

DEL AMO BOULEVARD EXTENSION PROJECT

**FINDINGS OF FACT AND
STATEMENT OF OVERRIDING CONSIDERATIONS**

State Clearinghouse No. 2001121087

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The following Findings of Fact and Statement of Overriding Considerations has been prepared to comply with requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (“CEQA”) (Cal. Pub. Res. Code § 21000 et seq.) and the CEQA Guidelines (Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15000 et seq.).

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Draft Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Assessment

In accordance with the *CEQA Guidelines*, the City of Torrance (City) prepared a Notice of Preparation (NOP) for the Del Amo Boulevard Extension Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Assessment (Draft EIR/EA), which was distributed on October 18, 2001 to public agencies and organizations as well as private organizations and individuals with a possible interest in the project. Over 500 copies of the NOP were distributed; nine written comment letters were received from various agencies, organizations, and individuals. Comments received during the 30-day comment period for the NOP were evaluated and considered in the preparation of the Draft EIR/EA. Two public scoping meetings were held at the City of Torrance, the first on May 21, 2001, and the second on May 23, 2001.

The Draft EIR/EA was completed and circulated for public review and comment on December 2, 2002, initiating a 45-day public review period pursuant to CEQA and its implementing guidelines. The document and Notice of Completion (NOC) was distributed to the California Office of Planning and Research, State Clearinghouse. Relevant agencies also received copies of the document. A Notice of Availability (NOA) was distributed to interested parties and adjacent property owners and residents, which informed them of where they could view the document and how to comment. The purpose of the 45-day review period was to provide interested public agencies, groups and individuals the opportunity to comment on the contents and accuracy of the document. The document was available to the public at the City Engineering Department and in six libraries. A Planning Commission Hearing open to the public was held on January 15, 2003 in City Council Chambers at Torrance City Hall.

1.2 Recirculated Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Assessment

As a result of comments received during the public review period for the Draft EIR/EA, the document was recirculated in conformance with the California Department of Transportation's (Caltrans) and the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA) National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) guidelines. The Recirculated EIR/EA incorporated comments received in the original draft. Changes to the document included a Historic Property Study Report (Appendix J) and an updated Noise Impact Analysis (Appendix E). The impact analysis and conclusions in the recirculated document did not change from the original draft.

During the 45-day review period for the original Draft EIR/EA, a total of 16 timely letters were received, and one letter was received after the close of the review period. Six of the letters were from public agencies, one was received from a private company, and nine were received from citizens. Responses to the 16 letters received in the public review period are included in the Recirculated EIR/EA. The Recirculated EIR/EA was circulated for public review on August 15, 2003, initiating a 45-day public review period. The document and Notice of Completion (NOC) was distributed to the California Office of Planning and Research, State Clearinghouse. Relevant agencies also received copies of the document. A Notice of Availability (NOA) was distributed to interested parties and adjacent property owners and residents, which informed them of where they could view the document and how to comment. The document was available to the public at the City Engineering Department and in six libraries.

1.3 Final Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Assessment

The Final EIR/EA was released to the public in Spring 2004. The Final EIR/EA contains written responses to comment letters that were received on the Draft EIR/EA. A total of six letters were received during the 45-day public comment period. A City Council meeting will be held on the Final EIR/EA in Spring 2004.

2.0 DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT

The proposed project would extend Del Amo Boulevard between Crenshaw Boulevard on the east and Maple Avenue on the west, and it would also widen an existing segment of Del Amo Boulevard between Maple Avenue and Prairie Avenue. The extension/widening of Del Amo Boulevard would include the construction of a new four lane roadway with optional bicycle lanes on the south side of Del Amo Boulevard, construction of a new bridge over the Burlington Northern Santa Fe railroad tracks, realignment of a portion of a branch railroad, construction of retaining walls, drainage improvements, relocation of affected utilities, and relocation/reconstruction of affected off-site facilities.

Currently, Del Amo Boulevard terminates on either side of the BNSF railroad tracks in the City of Torrance. With the exception of this segment and two other short breaks to the east (between Denker Street and Vermont Avenue and the overpass across the San Diego Freeway [I-405], which is currently under construction), Del Amo Boulevard currently runs continuously from the City of Redondo Beach to the Orange County line. As a result, east-west traffic in the project vicinity uses either 190th Street to the north or Torrance Boulevard to the south of the project site as alternate routes to Del Amo Boulevard. This causes a number of intersections in the project vicinity to operate at unacceptable levels of service (LOS); those intersections that are currently operating at acceptable LOS are forecasted to operate at unacceptable levels in the year 2020 unless the existing circulation system is improved.

3.0 FINDINGS OF FACT

CEQA (Cal. Pub. Res. Code § 21081), and particularly the CEQA Guidelines (Cal. Code Regs. tit. 14, § 15091), require that:

“No public agency shall approve or carry out a project for which an EIR has been certified which identifies one or more significant environmental effects of the project unless the public agency makes one or more written findings for each of those significant effects, accompanied by a brief explanation of the rationale for each finding. The possible findings are:

(1) Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project which avoid or substantially lessen the significant environmental effect as identified in the final EIR.

