

EXHIBIT A

TO: SANTA BARBARA COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS

FROM: MICHAEL POWERS, DEPUTY DIRECTOR

DATE: September 10, 2008

SUBJECT: CEQA-Required Findings and Statement of Overriding Considerations for the 2008 Santa Barbara County Regional Transportation Plan; State Clearinghouse No. 2004081136

I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed project by the Santa Barbara County Association of Governments (SBCAG) is the 2008 Santa Barbara County Regional Transportation Plan Update (2008 RTP Update). The 2008 RTP Update covers the entire area of Santa Barbara County and includes the cities of Santa Barbara, Carpinteria, Goleta, Lompoc, Buellton, Santa Maria, Solvang, and Guadalupe as well as the unincorporated communities of the County. The original RTP was adopted by SBCAG in 1975. This 2008 update reflects changes in legislative requirements, local land use policies, and resource constraints. The plan is organized into six chapters, including: an Introduction and Transportation System Description; a Needs and Issues Assessment; a Policy Element; an Action Element; a Financial Element; and a Performance Element. Of these six chapters of the RTP, the Policy Element and the Action Element are the two that include provisions with the potential to create physical changes to the environment.

The proposed 2008 RTP Update alternatives were selected for review in the EIR because of their potential to avoid or substantially lessen project impacts, or because they were required under CEQA Guidelines (e.g., the No Project alternative). The project and alternatives are described in more detail in the 2008 Santa Barbara County Regional Transportation Plan Draft EIR and Appendices thereto.

Three alternatives are considered for the proposed 2008 RTP Update: a Program Project Alternative, which includes only currently funded improvements; the Modified Project Alternative, which eliminates individual improvements with unavoidable impacts; and the CEQA-required No Project Alternative, in which no new transportation system improvements would be constructed. The No Project Alternative is considered the environmentally superior alternative overall as it would entail the fewest new roadway projects. Among the remaining alternatives, both the Program Project alternative and the Modified Project alternative would reduce impacts as compared to the proposed project in five issue areas. The Program Project alternative would have less overall impact than the Modified Project alternative in most areas because it involves fewer overall capital improvement projects.

II. THE RECORD

For the purposes of CEQA and the Findings IV-V, the record of the Santa Barbara County Association of Governments (SBCAG) relating to the plan includes:

1. The 2008 Santa Barbara County Regional Transportation Plan Draft EIR (July 2008) and Responses to Comments (September 2008).
2. The 2008 Santa Barbara County Regional Transportation Plan document.
3. Matters of common knowledge to SBCAG which it considers, such as:
 - a. The Santa Barbara County Comprehensive Plan, including the land use maps and elements thereof;
 - b. The text of the Land Use Element;
 - c. The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the CEQA Guidelines.
 - d. The Santa Barbara County Air Pollution Control District's Clean Air Plan;
 - e. Other formally adopted County, State and Federal regulations, statutes, policies, and ordinances;
 - f. Additional documents referenced in the Draft EIR for the 2008 Santa Barbara County Regional Transportation Plan Update.

III. CERTIFICATION OF THE FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

The Santa Barbara County Association of Governments (SBCAG) recommends to certify the following with respect to the 2008 Santa Barbara County Regional Transportation Plan Update (2008 RTP Update) Final EIR:

- A. SBCAG has reviewed and considered the 2008 RTP Update Final EIR.
- B. The Final Environmental Impact Report for the 2008 Santa Barbara County Regional Transportation Plan Update has been completed in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act.
- C. The Final Environmental Impact Report, and all related public comments and responses have been presented to SBCAG, and they have reviewed and considered the information contained in the Final Environmental Impact Report prior to approving the 2008 RTP Update.
- D. The 2008 RTP Update Final EIR reflects the independent judgment of SBCAG, acting as the lead agency for the project.

IV. FINDINGS FOR IMPACTS IDENTIFIED AS INSIGNIFICANT (Class III)

The findings below are for Class III impacts. Class III impacts are impacts that are adverse, but not significant.

A. Land Use (Class III)

1. **Impact LU-3.** Although some RTP projects could redistribute residential and commercial development, RTP projects that are included in local General Plans would not significantly induce growth beyond that envisioned in those plans. The primary purpose of proposed improvements is to accommodate projected growth. This is a Class III, *less than significant*, impact.
 - a. **Mitigation** – No mitigation is required.
 - b. **Findings** – In all cases for the RTP, roadway improvements are anticipated by the general plans of the applicable local jurisdictions. These general plans have previously undergone

environmental review, and have subsequently been approved to coordinate roadway construction with potential land development. As such, RTP roadway extensions are not inherently growth-inducing.

c. Supportive Evidence - Please refer to page 4.2-6 of the Draft EIR.

2. Impact LU-5. The RTP includes policies that guide proposed development under the plan. Proposed RTP policies are consistent with other regional and local transportation policies. Impacts would be Class III, *less than significant*.

a. Mitigation – No mitigation is required.

b. Findings – The project is considered consistent with applicable plans and policies.

c. Supportive Evidence - Please refer to pages 4.2-8 through 4.2-9 of the Draft EIR.

B. Air Quality (Class III)

1. Impact AQ-2. Implementation of the 2008 RTP would reduce emissions of ozone precursors as compared to implementation of the no project scenario. Although implementation of the 2008 RTP would increase PM₁₀ emissions as compared to existing levels, emissions would be less than the no project scenario. Therefore, long-term operational impacts would be Class III, *less than significant*.

a. Mitigation – No mitigation is required.

b. Findings – The operational impacts of the RTP on the attainment of state and federal air quality standards are less than significant.

c. Supportive Evidence – Please refer to pages 4.3-13 through 4.3-16 of the Final EIR Comments, Responses and Revisions.

2. Impact AQ-3. The proposed regional transportation projects included in the RTP would have the potential to add diesel fueled vehicles, which would result in the release of increased toxics into the air. However, the release of such toxics associated with RTP project would be below the levels forecasted by the 2007 CAP. Therefore, impacts would be Class III, *less than significant*.

a. Mitigation – No mitigation is required.

b. Findings – The 2008 RTP emission forecasts are less than the 2020 forecasts documented in the 2007 CAP.

c. Supportive Evidence – Please refer to page 4.3-16 of the Final EIR Comments, Responses and Revisions.

