Elsinore, through the unincorporated Riverside County community of Temescal Valley, to El Cerrito Road (PM 38.1) in the City of Corona, for a distance of approximately 15.8 miles. The proposed Project would also add a southbound auxiliary lane between both the Main Street (PM 21.2) Off-Ramp and SR-74 (Central Avenue) On-Ramp (approximately 0.75 mile), and the SR-74 (Central Avenue) Off-Ramp and Nichols Road On-Ramp (PM 23.9) (approximately one mile). Along with the lane additions, which would extend from PM 21.2 to 38.1, the proposed Project would include widening of up to 15 bridges; potential construction of noise barriers, retaining walls, and drainage systems; and implementation of electronic toll collection equipment and signs. Associated improvements for the toll lanes, including advance signage and transition striping, would extend approximately two miles from each end of the express lane limits to PM 20.3 in the south and PM 40.1 in the north. The proposed lane additions and supporting infrastructure are expected to be constructed primarily within the existing state right of way.</p> |  |  |                                  |              |
| <p><b>Type of Project</b> <i>(use Table 1 on instruction sheet)</i><br/>                 Change to existing state highway</p>   |  |  |                                  |              |
| <b>County</b><br>Riverside  | <p><b>Narrative Location/Route &amp; Postmiles</b> I-15 (PM 21.2 to 38.1)<br/><br/> <b>Caltrans Projects – EA#</b> 08-0J0820</p> |  |                                  |              |
| <b>Lead Agency:</b> RCTC  |  |  |                                  |              |
| <b>Contact Person</b><br>Stephanie Blanco   | <b>Phone#</b><br>951-809-1617  | <b>Fax#</b>                                      | <b>Email</b><br>SBlanco@RCTC.org |              |
| <p><b>Hot Spot Pollutant of Concern</b> <i>(check one or both)</i>    <b>PM<sub>2.5</sub></b> X    <b>PM<sub>10</sub></b> X</p>   |  |  |                                  |              |
| <b>Federal Action for which Project-Level PM Conformity is Needed</b> <i>(check appropriate box)</i>  |  |  |                                  |              |
| <b>Categorical Exclusion (NEPA)</b>   | X <b>EA or Draft EIS</b>   | <b>FONSI or Final EIS</b>                        | <b>PS&amp;E or Construction</b>  | <b>Other</b> |
| <b>Scheduled Date of Federal Action:</b> 6/2024   |  |  |                                  |              |
| <b>NEPA Assignment – Project Type</b> <i>(check appropriate box)</i>  |  |  |                                  |              |
| <b>Exempt</b>   | <b>Section 326 – Categorical Exemption</b>   | X <b>Section 327 – Non-Categorical Exemption</b> |                                  |              |
| <b>Current Programming Dates</b> <i>(as appropriate)</i>  |  |  |                                  |              |
|   | <b>PE/Environmental</b>  | <b>ENG</b>                                       | <b>ROW</b>                       | <b>CON</b>   |
| <b>Start</b>  | 5/2019   | 6/2024   | 6/2024                           | 1/2025       |
| <b>End</b>  | 6/2024   | 12/2026  | 12/2024                          | 12/2027      |

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| <p><b>Project Purpose and Need (Summary):</b> <i>(attach additional sheets as necessary)</i></p> <p><b>Purpose</b></p> <p>The purpose of the proposed Project is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve and manage traffic operations, congestion, and travel times along the corridor</li> <li>• Expand travel mode choice along the corridor</li> <li>• Provide an option for travel time reliability</li> <li>• Provide a cost-effective mobility solution</li> <li>• Expand and maintain compatibility with the express lane network in the region</li> </ul> <p><b>Need</b></p> <p>Existing traffic volumes often exceed current highway capacity along several segments of I-15 between SR-74 (Central Avenue) and El Cerrito Road. Due to forecasted population growth and the continued development to support the projected growth in the region, the I-15 corridor is expected to continue to experience increased congestion and longer commute times that are projected to negatively affect traffic operations along the freeway mainline.</p> |
| <p><b>Surrounding Land Use/Traffic Generators</b> <i>(especially effect on diesel traffic)</i></p> <p>The land uses located along the Project corridor include residences, commercial developments, industrial uses, and open space. The majority of the sensitive receptors within or adjacent to the Project area are residential, park, church, and school uses.</p>   |
| <p><b>Opening Year: Build and No Build LOS, AADT, % and # Trucks, Truck AADT of Proposed Facility</b><br/><u>I-15</u></p> <p>2030 No Build: ADT= 251,500, Truck ADT= 24,020 (9.6%), Level of Service (LOS) F<br/>2030 Build: ADT= 258,200, Truck ADT= 24,020 (9.3%), LOS F</p>  |
| <p><b>RTP Horizon Year / Design Year: Build and No Build LOS, AADT, % and # Trucks, Truck AADT of Proposed Facility</b><br/><u>I-15</u></p> <p>2050 No Build: ADT= 314,500, Truck ADT= 30,520 (9.7%), LOS F<br/>2050 Build: ADT= 348,200, Truck ADT= 30,520 (8.8%), LOS F</p>   |
| <p><b>Opening Year: If facility is an interchange(s) or intersection(s), Build and No Build cross-street AADT, % and # trucks, truck AADT</b><br/>N/A</p> <p><b>RTP Horizon Year / Design Year: If facility is an interchange (s) or intersection(s), Build and No Build cross-street AADT, % and # trucks, truck AADT</b><br/>N/A</p>  |
| <p><b>Describe potential traffic redistribution effects of congestion relief</b> <i>(impact on other facilities)</i></p> <p>See attached analysis.</p>  |
| <p><b>Comments/Explanation/Details</b> <i>(attach additional sheets as necessary)</i></p> <p>See attached analysis.</p>   |