(2) Such changes or alterations are within the responsibility and jurisdiction of another public agency and not the agency making the finding. Such changes have been adopted by such other agency or can and should be adopted by such other agency.

(3) Specific economic, legal, social, technological, or other considerations, including provision of employment opportunities for highly trained workers, make infeasible the mitigation measures or project alternatives identified in the final EIR.”

In short, CEQA requires that the lead agency adopt mitigation measures or alternatives, where feasible, to avoid or mitigate significant environmental impacts that would otherwise occur with implementation of the Project. Project mitigation or alternatives are not required, however, where they are infeasible or where the responsibility for modifying the project lies with another agency. (CEQA Guidelines, Section 15091 (a), (b).)

For those significant effects that cannot be mitigated to a less-than-significant level, the public agency is required to find that specific overriding economic, legal, social, technological, or other benefits of the project outweigh the significant effects on the environment (see, Cal. Pub. Res. Code § 21081(b)). The CEQA Guidelines state in Section 15093(a) that:

“If the specific economic, legal, social, technological, or other benefits of a proposed project outweigh the unavoidable adverse environmental effects, the adverse environmental effects may be considered ‘acceptable.’ ”

4.0 ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS DETERMINED TO BE NOT SIGNIFICANT OR TO BE LESS-THAN-SIGNIFICANT

4.1 Environmental Effects Determined to be Not Significant

The EIR/EA identified four categories of environmental impacts that were determined to be not significant, including agricultural resources, mineral resources, population and housing, and recreation. These impacts, described in Section 4.1 below, were determined to be not significant in the CEQA Initial Study; therefore, they were not analyzed in detail in the EIR/EA.

Agricultural Resources

There is no designated farmland within the project area; therefore, no impacts to Prime, Unique, or Statewide Important Farmland would occur. Similarly, no conflicts with existing zoning for agricultural uses would occur. Impacts to agricultural resources would not be significant.

Mineral Resources

There are no known mineral deposits of economic importance underlying the project site. The extension and widening of Del Amo Boulevard would not result in the loss of availability of any known mineral resource. Impacts to mineral resources would not be significant.

Population and Housing

The proposed project entails a 1.2-mile extension and expansion of Del Amo Boulevard through industrial and railroad land uses. Most of the proposed project site consists of a private road that is restricted to Dow Chemical, BNSF RR, Exxon-Mobil, and City personnel. The proposed extension of Del Amo Boulevard would bridge the BNSF railroad tracks, whose ROW is owned by SCRRA. No housing units or persons would be displaced as a result of the building construction, and no new housing would be constructed as a result of the project. The proposed project would result in increased use of the

roadway; however, the project would not induce substantial population growth in the project area. Impacts to population and housing would not be significant.

Recreation

The proposed project does not increase the use of existing recreational facilities, nor does it include or require the construction or expansion of any new recreational facilities. A private recreation area within DOW Chemical, which is not open to the public, may be reconfigured as a result of the roadway extension project. The nearest public park to the project site is Delthorne Park, located just south of the Del Amo Boulevard/Prairie Avenue intersection. Park use is not anticipated to increase as a result of the project, and no substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur. Impacts to recreation would not be significant.

4.2 Environmental Effects Determined to be Less Than Significant

Those impacts that were determined to be less than significant in the CEQA Initial Study were analyzed in the EIR/EA and are discussed in Section 4.2 below. In many cases, potentially significant impacts were also identified for these impacts categories, which are discussed in Sections 5.0 of this document.

Land Use

The proposed roadway extension would not physically divide any established community within the City. In addition, the proposed project would be consistent with relevant plans, ordinances, and policies. As such, the proposed project would have a less than significant impact regarding physical disruption of communities or land use plan consistency.

Aesthetics, Light, and Glare

The extension of Del Amo Boulevard between Crenshaw Boulevard and Maple Avenue would traverse an area dominated by industrial and manufacturing uses and would be visible from several nearby streets. The roadway would be elevated above the existing ground level along the central portion of the alignment to accommodate the proposed bridge over the BNSF railroad tracks and to meet the elevation of the existing road to the west. The key observation points analyzed in the EIR/EA showed that the change in elevation would be perceptible from some vantage points, but it would not obstruct any views. In some areas, the view would change substantially as a result of the project; however, the existing character of the view would not change. Given the industrial nature of the premises in the foreground, the proposed extension would be visually compatible with its surroundings and, therefore, would result in a less than significant impact.

Floodplain/Water Resources/Hydrology

The project site does not lie within a FEMA 100-year flood boundary or other designated flood zone. The proposed project does not include any residential uses nor would it impede or redirect flood flows. Drainage from the road would connect to the municipal storm water system. In addition, the site is distant from levees, dams, oceans, or other large water bodies. Therefore, flooding impacts would be less than significant.