3. Impact AQ-4. Re-entrained dust has the potential for increasing the PM₁₀ amounts in Santa Barbara County. The increase in growth expected through the RTP lifespan would likely result in additional vehicles adding to the PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} levels in the area. With implementation of Plan Santa Barbara County control measures to reduce such emissions, impacts would be Class III, *less than significant*.

a. Mitigation – No mitigation is required.

b. Findings – With implementation of planned Santa Barbara County control measures to reduce emissions of PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}, impacts would be less than significant.

c. **Supportive Evidence** – Please refer to pages 4.3-17 through 4.3-19 of the Final EIR Comments, Responses and Revisions.

4. **Impact AQ-5.** The proposed RTP forecast horizon is not consistent with the 2007 CAP. However, since the RTP and CAP socio-economic, vehicle activity growth assumptions and associated emissions estimates are identical, and the RTP implements the on-road mobile source emission control strategy of the CAP, impacts would be Class III, *less than significant*.

a. **Mitigation** – No mitigation is required.

b. **Findings** – The underlying socio-economic and vehicle activity growth assumptions between the 2007 CAP and 2008 RTP are identical. Therefore, the ozone precursor emission estimates in the 2008 RTP are consistent with those projected in the 2007 CAP. The 2008 RTP includes roadway and intersection improvements which reduce existing and future congestion, thereby reducing emissions. Additionally, because the 2008 RTP includes policies and projects which promote the implementation of the 2007 CAP TCMs, the 2008 RTP is considered to be consistent with the 2007 CAP.

c. **Supportive Evidence** – Please refer to pages 4.3-19 through 4.3-24 of the Final EIR Comments, Responses and Revisions.

C. Risk of Upset (Class III)

1. **Impact RU-2.** Roadway construction could involve the use or exposure of hazardous materials. Impacts would be adverse, but *less than significant* (Class III).

a. **Mitigation** – If standard state and local construction site requirements are followed, no mitigation measures would be required.

b. **Findings** – All transport and use of hazardous materials would be subject to myriad federal, state, and local regulations. Potential impacts are considered adverse but less than significant if standard operating procedures are followed at a construction site.

c. **Supportive Evidence** - Please refer to page 4.10-4 of the Draft EIR.

D. Biological Resources (Class III)

1. **Impact B-1.** Construction activity associated with some transportation projects may temporarily disturb riparian habitats and other biological resources. However, compliance with existing regulations pertaining to construction activities would be expected to reduce this impact to a *less than significant* (Class III) level.

a. **Mitigation** – For all projects with potential construction-related impacts, the lead agency should investigate the applicability of various federal, state, and local permit requirements and obtain all required permits prior to construction. Additional mitigation beyond compliance with the requirements of existing regulations pertaining to biological resources is not required.

b. **Findings** – Compliance with existing construction regulations would reduce construction impacts to a level considered less than significant.

c. **Supporting Evidence** – Please refer to pages 4.11-10 through 4.11-11 of the Draft EIR.

E. Energy (Class III)

1. **Impact E-1.** Energy consuming equipment and processes which will be used during construction and maintenance of RTP projects would require the use of energy. However, it is not anticipated that energy would be consumed in a wasteful or unnecessary manner. Therefore, such impacts would be Class III, *less than significant*.
 - a. **Mitigation** – Although RTP project construction and maintenance is not expected to involve the wasteful or unnecessary consumption of energy, the following mitigation measures are recommended to reduce energy consumption to the maximum degree feasible:
 - E-1(a)** Use alternatively fueled construction equipment, where feasible, such as natural gas (CNG), liquefied natural gas (LNG), propane, or biodiesel.
 - E-1(b)** Recycled construction materials shall be used whenever feasible.
 - E-1(c)** Waste materials from construction or demolition shall be recycled whenever feasible. Materials that can be recycled include but are not limited to asphalt, concrete, brick, lumber, gypsum wallboard (drywall), cardboard and other packaging, roofing material, ceramic tile, carpeting, plastic pipe and steel. Asphalt removed from roads and paved structures shall be recycled.
 - b. **Findings** – Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation. Implementation of the above measures would further reduce energy consumption.
 - c. **Supportive Evidence** – Please refer to pages 4.12-2 through 4.12-3 of the Draft EIR and pages 5 and 6 of the Final EIR Comments, Responses and Revisions.
2. **Impact E-2.** The operation of some RTP projects may increase energy demand. However, in a general sense, RTP implementation would increase the efficiency of the County’s transportation system and increase opportunities to use alternative transportation modes that reduce energy consumption. As such, this impact would be Class III, *less than significant*.
 - a. **Mitigation** – The RTP proposes many projects that will provide greater opportunity for county residents and visitors to use alternatives to single occupancy vehicle trips for transportation and reduce the demand for energy used in transportation. The proposed RTP also includes policies that encourage land use planning that encourages walking, biking, and transit use. In addition, the following mitigation measures are recommended to reduce potential impacts to energy:
 - E-2(a)** New facilities shall be designed with energy-efficient equipment and passive solar design (e.g., orientation of building to maximize natural heating and cooling, solar water heating, use of daylighting, and placement of trees to aid passive cooling, protection from prevailing winds, and maximum year-round solar access), provided that additional capital costs are offset by estimated energy savings during the first 5 years of operation. Other improvements with longer payback periods should be considered.
 - E-2(b)** All lighting shall be energy efficient and designed to use the least amount of energy to serve the purpose of the lighting. Lighting shall utilize solar energy wherever feasible.
 - E-2(c)** New landscaping design and irrigation systems shall be water efficient.

- b. **Findings** – Impacts would be less than significant without mitigation. Implementation of the above measures would further reduce countywide energy consumption.
 - c. **Supportive Evidence** – Please refer to pages 4.12-3 through 4.12-4 of the Draft EIR and pages 6 and 7 of the Final EIR Comments, Responses and Revisions.
3. **Impact E-3.** RTP projects may have an impact on the transportation of energy resources within the county. This impact is considered Class III, *less than significant*.
- a. **Mitigation** – No mitigation is required.
 - b. **Findings** – Impacts would be less than significant.
 - c. **Supporting Evidence** – Please refer to page 4.12-4 of the Draft EIR.