## PM<sub>2.5</sub>/PM<sub>10</sub> Hot-Spot Analysis

The proposed Project is within a nonattainment area for federal standards for particulate matter less than 2.5 microns in diameter (PM<sub>2.5</sub>) and within an attainment/maintenance area for the federal standards for particulate matter less than 10 microns in diameter (PM<sub>10</sub>). Therefore, per 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 93, hot-spot analyses are required for conformity purposes. However, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency does not require hot-spot analyses—qualitative or quantitative—for projects that are not listed in Section 93.123(b)(1) as an air quality concern.

According to 40 CFR Part 93.123(b)(1), the following are Projects of Air Quality Concern (POAQC):

- i. New highway projects that have a significant number of diesel vehicles, and expanded highway projects that have a significant increase in the number of diesel vehicles;
- ii. Projects affecting intersections that are at Level-of-Service D, E, or F with a significant number of diesel vehicles, or those that will change to Level-of-Service D, E, or F because of increased traffic volumes from a significant number of diesel vehicles related to the project;
- iii. New bus and rail terminals and transfer points that have a significant number of diesel vehicles congregating at a single location;
- iv. Expanded bus and rail terminals and transfer points that significantly increase the number of diesel vehicles congregating at a single location; and
- v. Projects in or affecting locations, areas, or categories of sites which are identified in the PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub> applicable implementation plan or implementation plan submission, as appropriate, as sites of violation or possible violation.

The Project does not qualify as a POAQC because of the following reasons:

- i) The build alternative proposed as part of the Project would expand I-15 through the addition of express lanes and auxiliary lanes. Tables 1 and 2 list the average daily traffic (ADT) and truck ADT volumes along the highway segments within the Project area for the opening year (2030) and horizon year (2050) conditions, respectively. These tables also compare the ADT and Truck ADT volumes associated with the build alternative to the No-Build conditions. As shown in Tables 1 and 2, the Project would increase the total ADT by up to 17,900 vehicles in 2030 and by up to 66,600 vehicles in 2050. The increase in ADT is anticipated to be a result of passenger car demand for this corridor. It is anticipated that the extension of the existing express lanes in the median of the I-15 corridor would not result in a significant increase in truck trips because heavy trucks are limited to the two outer lanes and would be restricted from utilizing the proposed express lanes. Peak period operational improvements of the GP lanes are also not anticipated to draw additional truck traffic as truck travel times are generally less sensitive to peak period travel timeframes. Additionally, generally trucks are already utilizing the I-15 corridor as a primary regional route due to a lack of viable alternative haul routes parallel to the I-15 corridor. Therefore, as illustrated in Tables 1 and 2, the expanded highway would not significantly increase in the number of diesel vehicles.
- ii) As discussed above, the proposed Project would not significantly increase the number of diesel vehicles operating within the Project study area. In addition, the mainline project will not affect local street intersections. Therefore, the proposed Project would not affect intersections that are at LOS D, E, or F with a significant number of diesel vehicles.
- iii) The proposed build alternative does not include the construction of a new bus or rail terminal.
- iv) The proposed build alternative does not expand an existing bus or rail terminal.

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- v) The proposed build alternative is not in or affecting locations, areas, or categories of sites that are identified in the  $PM_{2.5}$  and  $PM_{10}$  applicable implementation plan or implementation plan submission, as appropriate, as sites of violation or possible violation.

Therefore, the proposed Project meets the Clean Air Act requirements and 40 CFR 93.116 without any explicit hot-spot analysis and would not create a new, or worsen an existing,  $PM_{2.5}$  and  $PM_{10}$  violation.