Because the project area would be more than five acres in size, a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) permit with standard Best Management Practices would be required for construction. Compliance with the NPDES general permit would reduce potential water quality impacts during construction to a less than significant level.

Air Quality

The results of CO modeling indicate that the diverted traffic resulting from the extension of Del Amo Boulevard would not create a CO hot spot at any one of the modeled intersections along Del Amo Boulevard resulting from constructing either Alternative 2, 3, or 4. Also shown in the table, CO concentrations at intersections along the two alternate east-west routes, 190th Street and Torrance Boulevard, would be less as a result of the proposed project than with the No Action Alternative. Modeled intersections along Torrance Boulevard and the intersections of 190th Street and Crenshaw Boulevard for future build conditions would be considered CO hot spots under prolonged worst-case meteorological conditions as concentrations at these intersections would be in exceedance of the state eight-hour CO standard. However, since the CO concentrations at these intersections would be less than with the No Action Alternative, the proposed project would not cause or contribute to any new localized CO violation of the state eight-hour standard or increase the frequency or severity of the existing CO violation of the state eight-hour standard in a CO non-attainment area. Therefore, the extension of Del Amo Boulevard would not have a significant impact on local CO concentrations.

As the proposed project would not result in new traffic generation in the City of Torrance (the proposed project would result in the diversion of some traffic from the east-west routes, primarily Torrance Boulevard and 190th Street, onto Del Amo Boulevard), impacts to local PM₁₀ concentrations are less than significant.

Other air quality impacts that were determined to be potentially significant are discussed in Section 5.0 below.

Noise

Implementation of any build alternatives would result in no future traffic noise impact at seven of the eight analyzed noise receptor locations in the project vicinity when compared with the No Action Alternative, as the future noise level remains below the noise abatement criterion (NAC) of 67 dBA. The remaining noise receptor location would experience an increase of 1 dBA when compared with the No Action Alternative. Although the calculated noise level at this location exceeds the NAC of 67 dBA, L_{eq}, the noise increase associated with the future build alternatives would not exceed existing noise levels by more than 4 dBA, L_{eq}. Therefore, the increases in noise levels at these eight locations are not substantial and no significant traffic noise impacts would occur.

Implementation of any build alternatives would increase the future predicted noise level by approximately 4 dBA for the segment of Del Amo Boulevard between Van Ness Avenue and Crenshaw Boulevard, when compared with the No Action Alternative. The noise increase between Crenshaw Boulevard and Van Ness Avenue over existing levels and the No Action Alternative would be less than the 12 dBA, L_{eq} threshold (Caltrans 1998) and would not be considered a substantial noise increase. Therefore, there

would be no long-term significant noise impacts associated with the implementation of the proposed project.

Other noise impacts that were determined to be potentially significant are discussed in Section 5.0 below.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials

The proposed project would not expose construction workers or the general public to groundwater contamination, nor would it exacerbate existing groundwater contamination under the site. Impacts related to hazards from groundwater contamination would be less than significant.

There are no existing or proposed schools within one-quarter mile of the project site. Therefore, impacts related to hazards or hazardous materials at school sites are not anticipated.

Other hazards and hazardous materials impacts that were determined to be potentially significant are discussed in Section 5.0 below.

Cultural Resources

Two railroads and one complex (which includes seven building/structures built prior to 1957) have been identified in the area of potential effect (APE) as structures built before 1957 (Appendix J of the Recirculated EIR/EA). They have been recorded and provisionally evaluated as not eligible for listing on the National Register. Within the APE, four properties were treated under the "Caltrans Interim Policy for the Treatment of Buildings Constructed in 1957 or Later." Impacts to historic resources would be less than significant.

Site CA-LAN-100, located at the intersection of 190th Street and Hawthorne Boulevard, is nearly $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile from the project area. Project construction and operation would not affect this resource. Although it is possible that subsurface archaeological artifacts may be discovered during construction of the roadway extension, the probability of encountering buried archaeological resources is low. Impacts to archaeological resources are considered less than significant.

Other cultural resource impacts that were determined to be potentially significant are discussed in Section 5.0 below.

Biological Resources

A solitary willow tree is on site, which does not provide viable wildlife habitat. This particular willow tree is not considered a sensitive resource, and its loss would not be a significant impact. There are no oak trees within the project area.

While some vegetation, including marginal riparian stands and the lone willow tree, would be removed as part of the proposed project, this vegetation is not considered to have significant intrinsic value or significant value as wildlife habitat. As such, the impact to vegetation would be less than significant.

Other biological resource impacts that were determined to be potentially significant are discussed in Section 5.0 below.

Public Services and Utilities

Fire Protection. The proposed project would improve the Fire Department's ability to promptly travel in an east-west direction through the City, thus improving response times to emergencies. Impact related to fire protection would be less than significant.

Police Protection. The proposed project would not cause a substantial increase in the frequency of calls or police response times. Impact related to police protection would be less than significant.

Schools. The proposed project would not result in a need for new or altered school facilities, nor would it impact the daily operation of any schools in the project vicinity. Impacts to schools would be less than significant.