F. Environmental Justice (Class III)

1. **Impact EJ-1.** Implementation of the 2008 RTP may cause adverse effects on a minority or low-income population; however, these potential impacts are not disproportionately high as per E.O. 12898 regarding environmental justice. Such impacts are Class III, *less than significant*.
- a. **Mitigation** – No mitigation is required.
 - b. **Findings** – The programmed and planned program of projects proposed in the Regional Transportation Plan does not have a disproportionate adverse impact on these communities.
 - c. **Supporting Evidence** – Please refer to pages 4.13-4 through 4.13-5 of the Draft EIR

V. FINDINGS FOR IMPACTS IDENTIFIED AS SIGNIFICANT BUT MITIGABLE (Class II)

Class II impacts are those which are significant, but they can be mitigated to insignificance by implementation of certain mitigation measures.

G. Transportation and Circulation (Class II)

1. **Impact T-1.** Proposed roadway projects under the RTP update would not fully address potential traffic congestion on existing roadways. This is a Class II, *significant but mitigable*, impact.

a. **Mitigation** –

T-1 The Regional Transportation Plan shall be amended to identify deficient (LOS E or worse) state highways and intersections and the need for level of service improvements at the following locations:

State Highway Segments *	Intersections *
U.S. 101 NB <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Milpas St. to Route 217/Patterson • Hollister Ave. to Las Cruces, Rte. 1 • Clark Ave. to Santa Maria Way 	Blosser Road / Main Street-SR 166 (0.99 / LOS E) Miller Street / Main Street-SR 166 (1.02 / LOS F) Central Avenue / H Street-SR 1 (1.16 / LOS F) Hollister Avenue / Storke Road (0.95 / LOS E) Fairview Avenue / U.S. 101 NB Ramps (0.94 / LOS E) Hollister Avenue / Patterson Road (0.94 / LOS E)
U.S. 101 SB <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sheffield Dr. to San Ysidro Rd. • Carrillo St. to Route 217/Patterson 	Fairview Avenue / Calle Real (0.98 / LOS E) Mission Street / U.S. 101 SB Ramps (1.19 / LOS F) Castillo Street / Montecito Street (0.92 / LOS E) Castillo Street / U.S. 101 NB On-Haley Street (1.01 / LOS F)

<p><i>State Route 1</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Las Cruces Rd. to Rte. 246 • Rte. 135 to SB-SLO County line <p><i>State Route 154</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North U.S. 101 to Stagecoach Rd. • San Marcos Pass Summit to Jct. Rte. 192 <p><i>State Route 166</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State Rte. 1 to Blosser Rd. <p><i>State Route 246</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • East Rte. 1 to Domingos Rd. 	<p>Castillo Street / U.S. 101 SB Ramps (0.92 / LOS E) Garden Street / U.S. 101 NB Ramps (0.97 / LOS E)</p>
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* These facilities are forecast to operate at LOS E or worse under the 2030 Planned scenario.

T-2 Because each of the locations listed in mitigation measure [T-1] is located on the adopted CMP system for the region, the jurisdiction in which a forecasted impacted area is located shall be responsible for monitoring the level of service at that location and preparing a Deficiency Plan pursuant to the adopted Congestion Management Program. As roadway improvements and other transportation improvements are identified, the jurisdiction shall be responsible for submitting these projects for inclusion in future Regional Transportation Plan updates.

- b. Findings** – Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project which mitigate or avoid the significant effects on the environment to a level of insignificance.
- c. Supportive Evidence** – Please refer to pages 4.1-16 through 4.16-28 of the Draft EIR.

H. Land Use (Class II)

1. Impact LU-1. Some RTP projects may create land use conflicts with existing sensitive land uses, including residential development. This is a Class II, *significant but mitigable*, impact.

a. Mitigation –

LU-1(a) Setbacks, fences, or other appropriate means shall be used to separate transportation facilities with the potential to generate land use conflicts from adjacent sensitive land uses. Roadways shall be designed to minimize potential impacts to pedestrians and bicyclists, particularly those living in adjacent residential areas, or attending nearby schools. Adequate striping, signs and signalization shall be installed to slow traffic where appropriate, and to reduce safety and noise impacts. The jurisdiction through which the proposed impacting roadway traverses would be responsible for implementing this measure, which may in part be based on project-specific noise and safety studies required by the local agency.

LU-1(b) Street lighting, where necessary, shall be minimized to the extent possible in areas adjacent to sensitive land uses. Street lights shall be shielded, and oriented away from residential development. No street light shall exceed the minimum height requirement as dictated by Caltrans or local ordinance, as applicable.

- b. **Findings** – Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project which mitigate or avoid the significant effects on the environment to a level of insignificance and those changes or alterations are within the responsibility and jurisdiction of another public agency and have been, or can and should be, adopted by that other agency.
 - c. **Supportive Evidence** – Please refer to pages 4.2-4 through 4.2-5 of the Draft EIR.
2. **Impact LU-2.** Some RTP projects could displace or disrupt existing homes and businesses. This is a Class II, *significant but mitigable*, impact.
- a. **Mitigation** –
 - LU-2(a) The local jurisdiction in which an RTP project with the potential to displace residences or businesses (as indicated in Table 4.2-1) is located shall assure that project-specific environmental reviews consider alternative alignments that avoid or minimize impacts to nearby residences and businesses.
 - LU-2(b) Where project-specific reviews identify displacement or relocation impacts that are unavoidable, the local jurisdiction in which the project is located shall ensure that all applicable local, state, and federal relocation programs are used to assist eligible persons to relocate. In addition, the local jurisdiction shall review the proposed construction schedules to ensure that adequate time is provided to allow affected businesses to find and relocate to other sites.
 - LU-2(c) For all transportation projects that could result in temporary lane closures or access blockage during construction, a temporary access plan shall be implemented to ensure continued access to affected cyclists, businesses, and homes. Appropriate signs and safe access shall be guaranteed during project construction to ensure that businesses remain open.
 - b. **Findings** – Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project which mitigate or avoid the significant effects on the environment to a level of insignificance and those changes or alterations are within the responsibility and jurisdiction of another public agency and have been, or can and should be, adopted by that other agency.
 - c. **Supportive Evidence** – Please refer to pages 4.2-5 through 4.2-6 of the Draft EIR.