**Table 1. 2030 Traffic Volumes**

| I-15 Freeway Segment                       | No-Build |           |         | Build   |           |         | Project Increase |           |                      |
|--|----------|-----------|---------|---------|-----------|---------|------------------|-----------|----------------------|
|  | ADT      | Truck ADT | Truck % | ADT     | Truck ADT | Truck % | ADT              | Truck ADT | % Increase in Trucks |
| South of Main Street                       | 173,700  | 16,230    | 9.3%    | 185,200 | 16,230    | 8.8%    | 11,500           | 0         | 0%                   |
| Main Street to SR-74 (Central Avenue)      | 166,000  | 15,440    | 9.3%    | 178,900 | 15,440    | 8.6%    | 12,900           | 0         | 0%                   |
| SR-74 (Central Avenue) to Nichols Road     | 149,100  | 13,740    | 9.2%    | 163,200 | 13,740    | 8.4%    | 14,100           | 0         | 0%                   |
| Nichols Road to Lake Street                | 147,900  | 13,610    | 9.2%    | 161,700 | 13,610    | 8.4%    | 13,800           | 0         | 0%                   |
| Lake Street to Horsethief Canyon           | 155,900  | 14,460    | 9.3%    | 170,400 | 14,460    | 8.5%    | 14,500           | 0         | 0%                   |
| Horsethief Canyon to Indian Truck Trail    | 155,900  | 14,460    | 9.3%    | 170,400 | 14,460    | 8.5%    | 14,500           | 0         | 0%                   |
| Indian Truck Trail to Temescal Canyon Road | 158,700  | 14,650    | 9.2%    | 174,200 | 14,650    | 8.4%    | 15,500           | 0         | 0%                   |
| Temescal Canyon Road to Weirick Road       | 161,000  | 14,750    | 9.2%    | 176,500 | 14,750    | 8.4%    | 15,500           | 0         | 0%                   |
| Weirick Road to Cajalco Road               | 185,000  | 17,190    | 9.3%    | 199,500 | 17,190    | 8.6%    | 14,500           | 0         | 0%                   |
| Cajalco Road to El Cerrito Road            | 205,000  | 19,290    | 9.4%    | 222,900 | 19,290    | 8.7%    | 17,900           | 0         | 0%                   |
| El Cerrito Road to Ontario Avenue          | 214,200  | 20,340    | 9.5%    | 229,400 | 20,340    | 8.9%    | 15,200           | 0         | 0%                   |
| Ontario Avenue to Magnolia Avenue          | 230,500  | 22,000    | 9.5%    | 239,700 | 22,000    | 9.2%    | 9,200            | 0         | 0%                   |
| Magnolia Avenue to SR-91                   | 251,500  | 24,020    | 9.6%    | 258,200 | 24,020    | 9.3%    | 6,700            | 0         | 0%                   |

**Table 2. 2050 Traffic Volumes**

| I-15 Freeway Segment                       | No-Build |           |         | Build   |           |         | Project Increase |           |                      |
|--|----------|-----------|---------|---------|-----------|---------|------------------|-----------|----------------------|
|  | ADT      | Truck ADT | Truck % | ADT     | Truck ADT | Truck % | ADT              | Truck ADT | % Increase in Trucks |
| South of Main Street                       | 178,700  | 17,270    | 9.7%    | 225,300 | 17,270    | 7.7%    | 46,600           | 0         | 0%                   |
| Main Street to SR-74 (Central Avenue)      | 175,900  | 16,940    | 9.6%    | 227,100 | 16,940    | 7.5%    | 51,200           | 0         | 0%                   |
| SR-74 (Central Avenue) to Nichols Road     | 158,400  | 15,060    | 9.5%    | 211,000 | 15,060    | 7.1%    | 52,600           | 0         | 0%                   |
| Nichols Road to Lake Street                | 159,000  | 15,150    | 9.5%    | 216,800 | 15,150    | 7.0%    | 57,800           | 0         | 0%                   |
| Lake Street to Horsethief Canyon           | 167,700  | 16,080    | 9.6%    | 230,400 | 16,080    | 7.0%    | 62,700           | 0         | 0%                   |
| Horsethief Canyon to Indian Truck Trail    | 171,500  | 16,310    | 9.5%    | 231,900 | 16,310    | 7.0%    | 60,400           | 0         | 0%                   |
| Indian Truck Trail to Temescal Canyon Road | 176,600  | 16,720    | 9.5%    | 237,700 | 16,720    | 7.0%    | 61,100           | 0         | 0%                   |
| Temescal Canyon Road to Weirick Road       | 180,700  | 17,090    | 9.5%    | 242,800 | 17,090    | 7.0%    | 62,100           | 0         | 0%                   |
| Weirick Road to Cajalco Road               | 209,300  | 20,030    | 9.6%    | 275,900 | 20,030    | 7.3%    | 66,600           | 0         | 0%                   |
| Cajalco Road to El Cerrito Road            | 264,900  | 25,540    | 9.6%    | 330,700 | 25,540    | 7.7%    | 65,800           | 0         | 0%                   |
| El Cerrito Road to Ontario Avenue          | 280,600  | 27,030    | 9.6%    | 334,400 | 27,030    | 8.1%    | 53,800           | 0         | 0%                   |
| Ontario Avenue to Magnolia Avenue          | 296,400  | 28,610    | 9.7%    | 338,100 | 28,610    | 8.5%    | 41,700           | 0         | 0%                   |
| Magnolia Avenue to SR-91                   | 314,500  | 30,520    | 9.7%    | 348,200 | 30,520    | 8.8%    | 33,700           | 0         | 0%                   |