Electricity. The demand for electricity would be low and would be accommodated by existing power supplies in the area. Impacts would be less than significant.

Sewage. The proposed roadway extension would not impact existing sewer capabilities. Impacts would be less than significant.

Solid Waste. Solid waste resulting from project construction would be properly disposed of at a certified landfill at the discretion of the hired contractors. Impacts would be less than significant.

Stormwater. A new storm drain system would connect to the existing municipal storm water drainage network. The existing and proposed system would be analyzed in the design phase for capacity to handle the increase in flows. Impacts would be less than significant.

Utilities. A number of pipes, wires, and underground utilities which traverse the site, would be affected by the proposed project. Approval from the responsible agencies for the identification and removal or relocation of each utility would be required prior to commencement of construction. Impacts would be less than significant.

Other impacts to public services that were determined to be potentially significant are discussed in Section 5.0 below.

Socioeconomics and Environmental Justice

The proposed project would redistribute existing traffic but would not increase traffic generation. As such, this alternative is not expected to have any impact on the population size or housing stock within or near the project area. The road improvements would not remove any existing housing, provide access to any undeveloped areas, or induce unplanned development in the City. Impacts would be less than significant.

5.0 POTENTIALLY SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS DETERMINED TO BE REDUCED TO A LEVEL OF INSIGNIFICANCE

The EIR/EA identified several potentially significant environmental impacts from the proposed project that could be mitigated to less than significant levels. Specifically, these impacts include geology and soils, transportation/circulation, air quality, noise, hazards and hazardous materials, cultural resources, biological resources, and public services and utilities. The City has determined that based on substantial evidence in the record, changes or alterations have been incorporated into the Project which avoid or substantially lessen the significant effects (CEQA Guidelines Section 15091), and, thus, that adoption of the mitigation measures set forth below will reduce these significant effects to less-than-significant levels. A discussion of each topic is provided below.

5.1 Geology and Soils

Impacts: Potentially significant impacts from ground motion; potentially significant impacts from expansive soils.

Finding

With the implementation of mitigation measures listed in the mitigation monitoring and reporting program (MMRP) in Section 4 of the Final EIR/EA, impacts to geology and soils would not be significant. The City would be responsible for implementation of these mitigation measures.

Facts in Support of Finding

Based on the site conditions and the geometrics of the proposed alignment, retaining walls would be necessary at three locations along Del Amo Boulevard. The proposed roadway and overpass would be susceptible to levels of seismic ground shaking typical for much of southern California. The proximity of major faults to the project location increases the probability that an earthquake of magnitude 6.0 or greater may affect the project site. Strong seismic shaking at the project site could affect the stability of the engineered structures, particularly the MSE retaining walls and the reinforced fill material.

Construction-related soil disturbances would generally be limited to the uppermost 10 to 20 feet of soil, which are comprised predominately of granular alluvial materials, along with lesser amounts of clay, silts, and sandy, silty artificial fills. These soils do not exhibit expansive soil characteristics; however, the potential for expansive soils to occur in the project area does exist.

Mitigation measures are provided to reduce impacts to geology and soils to a less than significant level.

Mitigation Measures

Potentially significant impacts to geology and soils would be reduced to a level of insignificance through implementation of the following required mitigation measures:

- A professional civil/geotechnical engineer shall prepare a geotechnical report for the proposed project. The report, to be submitted to the Public Works Director prior to design approval, shall

examine the type and degree of earthwork required for the project. This report shall concentrate on issues of geologic stability and may include but is not limited to determining the presence, depth, and texture of unconsolidated sediments. The geotechnical report shall include analysis to determine the presence, depth, and lateral extent of expansive soils at the site, and recommend techniques for reducing the impact of expansive soils. If expansive soils are encountered, mitigation measures may include excavation and replacement of expansive soils, lime-stabilization, or other proven engineering practices.

- The final design of the proposed roadway shall be approved by a professional civil/geotechnical engineer prior to construction, to ensure that it meets all state and city specifications applicable to the project site, including but not limited to local grading standards, engineering codes, and Title 24 of the California Building Code requirements.

The following mitigation measure would apply only to Alternatives 2 and 4:

- The MSE retaining walls shall be constructed in accordance with applicable Caltrans requirements. In particular, design and construction of the roadway shall conform with the Caltrans' Division of Structures' Mechanically Stabilized Embankment Details No. 1 through 9.

5.2 Transportation/Circulation

Impacts: Potentially significant impacts at 15 roadway intersections.

Finding

With the exception of the significant unavoidable impacts described in Section 6.0, impacts to transportation and circulation would not be significant after implementation of mitigation measures listed in the MMRP in Section 4 of the Final EIR/EA. The City would be responsible for implementation of these mitigation measures.

Facts in Support of Finding

Based on the City of Torrance's thresholds of significance, the future with project forecast indicates that the proposed project would create significant transportation and circulation impacts at 15 of the 28 analyzed intersections during one or both peak hours. The remaining 13 analyzed intersections are not expected to be significantly impacted by traffic from the proposed project during the a.m. and p.m. peak hours.