I. Air Quality (Class II)

- 1. **Impact AQ-1.** Development under the 2008 RTP would have the potential to result in construction related air quality impacts. These impacts would have an adverse effect on air pollution in Santa Barbara County. However, with the incorporation of mitigation measures, impacts would be *Class II, significant but mitigable*.
 - a. **Mitigation** –
 - AQ-1(a) The local jurisdiction in which a particular RTP project is located shall ensure that Santa Barbara County APCD’s standard dust control

measures are implemented. These measures are included in the Appendix. The measures shall be noted on all construction plans and the local jurisdiction shall perform periodic site inspections.

AQ-1(b) The local jurisdiction in which a particular RTP project is located shall ensure that any haul trucks associated with the project are covered during the transportation of fill material. This requirement shall be noted on all construction plans and the local jurisdiction shall perform periodic site inspections.

AQ-1(c) The jurisdiction in which a particular RTP project is located shall ensure that ground disturbance is phased to the extent possible to minimize the creation of fugitive dust. This shall be accomplished through review and approval by the local jurisdiction of the construction schedule submitted in association with the project's environmental review.

AQ-1(d) The jurisdiction in which a particular RTP project is located shall ensure that the Best Available Control Technology is implemented to reduce short-term NO_x emissions. BACT measures shall include 2 degree timing retard, high pressure fuel injectors and reformulated diesel fuel, if available. These measures shall be noted on all construction plans and the local jurisdiction shall perform periodic site inspections.

AQ-1(e) The jurisdiction in which a particular RTP project is located shall ensure that the removal of underground storage tanks is a permitted activity in accordance with SBCAPCD rules and regulations. This shall be accomplished through the submittal of SBCAPCD permits to the local jurisdiction prior to issuance of a grading permit.

- b. Findings** – Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project which mitigate or avoid the significant effects on the environment to a level of insignificance and those changes or alterations are within the responsibility and jurisdiction of another public agency and have been, or can and should be, adopted by that other agency.
- c. Supportive Evidence** – Please refer to pages 4.3-11 through 4.3-13 of the Final EIR Comments, Responses and Revisions.

J. Noise (Class II)

1. Impact N-1. Construction activity associated with road, bike, rail, and airport projects would create temporary noise level increases in discreet locations throughout the county over the life of the RTP. This is a Class II, *significant but mitigable*, impact.

a. Mitigation –

N-1(a) The local jurisdiction in which a particular RTP project is located shall ensure that, where residences or other noise sensitive uses are located within 1,600 feet of construction sites, appropriate measures shall be implemented to ensure consistency with local noise ordinance requirements relating to construction. Specific techniques may include, but are not limited to, restrictions on construction timing, use of sound

blankets on construction equipment, and the use of temporary walls and noise barriers to block and deflect noise.

N-1(b) If a particular project within 1,600 feet of sensitive receptors requires pile driving, the local jurisdiction in which this project is located shall require the use of pile drilling techniques instead, where feasible. This shall be accomplished through the placement of conditions on the project during its individual environmental review.

b. Findings – Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project which mitigate or avoid the significant effects on the environment to a level of insignificance and those changes or alterations are within the responsibility and jurisdiction of another public agency and have been, or can and should be, adopted by that other agency.

c. Supportive Evidence – Please refer to pages 4.4-6 through 4.4-7 of the Draft EIR.

2. Impact N-2. Various RTP projects could potentially expose sensitive receptors to noise in excess of normally acceptable levels. This is a Class II, *significant but mitigable*, impact.

a. Mitigation –

N-2(a) If an RTP project is located within 1,000 feet of sensitive uses, the local jurisdiction in which the project is located shall ensure that a noise survey is conducted to determine alternate alignments which allow greater distance from, or greater buffering of, noise-sensitive areas. The noise survey shall be sufficient to indicate existing and projected noise levels, to determine the amount of attenuation needed to reduce potential noise impacts to such uses to an exterior noise level of 65 dBA or less. This shall be accomplished during the project's individual environmental review.

N-2(b) Various sound attenuation techniques shall be considered where new or expanded roadways are found to expose receptors to noise exceeding normally acceptable levels. The preferred methods for mitigating noise impacts will be the use of appropriate setbacks and sound attenuating building design, including retrofit of existing structures with sound attenuating building materials where feasible. In instances where use of these techniques is not feasible, the use of sound barriers (earthen berms, sound walls, or some combination of the two) will be considered. Determination of appropriate noise attenuation measures will be assessed on a case-by-case basis during a project's individual environmental review pursuant to the regulations of the applicable agency.

N-2(c) Long expanses of walls or fences should be interrupted with offsets and provided with accents to prevent monotony. Landscape pockets and pedestrian access through walls should be provided. Whenever possible, a combination of elements should be used, including solid fences, walls, and, landscaped berms.

b. Findings – Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project which mitigate or avoid the significant effects on the environment to a level of

insignificance and those changes or alterations are within the responsibility and jurisdiction of another public agency and have been, or can and should be, adopted by that other agency.

c. **Supportive Evidence** – Please refer to pages 4.4-7 through 4.4-16 of the Draft EIR.

K. Aesthetics (Class II)

1. **Impact AES-1.** The design of some of the proposed transportation projects may affect public views along designated scenic corridors, adjacent landscaping, and other highways considered to have high scenic qualities. This is a Class II, *significant but mitigable*, impact.

a. Mitigation –

AES-1(a) Where a particular RTP improvement affects adjacent landforms, the local jurisdiction in which the project is located shall ensure that recontouring provides a smooth and gradual transition between modified landforms and existing grade. This requirement can be accomplished through the placement of conditions on the project by the local jurisdiction during individual environmental review.

AES-1(b) The local jurisdiction in which a particular RTP project is located shall ensure that associated landscape materials and design enhance landform variation, provide erosion control and blend with the natural setting. This requirement can be accomplished through the placement of conditions on the project by the local jurisdiction during individual environmental review. To ensure compliance with approved landscape plans, the implementing agency shall provide a performance security equal to the value of the landscaping/irrigation installation.