Seven locations may be considered in the future by City Council and if approved would be budgeted through a five-year Capital Improvement Program (CIP). The CIP, which is updated biannually, includes all projects with appropriated funds, as approved by City Council. Unbudgeted projects may be

considered in future updates. Over the next 20 years it is possible that other projects that have been identified to mitigate traffic impacts associated with the Del Amo Boulevard extension could be constructed. The implementation of a proposed future project would be dependent on actual need, as compared to other citywide needs, and the availability of funding. If implemented, the following projects would help to alleviate future traffic congestion in the project vicinity:

- Van Ness Avenue at 190th Street
- Western Avenue at 190th Street
- Hawthorne Boulevard at Del Amo Boulevard (completed in Spring 2003)
- Crenshaw Boulevard at Del Amo Boulevard
- Van Ness Avenue at Del Amo Boulevard
- Western Avenue at Del Amo Boulevard
- Anza Avenue at Torrance Boulevard

The remaining eight impacted intersections will result in significant impacts with implementation of the proposed project. Significant unavoidable impacts are discussed in Section 6.0.

Short term impacts to traffic and circulation have the potential to occur during project construction. Mitigation has been provided to reduce construction impacts during to below the level of significance. In addition, the additional traffic may impact pedestrian safety. Mitigation has been provided to reduce safety impacts during to below the level of significance.

Mitigation Measures

Possible mitigation measures were identified and analyzed for those 15 locations. Potential mitigation measures, which include both operational and potential physical improvements, were designed to increase capacity. Physical improvements that require right-of-way acquisition were not considered to be feasible at this time because the study area is relatively built-out with little or no easily obtainable right-of-way for roadway improvements/widening. Therefore, mitigation is not proposed at eight of the 15 locations.

Seven locations are to be considered in the future by City Council and if approved would be budgeted through a five-year Capital Improvement Program (CIP). The CIP, which is updated biannually, includes all projects with appropriated funds, as approved by City Council. Unbudgeted projects may be considered in future updates. Over the next 20 years it is possible that other projects that have been identified to mitigate traffic impacts associated with the Del Amo Boulevard extension could be constructed. The implementation of a proposed future project would be dependent on actual need, as compared to other citywide needs, and the availability of funding. If implemented, the following projects would help to alleviate future traffic congestion in the project vicinity:

- *Van Ness Avenue at 190th Street* – The southbound approach should be modified to add one left-turn lane.
- *Western Avenue at 190th Street* – The eastbound approach should be modified to add one right-turn lane.

- *Hawthorne Boulevard at Del Amo Boulevard* – The eastbound approach shall be modified to add one through lane to create two left-turn lanes and two through lanes (this mitigation measure was constructed in spring 2003).
- *Crenshaw Boulevard at Del Amo Boulevard* –The westbound approach should be modified to add one through lane to create two left-turn lanes, two through lanes, and one right-turn lane.
- *Van Ness Avenue at Del Amo Boulevard* – The eastbound approach should be modified to add one through lane and one left-turn lane. Additionally, the southbound approach shall be modified to add one right-turn lane.
- *Western Avenue at Del Amo Boulevard* – The eastbound approach should be modified to add one left-turn lane. The southbound approach should be modified to add one free right-lane. Additionally, the eastbound approach should be converted to four lanes with split phasing east of Western Avenue.
- *Anza Avenue at Torrance Boulevard* – The eastbound approach should be modified by removing the defacto right-turn lane to add a second left-turn lane.

The following mitigation measures apply to the proposed project:

- Construction related truck trips on State highways shall be limited to off-peak commute periods. Transport of over-size or over-weight vehicles on State highways will need a Transportation Permit from the California Department of Transportation.
- Concerns were voiced at public hearings regarding traffic speed and volume, and pedestrian crossing safety at various locations along Del Amo Boulevard, if the proposed project were constructed. These locations are not currently within the proposed construction limits; however, these intersections would potentially be impacted after construction. If approval is given to proceed to the design phase, the City will prepare a Vehicle/Pedestrian/Bicycle Circulation and Management Study. The study would investigate traffic speed and volume, pedestrian crossings, and several other elements of the existing and proposed circulation for the three distinct travel modes. As part of preparing the study, the City would conduct a series of public workshops with the surrounding community to identify specific, relevant issues, and agree on mitigation measures that are mutually beneficial.

5.3 Air Quality

Impact: Potentially significant impacts from short-term construction emissions.

Finding

With the implementation of mitigation measures listed in the MMRP in Section 4 of the Final EIR/EA, short-term construction impacts to air quality would not be significant. The City would be responsible for implementation of these mitigation measures.

Facts in Support of Finding

The principal sources of pollutant emissions during construction are fugitive dust and construction equipment engine exhaust. Fugitive dust would be created during site clearing, excavation, and grading; removal of pavement; vehicle travel on paved and unpaved roads; and material blown from unprotected graded areas, stockpiles, and haul trucks. Fugitive dust includes PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}, which are potential health hazards and also often contribute to visibility and nuisance impacts which occur when dust from construction activities is deposited on homes, vehicles, and plants. In construction equipment exhaust, the principal pollutants of concern are NO_x and ROC, the primary constituents in the formation of O₃, a regional non-attainment pollutant.

Construction-related emissions generated by the proposed project would remain below the SCAQMD thresholds of significance, with the exception of NO_x emissions during the utility relocation and construction of the roadway and overpass phases of construction. These emissions were estimated based on a mix of construction equipment and the number of truck and construction workers' trips assumed for the proposed project. Although these emissions would be temporary and would cease at the completion of construction activities, they may temporarily affect local criteria pollutant concentrations in the project area, particularly NO_x levels. This would result in a short-term significant impact on air quality. Mitigation has been provided to reduce safety impacts during construction to below the level of significance.

Mitigation Measures

The following measures would be incorporated into the project to reduce NO_x emissions associated with project construction, particularly during the utility relocation/excavation and roadway/overpass construction and roadway widening phases of construction:

- The project proponent shall ensure that all heavy construction equipment is equipped with particulate filters, as per the manufacture's instructions.
- The project proponent shall ensure that all heavy construction equipment is powered with low sulfur fuels, as feasible.
- All equipment shall be properly tuned and maintained.

Although dust emissions are not estimated to be significant, the following measures shall be incorporated into the project to minimize emissions of fugitive dust, including PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}:

- Land disturbance shall be minimized to the extent feasible.
- Haul trucks shall be covered when loaded with fill.
- Surface of dirt piles shall be stabilized if not removed immediately.
- Paved streets shall be swept at least once per day where there is evidence of dirt that has been carried onto the roadway.
- Disturbed areas that will not be paved as part of the proposed project shall be revegetated to prevent soil erosion.

During high wind conditions:

- Cease all earth moving activities or apply water to soil not more than 15 minutes prior to moving such soil.

- For disturbed surfaces to be left inactive for several days apply water with a chemical stabilizer diluted to not less than 1/20 of the concentration required to maintain a stabilized surface for a period of six months; or apply chemical stabilizers prior to wind event; or apply water to all unstabilized disturbed areas 3 times per day; or utilize a combination of these actions.
- For unpaved roads, apply chemical stabilizers prior to wind event, or apply water once per hour during active operation, or stop all vehicular traffic.
- For open storage piles, apply water once per hour, or install temporary coverings.
- For paved road track-out, cover all haul vehicles, or comply with vehicle freeboard requirements of Section 23114 of the California Vehicle Code for both public and private roads.

5.4 Noise

Impact: Potentially significant short-term construction noise impacts.

Finding

Although no significant noise impacts are anticipated during project construction or operation, noise abatement measures would be incorporated into the project. With the implementation of mitigation measures listed in the MMRP in Section 4 of the Final EIR/EA, short-term construction impacts to air quality would not be significant. The City would be responsible for implementation of these mitigation measures.

Facts in Support of Finding

Construction noise would be generated by diesel-engine driven construction equipment, which would be used for roadway and retaining wall installation. Construction noise would also be generated from pile driving and staging areas. Grading and paving work would occur near the intersection of Del Amo Boulevard and Crenshaw Boulevard. During this work, short-term average noise levels may exceed 65 dBA, and peak noise levels may exceed 70 dBA, causing occasional speech interference at the residences located just east of Crenshaw Boulevard. In accordance with the City's noise ordinance, no nighttime work would occur and therefore, the construction noise impact would be adverse but would not be significant.

Although no significant noise impacts are anticipated during project construction, noise abatement measures have been identified to minimize the adverse noise impacts on sensitive receptors in the project area.

Mitigation Measures

Implementation of the following mitigation measures would mitigate the significant impacts associated with short-term construction noise:

- Staging areas for the storage and maintenance of construction equipment shall be arranged so that the noisiest activities will be located at the furthest practicable distance from residences. Where feasible, stockpiled materials should be located to provide noise barriers between noisy activities and nearby residential receptors. Equipment maintenance and other noisy activities shall not be undertaken in staging areas near residential receptors.

- Contractors shall comply with Caltrans Standard Specifications Sections 7 and 42 and Standard Special Provisions for limits on construction noise levels.
- Contractors shall comply with all local noise level standards, regulations, and ordinances that apply to any work performed pursuant to the contract.
- Each internal combustion engine shall be equipped with a muffler of a type recommended by the manufacturer. No internal combustion engine shall be operated on the project without said muffler.

5.6 Hazards and Hazardous Materials

Impacts: Potentially significant impacts to motorists, pedestrians, or vehicles from hazards; potentially significant impacts from soil contamination.

Finding

With the implementation of mitigation measures listed in the MMRP in Section 4 of the Final EIR/EA, impacts to hazards and hazardous materials would not be significant. The City would be responsible for implementation of these mitigation measures.