AES-1(c) The local jurisdiction or lead agency of a particular RTP project shall ensure that a project in a scenic view corridor will have the minimum possible impact, consistent with project goals, upon foliage, existing landscape architecture and natural scenic views. This requirement shall be accomplished through the placement of conditions on the project design by the lead agency during the project specific environmental review and by ensuring that specific design considerations to achieve this mitigation are enacted at each stage of design by the lead agency, local jurisdictions and SBCAG personnel.

AES-1(d) Potential noise impacts arising from increased traffic volumes associated with adjacent land development shall be preferentially mitigated through the use of setbacks and the acoustical design of adjacent proposed structures. The use of sound walls, or any other architectural features that could block views from the scenic highways or other view corridors, shall be discouraged to the extent possible. Where use of sound walls is found to be necessary, walls shall incorporate offsets, accents, and landscaping to prevent monotony, as described in Mitigation Measure N-2(c).

b. **Findings** – Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project which mitigate or avoid the significant effects on the environment to a level of

insignificance and those changes or alterations are within the responsibility and jurisdiction of another public agency and have been, or can and should be, adopted by that other agency.

c. Supportive Evidence – Please refer to pages 4.5-3 through 4.5-4 of the Draft EIR.

L. Water Resources (Class II)

1. Impact W-1. Construction and maintenance of RTP projects would incrementally increase countywide water demand. Such impacts would be Class II, *significant but mitigable*.

a. Mitigation –

W-1(a) The local jurisdiction in which a particular RTP project is located shall ensure that, where economically feasible, reclaimed and/or desalinated water is used for dust suppression during construction activities. This measure shall be noted on construction plans and shall be spot checked by the local jurisdiction.

W-1(b) The local jurisdiction in which a particular RTP project is located shall ensure that low water use landscaping (i.e., drought tolerant plants and drip irrigation) is installed. When feasible, native plant species shall be used. This shall be accomplished through the placement of conditions on the project by the local jurisdiction during individual environmental review.

W-1(c) The local jurisdiction in which a particular RTP project is located shall ensure that, if feasible, landscaping associated with proposed improvements is maintained using reclaimed and/or desalinated water. This shall be accomplished through the placement of conditions on the project by the local jurisdiction during individual environmental review.

W-1(d) The local jurisdiction in which a particular RTP project is located shall ensure that porous pavement materials are utilized, where feasible, to allow for groundwater percolation. Rural bicycle trails shall be left unpaved, where appropriate. This shall be accomplished through the placement of conditions on the project by the local jurisdiction during individual environmental review.

b. Findings – Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project which mitigate or avoid the significant effects on the environment to a level of insignificance and those changes or alterations are within the responsibility and jurisdiction of another public agency and have been, or can and should be, adopted by that other agency.

c. Supportive Evidence – Please refer to pages 4.6-4 through 4.6-5 of the Draft EIR and page 4 of the Final EIR Comments, Responses and Revisions.

2. Impact W-2. Construction of, and vehicular operations on, proposed transportation facilities could result in erosion and contaminants in runoff, which could degrade surface and ground water quality. This impact is Class II, *significant but mitigable*.

a. Mitigation –

W-2(a) The local jurisdiction in which a particular RTP project is located shall ensure that fertilizer/pesticide application plans for any new right-of-way landscaping are prepared to minimize deep percolation of contaminants. The plans shall specify the use of products that are safe for use in and around aquatic environments. This shall be accomplished through the placement of conditions on the project by the local jurisdiction during individual environmental review.

W-2(b) The local jurisdiction in which an RTP road widening or roadway extension project is located shall ensure that the improvement directs runoff into subsurface percolation basins and traps which would allow for the removal of urban pollutants, fertilizers, pesticides, and other chemicals. This shall be accomplished through the placement of conditions on the project by the local jurisdiction during individual environmental review.

W-2(c) For roadway projects that would disturb at least one acre, a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) shall be developed prior to the initiation of grading and implemented for all construction activity on the project site. The SWPPP shall include specific BMPs to control the discharge of material from the site and into the creeks and local storm drains. BMP methods may include, but would not be limited to, the use of temporary retention basins, straw bales, sand bagging, mulching, erosion control blankets and soil stabilizers.

b. Findings – Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project which mitigate or avoid the significant effects on the environment to a level of insignificance and those changes or alterations are within the responsibility and jurisdiction of another public agency and have been, or can and should be, adopted by that other agency.

c. Supportive Evidence – Please refer to pages 4.6-5 through 4.6-6 of the Draft EIR and page 4 of the Final EIR Comments, Responses and Revisions.

M. Geologic Processes and Flooding (Class II)

1. Impact G-1. Some projects proposed in the RTP may be located on potential unstable soils, or in areas of high liquefaction potential. This is a Class II, *significant but mitigable*, impact.

a. Mitigation –

G-1(a) In areas subject to tsunami/seiche effects, the local jurisdiction shall ensure that RTP projects involving the construction of new roadways or other structures are elevated above the 10-foot elevation by an appropriate margin. This requirement can be accomplished through the placement of conditions on the project by the local jurisdiction during individual environmental review. In addition, the local jurisdiction shall ensure that early warning systems and evacuation plans for tsunami/seiche events are developed and implemented.

G-1(b) If a particular RTP bridge, airport facility, or passenger station project is located in an area of moderate to high liquefaction potential, the local jurisdiction in which this project is located shall ensure that these structures are designed based upon appropriate geology, soils and earthquake engineering studies. Possible design measures include deep foundations, removal of liquifiable materials and dewatering. This requirement can be accomplished through the placement of conditions on the project by the local jurisdiction during individual environmental review.

G-1(c) If a particular RTP road widening or bridge project involves cut slopes over 20 feet in height or is located in areas of bedded or jointed bedrock, the local jurisdiction in which the project is located shall ensure that specific slope stabilization studies are conducted. Possible stabilization methods include buttresses, retaining walls and soldier piles. This requirement can be accomplished through the placement of conditions on the project by the local jurisdiction during individual environmental review.

G-1(d) If a particular RTP bridge, airport facility, or passenger station project is located in an area of highly expansive, collapsible or compressible soils, the local jurisdiction in which the project is located shall ensure that a specific investigation and appropriate design factors are implemented. This requirement can be accomplished through the placement of conditions on the project by the local jurisdiction during individual environmental review.