Facts in Support of Finding

Hazards

Elevated Flares

The roadway would traverse the southern boundary of the Exxon-Mobil property, within approximately 500 feet of the elevated flare towers. These towers on the north side of Del Amo Boulevard would be visible to vehicles traveling between Crenshaw Boulevard and Madrona Avenue/Prairie Avenue. Operation of the flares may attract the attention of drivers, resulting in hazardous driving conditions along the proposed roadway. Mitigation has been provided to reduce safety impacts during flaring events to below the level of significance.

Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) Storage Area

The risk of upset at the Exxon-Mobil Refinery, although unlikely, would expose drivers to a potentially significant impact. An unconfined vapor cloud explosion (UVCE) in the LPG storage area could result in a “vapor cloud fire” near the site. Although impacts are unlikely, the potential hazards are only marginally acceptable and, therefore, considered potentially significant. Mitigation has been provided to reduce impacts to below the level of significance.

Coker Feed Tank

Construction of the roadway would require removal of a portion of the berm surrounding the 500,000-gallon storage tank. The berm would be replaced as part of the project; therefore, this alternative would not affect the reliability and safety of the facility.

The new roadway would pass within approximately 200 feet of the tank. Although the residuum in the tank is considered a flammable material, it is difficult to ignite and is considered a relatively stable non-volatile material that would not be expected to have a boil-over potential (Risk Management Professionals 1999). If combustion occurs, sulfur dioxide would be released into the air. Due to the proximity of the tank to the proposed roadway, the risk of upset would pose a potentially significant effect at the roadway. Mitigation has been provided to reduce impacts to below the level of significance.

Soil Contamination

Construction of the roadway would require approximately 8,800 cubic yards of soil excavation and disposal. Some of this soil may be contaminated with TPH, VOCs, and CAM metals. Exposure to contaminated soils would be considered a potentially significant impact to public health and worker safety. Mitigation has been provided to reduce impacts from soil contamination to below the level of significance.

Mitigation Measures

Hazards

A number of the following mitigation measures were recommended as part of the hazard analysis conducted for the project (Appendix F). The page numbers in parenthesis following some of the mitigation measures indicate where the measures can be found in Appendix F. The City would be responsible for implementing these measures; however, the cost of implementation shall be established in a written agreement between the City and Exxon-Mobil.

Risk of Upset

- “No Loitering” signs shall be installed on the southern fenceline of the Exxon-Mobil Refinery; sign posting shall require permission from and coordination with Exxon-Mobil (page 49).
- Traffic signalization or equivalent safety measure for the proposed roadway shall be implemented so that traffic, even during rush hour, is not backed up and “stalled” at the point closest to the elevated flare towers and the LPG storage area (page 49).
- The frequency of testing and inspection of equipment in the LPG storage area shall be increased to further minimize the likelihood of a potential hydrocarbon release (page 50).
- Ambient hydrocarbon detectors shall be installed on the southern perimeter of the South Oil Movements LPG Storage Area. A total of four detectors, the exact locations to be determined by the Exxon-Mobil Refinery, shall be installed (page 50).
- Fire hydrants shall be required every 300 feet along the proposed Del Amo Boulevard extension.
- Sidewalks or bicycle paths shall not be permitted on the north side of Del Amo Boulevard between Crenshaw Boulevard and Maple Avenue.

Driver Distraction

- The safety report recommends that signage be placed along both ends of the Del Amo Boulevard extension, suggesting that motorists focus on their driving, even while a flaring event is in progress (page 49). Prior to implementation of this measure, the City would make a final decision on whether or not the signs would be more of a distraction to drivers.
- A brief article regarding the proposed project shall be prepared and presented in the Community Report prepared by Exxon-Mobil. The article, meant to minimize the potential for driver distraction, shall inform the community of the potential for flaring events to occur while driving on the new roadway segment (page 50).

Emergency Response and Evacuation

- Remotely operated physical barriers (e.g., crossing gates) shall be constructed on both ends of the Del Amo Boulevard extension. The operation of these barriers shall be integrated with the operation of the existing barrier on Crenshaw Boulevard south of 190th Street. The City and Exxon-Mobil shall prepare a joint activation protocol for the barriers (page 50).
- Traffic signalization shall include emergency traffic light sequencing capabilities for Del Amo Boulevard (page 49).
- A median break similar to the ones installed on Crenshaw Boulevard between Del Amo Boulevard and 190th Street shall be provided in the final design of the roadway improvements.
- The traffic flow diagrams in the Safety Advisor's Evaluation of Traffic Control Systems shall be updated to include the Del Amo Boulevard extension. Familiarization training shall be provided to Torrance Police Department personnel regarding the changes in traffic flow and the project's safety features (e.g., remotely operated barriers, etc.) (page 50).
- A physical barrier shall be considered along the north side of the proposed roadway to resist the potential overpressure from an explosion and to mitigate potential radiation from such an explosion and flares.