G-1(e) If a particular RTP roadway, runway or fixed facility project involving deep foundations or underground areas is located in an area of high groundwater potential, the local jurisdiction in which the project is located shall ensure that appropriate construction techniques (such as dewatering, special water proofing, and deeper foundations) are included. This requirement can be accomplished through the placement of conditions on the project by the local jurisdiction during individual environmental review.

b. Findings – Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project which mitigate or avoid the significant effects on the environment to a level of insignificance and those changes or alterations are within the responsibility and jurisdiction of another public agency and have been, or can and should be, adopted by that other agency.

c. Supportive Evidence – Please refer to pages 4.7-6 through 4.7-8 of the Draft EIR.

2. Impact G-2. Some proposed RTP projects could be subject to seismic hazards, including fault rupture and groundshaking. This is a Class II, *significant but mitigable*, impact.

a. Mitigation –

G-2(a) The local jurisdiction in which a particular RTP bridge, airport facility, or passenger station project is located shall ensure that the structure is designed and constructed to the latest geotechnical standards. In most

cases, this will necessitate site specific geologic and soils engineering investigations to exceed the code for high groundshaking zones. This can be accomplished through the placement of conditions on the project by the local jurisdiction during individual environmental review.

G-2(b) The local jurisdiction in which a particular RTP bridge, airport facility, or passenger station project is located shall ensure that these structures are placed in areas outside of fault rupture zones. If avoidance is not possible, detailed geologic and seismic studies must be conducted to locate active or potentially active fault traces. Structures shall then be placed outside of an appropriate setback distance. This requirement can be accomplished through the placement of conditions on the project by the local jurisdiction during individual environmental review.

b. Findings – Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project which mitigate or avoid the significant effects on the environment to a level of insignificance and those changes or alterations are within the responsibility and jurisdiction of another public agency and have been, or can and should be, adopted by that other agency.

c. Supportive Evidence – Please refer to pages 4.7-8 through 4.7-9 of the Draft EIR.

3. Impact G-3. Some RTP projects could be subject to high flood hazard. Impacts are Class II, *significant but mitigable*.

a. Mitigation –

G-3(a) If a particular RTP roadway, airport facility, bikeway or bridge project is located in an area with high flooding potential, the local jurisdiction in which the project is located shall ensure that the structure is elevated at least one foot above the 100 year flood zone elevation and that bank stabilization and erosion control measures are implemented along creek crossings. This requirement can be accomplished through the placement of conditions on the project by the local jurisdiction during individual environmental review.

b. Findings – Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project which mitigate or avoid the significant effects on the environment to a level of insignificance and those changes or alterations are within the responsibility and jurisdiction of another public agency and have been, or can and should be, adopted by that other agency.

c. Supportive Evidence – Please refer to pages 4.7-9 through 4.7-10 of the Draft EIR.

N. Facility Maintenance (Class II)

1. Impact FM-1. New RTP roadway and bikeway facilities would require increased maintenance. Because of uncertainties about the adequacy of maintenance staffing and equipment, this impact is Class II, *significant but mitigable*.

a. Mitigation –

FM-1(a) The local jurisdiction or airport district in which a particular RTP project is located shall ensure that adequate funds are budgeted to maintain the

proposed transportation facility as well as existing facilities. This can be accomplished during the project's individual environmental review phase, at which time an assessment of the facility's specific maintenance needs and budget requirements can be made.

b. Findings – Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project which mitigate or avoid the significant effects on the environment to a level of insignificance and those changes or alterations are within the responsibility and jurisdiction of another public agency and have been, or can and should be, adopted by that other agency.

c. Supportive Evidence – Please refer to pages 4.8-3 through 4.8-3 of the Draft EIR.

O. Cultural Resources (Class II)

1. Impact CR-1. Proposed development under the RTP could disturb known and previously undiscovered cultural resources. Such impacts would be Class II, *significant but mitigable*.

a. Mitigation –

CR-1(a) The local jurisdiction in which an RTP project involving earth disturbance, the installation of pole signage or lighting, or construction of permanent above ground structures or roadways is located shall ensure that the following elements are included in the RTP project's individual environmental review:

1. A map defining the Area of Potential Effects (APE) shall be prepared for RTP improvements which involve earth disturbance, the installation of pole signage or lighting, or construction of permanent above ground structures. This map will indicate the areas of primary and secondary disturbance associated with construction and operation of the facility and will help in determining whether known cultural resources are located within the impact zone.
2. A preliminary study of each project area, as defined in the APE, shall be completed to determine whether or not the project area has been studied under an earlier investigation, and to determine the impacts of the previous project.
3. If the results of the preliminary studies indicate additional studies are necessary; development of field studies and/or other documentary research shall be developed and completed (Phase I studies). Negative results would result in no additional studies for the project area.
4. Based on positive results of the Phase I studies, an evaluation of identified resources shall be completed to determine the potential eligibility/ significance of the resources (Phase II studies).
5. Phase III mitigation studies shall be coordinated with the Office of Historic Preservation, as the research design will require review and approval from the OHP. In the case of prehistoric or Native

American related resources, the Native American Heritage Commission and/or local representatives of the Native American population shall be contacted and permitted to respond to the testing/mitigation programs.

CR-1(b) If development of the proposed improvement requires the presence of an archaeological monitor, the local jurisdiction shall ensure that a certified archaeologist/paleontologist monitors the grading and/or other ground altering activities. The schedule and extent of the monitoring will depend on the grading schedule and/or extent of the ground alterations. This requirement can be accomplished through placement of conditions on the project by the local jurisdiction during individual environmental review.

CR-1(c) The local jurisdiction shall ensure that materials recovered over the course of any given improvement are adequately cleaned, labeled, and curated at a recognized repository. This requirement can be accomplished through placement of conditions on the project by the local jurisdiction during individual environmental review.

CR-1(d) Local jurisdictions shall ensure that mitigation for potential impacts to significant cultural resources includes one or more of the following:

- Realignment of the project right-of-way (avoidance; the most preferable method);
- Capping of the site and leaving it undisturbed;
- Addressing structural remains with respect to NRHP guidelines (Phase III studies);
- Relocating structures per NRHP guidelines;
- Creation of interpretative facilities; and/or
- Development of measures to prevent vandalism.

This can be accomplished through placement of conditions on the project by the local jurisdiction during individual environmental review.

b. Findings – Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project which mitigate or avoid the significant effects on the environment to a level of insignificance and those changes or alterations are within the responsibility and jurisdiction of another public agency and have been, or can and should be, adopted by that other agency.

c. Supportive Evidence – Please refer to pages 4.9-6 through 4.9-9 of the Draft EIR.

P. Risk of Upset (ClassII)

- 1. Impact RU-1.** The extension of new roadways and widening of existing facilities would facilitate improved emergency response. However, short-term lane and road closures during project construction could temporarily disrupt emergency response. This is a Class II, *significant but mitigable*, impact.

a. Mitigation –

RU-1(a) For road construction projects involving temporary lane or road closures, the responsible agency shall post advance warning signs indicating when disruption would occur, and provide marked detours. In no case shall a major critical facility (state or federal highways) be disrupted without first coordinating with the Santa Barbara County Office of Emergency Preparedness. In that case, provisions to allow the passage of emergency vehicles, even during construction, shall be addressed in the construction plans for projects on these roadways.

b. Findings – Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project which mitigate or avoid the significant effects on the environment to a level of insignificance and those changes or alterations are within the responsibility and jurisdiction of another public agency and have been, or can and should be, adopted by that other agency.

c. Supportive Evidence – Please refer to pages 4.10-3 through 4.10-4 of the Draft EIR.

2. Impact RU-3. New or expanded facilities would generally improve roadway safety for hazardous materials transport. However, roadway design should maximize safety with respect to the transport of hazardous materials. Potential impacts are Class II, *significant but mitigable*.

a. Mitigation –

RU-3(a) For RTP improvements proposed along a designated hazardous materials transfer route, the local jurisdiction in which the project is located shall ensure that the project is designed to allow for safe traveling, merging and passing of hazardous materials haul trucks. Design considerations should include: wider “slow” lanes, longer approach ramps and merger lanes and more gradually inclined interchanges. This can be accomplished through the placement of conditions on the project by the local jurisdiction during individual environmental review.

b. Findings – Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project which mitigate or avoid the significant effects on the environment to a level of insignificance and those changes or alterations are within the responsibility and jurisdiction of another public agency and have been, or can and should be, adopted by that other agency.

c. Supportive Evidence – Please refer to pages 4.10-4 through 4.10-5 of the Draft EIR.

VI. FINDINGS FOR IMPACTS IDENTIFIED AS SIGNIFICANT AND UNAVOIDABLE (Class I)

The unavoidable significant impacts of the project are found to be acceptable due to overriding considerations (See Section VII). The findings below are for Class I impacts, where implementation of the project may result in the following significant, unavoidable environmental impacts:

A. Land Use (Class I)

1. Impact LU-4. Some RTP projects could convert agricultural lands to transportation infrastructure. Although the actual level of impact from individual projects is not known at

this time, the overall impact to agriculture is assumed to be Class I, *significant and unavoidable*.

- a. **Mitigation** –No measures are available to mitigate the loss of agricultural lands, short of eliminating proposed roadways that would traverse areas containing prime soils. However, the following measures would incrementally reduce impacts to agricultural lands and existing agricultural production:

- LU-4(a) When new roadway extensions are planned, the local jurisdiction in which the RTP project is located shall assure that project-specific environmental reviews consider alternative alignments that reduce or avoid impacts to agricultural lands.

- LU-4(b) Rural roadway alignments shall follow property lines to the extent feasible, to minimize impacts to the agricultural production value of any specific property. Farmers shall be compensated for the loss of agricultural production at the margins of lost property, based on the amount of land deeded as road right-of-way, as a function of the total amount of production on the property.

- LU-4(c) When new roadway extensions are planned in areas that contain sensitive farmland, the local jurisdiction in which the RTP project is located shall assure that project-specific environmental reviews consider the use of agricultural conservation easements on land of at least equal quality and size as compensation for the loss of agricultural land. Agricultural conservation easements could be implemented by directly purchasing easements or donating mitigation fees to a local, regional, or statewide organization or agency whose purpose includes the acquisition and stewardship of agricultural conservation easements.

Mitigation measure LU-1 (a), which calls for appropriate setbacks and fencing, would also minimize trespassing and vandalism impacts.

- b. **Findings** – Changes or alterations have been required in, or can be incorporated in to the project which avoid or substantially lessen the significant environmental effects as identified in the Final EIR; however, these effects have not been lessened to a level of insignificance. These impacts are acceptable by reason of the overriding considerations discussed in Section VII.
- c. **Supportive Evidence** – Please refer to pages 4.2-6 through 4.2-8 of the Draft EIR and page 3 of the Final EIR Comments, Responses and Revisions.

B. Aesthetics (Class I)

- 1. **Impact AES-2.** Development of proposed roadway projects would contribute to the alteration of the county's character from a rural (or semi-rural) to a somewhat more suburban condition. This is a Class I, *significant and unavoidable*, impact.

- a. **Mitigation** –

- AES-2(a) Roadway extensions and widenings shall avoid the removal of existing mature trees to the extent possible. Any trees lost shall be replaced at a minimum 1:1 basis and incorporated into the landscaping design for the

roadway (note: the oak tree replacement rate may be higher than 1:1 in some jurisdictions, including the County of Santa Barbara).

AES-2(b) Roadway lighting shall be minimized to the extent possible, and shall not exceed the minimum height requirements of the local jurisdiction in which the project is proposed.

AES-2(c) Bus shelters and other ancillary facilities constructed under the RTP shall be designed in accordance with the architectural review requirements of the local jurisdiction in which the project is proposed. Bus shelters shall incorporate colors and wood materials complementary of the natural surroundings.

b. Findings – Changes or alterations have been required in, or can be incorporated in to the project which avoid or substantially lessen the significant environmental effects as identified in the Final EIR; however, these effects have not been lessened to a level of insignificance. These impacts are acceptable by reason of the overriding considerations discussed in Section VII.

c. Supportive Evidence – Please refer to pages 4.5-4 through 4.5-6 of the Draft EIR.

C. Biological Resources (Class I)

1. Impact B-2. Some proposed transportation projects could permanently alter natural habitat areas wildlife corridors, and special status plant and animal species. Impacts of many individual projects can likely be mitigated to a less than significant level. However, because the feasibility of mitigation cannot be determined at this time, the cumulative effect of RTP implementation is Class I, *significant and unavoidable*.

a. Mitigation – All RTP projects will be subject to local, state, and federal regulations pertaining to the protection of biological resources. In addition, the following measure is required to mitigate potential long-term impacts to biological resources:

B-2(a) The local jurisdiction in which an RTP project with potentially significant long-term effects to biological resources is located shall assure that project-specific environmental reviews consider specific mitigation measures and/or alternative alignments that avoid or minimize impacts to biological resources.

b. Findings – Changes or alterations have been required in, or can be incorporated in to the project which avoid or substantially lessen the significant environmental effects as identified in the Final EIR; however, these effects have not been lessened to a level of insignificance. These impacts are acceptable by reason of the overriding considerations discussed in Section VII.

c. Supportive Evidence – Please refer to pages 4.11-11 through 4.11-12 of the Draft EIR and page 5 of the Final EIR Comments, Responses and Revisions.

VII. STATEMENT OF OVERRIDING CONSIDERATIONS

Findings pursuant to CEQA Guidelines sections 15093 and 15092.

- A. The project’s significant, unmitigable, unavoidable adverse effects are as follows:
1. **Some RTP projects could convert agricultural lands to transportation infrastructure.**
 2. **Development of proposed roadway projects would contribute to the alteration of the county’s character from a rural (or semi-rural) to a somewhat more suburban condition.**
 3. **The cumulative effect of RTP implementation could permanently alter natural habitat areas and wildlife corridors.**
- B. **Findings** – The Santa Barbara County Association of Governments has weighed the benefits of the proposed project against its unavoidable environmental impacts. Based on the consideration of the record as a whole, the Santa Barbara County Association of Governments finds that the benefits of the project outweigh the unavoidable adverse environmental impacts to the extent that the unavoidable adverse environmental impacts become “acceptable”.
- C. **Supporting Evidence**
1. Social, Economic and Environmental Benefits. The project will result in the following social and economic benefits:
 - a. The implementation of RTP transportation projects will provide for a comprehensive transportation system of facilities and services that meets the public's need for the movement of people and goods, and that is consistent with the social, economic, and environmental goals and policies of the region.
 - b. The project will improve transportation mobility and accessibility in the county.
 - c. The project will improve air contaminant emissions levels compared to future No Project conditions.
 - d. The project will promote consistency between the California Transportation Plan, the regional transportation plan and other plans developed by cities, counties, districts, Native American Tribal Governments, and State and Federal agencies in responding to Statewide and interregional transportation issues and needs.
 - e. The construction of transportation projects will result in both short-term and long-term economic benefits to the County and its residents. Transportation projects will indirectly provide for a number of jobs relating to construction and maintenance.
 2. Alternatives. The following project alternatives identified in the Environmental Impact Report, although feasible from a technical standpoint, are rejected for the following reasons:
 - **Program Project Alternative.** This alternative assumes that the existing RTP is not updated and that only currently funded RTP projects would be constructed. This alternative is rejected because it would not meet the objectives of the proposed 2008 RTP.

- **Modified Project Alternative.** This alternative assumes that the proposed RTP is implemented, but that certain projects with the potential to create Class I (significant and unavoidable) impacts are eliminated. Elimination of the identified project would result in increased traffic impacts, and may result in greater impacts related to risk of upset and safety. This alternative is rejected because it would not meet the objectives of the proposed 2008 RTP.
- **No Project Alternative.** This alternative assumes that no new capital improvement projects are funded or implemented after 2008. This alternative is rejected because it would not meet the objectives of the proposed 2008 RTP.

VIII. CEQA GENERAL FINDINGS

- A. The Santa Barbara County Association of Government finds that changes or alterations have been incorporated into the project to mitigate or avoid significant impacts to the greatest degree practicable. These changes or alterations include mitigation measures and project modifications outlined herein and set forth in more detail in the 2008 Santa Barbara County Regional Transportation Plan Update Draft EIR.
- B. The Santa Barbara County Association of Government finds that the project, as approved, includes an appropriate Mitigation Monitoring Program. This mitigation monitoring program ensures that measures that avoid or lessen the significant project impacts, as required by CEQA and the State CEQA Guidelines, will be implemented as described.

IX. MITIGATION MONITORING PROGRAM

- A. The applicant, Santa Barbara County Association of Governments, will be primarily responsible for ensuring that all project mitigation measures are complied with. Mitigation measures will be programmed to occur at, or prior to, the following milestones:
- *During environmental review.* These are measures that need to be undertaken during individual project-level environmental review of RTP transportation projects. These measures include items such as assessment of identification of specific project level noise reduction measures, and measures to reduce impacts on biological resources.
 - *Prior to issuance of a grading permit.* These are measures that need to be undertaken before earth moving activities begin. These measures include items such as staking the limits of environmentally sensitive areas or vegetation to remain, confirming biological mitigation plans with resource agencies, and including pertinent design details in the project plans.
 - *During project construction.* These measures are those that need to occur as the project is being constructed. They include monitoring the construction site for the proper implementation of dust and emission controls, erosion controls, biological protection, and examining grading areas for the presence of cultural materials.
 - *Prior to completion of construction.* These measures apply to project components that would go into effect at completion of the project construction phase, including items such as management or monitoring plans (e.g., revegetation, etc.). In order for the plan to be available for use at project completion, it will need to be prepared and completed before project construction is finished.

Connecting each of the mitigation measures to these milestones will integrate mitigation monitoring into existing SBCAG processes, as encouraged by CEQA. In each instance, implementation of the mitigation measure will be accomplished in parallel with another activity associated with the project.

- B.** As lead agency for the 2008 Santa Barbara County Regional Transportation Plan Update EIR, the Santa Barbara County Association of Governments hereby certifies that the approved Mitigation Monitoring Program is adequate to ensure the implementation of the mitigation measures described herein.