Soil Contamination

- The City shall prepare and implement a soil remediation plan for the project. Under the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA), the current property owners may be required to implement soil remediation prior to the City's acquisition of the road right-of-way. The soil remediation plan shall incorporate the results and recommendations provided in the Phase II Soil Investigation Report prepared for this EIR/EA. The plan shall characterize the extent of soil contamination in the project area and identify appropriate methods for removal and disposal of contaminated soil. Additional testing may be required to determine the extent of contamination within the areas of excavation.

In areas of suspected contamination, surface samples shall be analyzed using appropriate collection and sampling techniques. During excavation, soils shall be segregated, sampled, and tested to determine the appropriate disposal and treatment options, which could include in-situ remediation. If the soils exceed the applicable screening criteria established by the RWQCB or are classified as hazardous (according to Resource Conservation and Recovery Act [RCRA] and Cal. Code Regs. Title 22), soils shall be hauled to a Class I landfill or other appropriate soil treatment and recycling facility.

- Soil remediation and the costs associated on the land dedicated by the Exxon Mobil Corporation will be the responsibility of Exxon Mobil, as stated in a Memorandum of Understanding dated May 11, 1999 between the City of Torrance and the Exxon Mobil Corporation (formerly Mobil Oil Corporation).
- The City shall enter into an agreement with both Dow Chemical and Exxon-Mobil regarding disposal of any contaminated soil encountered prior to the City's acquisition of the road right-of-way. This agreement shall be included in the ROW agreement for the project.
- The construction contractor shall hire a certified industrial hygienist to prepare a worker health and safety plan for the project. This plan must conform to U.S. Occupational Health and Safety Administration (OSHA) requirements for construction sites with hazardous materials present during construction. An independent consultant shall be hired to monitor compliance with the plan.

5.7 Cultural Resources

Impacts: Potentially significant impacts to buried archaeological resources.

Finding

With the implementation of mitigation measures listed in the MMRP in Section 4 of the Final EIR/EA, impacts to cultural resources would not be significant. The City would be responsible for implementation of these mitigation measures.

Facts in Support of Finding

Site CA-LAN-100 is located at the intersection of 190th Street and Hawthorne Boulevard, which is nearly $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile from the project area. Project construction and operation will not affect this resource. Although it is possible that subsurface archaeological artifacts may be discovered during construction of the roadway extension, the probability of encountering buried archaeological resources is low. However, if encountered, impacts to archaeological resources would be potentially significant. Mitigation is provided to ensure that impacts to archaeological resources remain below the level of significance.

Mitigation Measures

Potentially significant impacts to cultural resources would be reduced to a level of insignificance through implementation of the following required mitigation measures:

- The City will be responsible for providing an archaeological monitor during excavation. If any cultural resources are found during site excavation and other ground-disturbing activities, work shall be halted in the area immediately until the resource can be assessed by a qualified archaeologist and recommendations for treatment can be made.
- In the event that archaeological artifacts are recovered, the disposition of those artifacts will be undertaken in consultation with culturally affiliated Native Americans.
- In the event that human remains are found during the excavation process, the City shall immediately halt all excavation and comply with the provisions of Health and Safety Code §7050.5, CEQA §15064.5(e), and Public Resources Code §5097.98, which mandates the process to be followed in the event of an accidental discovery of human remains in a location other than a dedicated cemetery.

5.8 Biological Resources

Impacts: **Potentially significant impacts to vegetation; potentially significant impacts to wildlife habitat.**

Finding

With the implementation of mitigation measures listed in the MMRP in Section 4 of the Final EIR/EA, impacts to biological resources would not be significant. The City would be responsible for implementation of these mitigation measures.

Facts in Support of Finding

A number of trees and shrubs would be removed for the proposed project that are potentially used as wildlife habitat. Mitigation is provided to ensure that impacts to vegetation and wildlife would remain below the level of significance.

Mitigation Measures

Potentially significant impacts to biological resources would be reduced to a level of insignificance through implementation of the following required mitigation measures:

- Landscaping shall be provided along the Del Amo Boulevard extension, including the median and parkway. Landscaping design will be consistent with the City General Plan and applicable City design guidelines. Low-water use or drought tolerant plants shall be used together with water efficient irrigation systems.
- All tree and shrub removal shall occur outside of the nesting bird season (April 1- October 1) for migratory nongame native bird species, in accordance with the federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act. If the nesting season cannot be avoided, a pre-construction nesting bird survey shall be conducted to determine the presence/absence of nesting birds. Any positive findings of presence of nesting birds shall be followed by consultation with the California Department of Fish and Game.

5.9 Public Services and Utilities

Impacts: Potentially significant impacts to utilities; potentially significant impacts from solid waste generation.

Finding

With the implementation of mitigation measures listed in the MMRP in Section 4 of the Final EIR/EA, impacts to public services and utilities would not be significant. The City would be responsible for implementation of these mitigation measures.

Facts in Support of Finding

Utilities. A number of pipes, wires, and underground utilities which traverse the site, would be affected by the proposed project. The potential disturbance of underground utilities, including petroleum pipelines, during construction would be a significant impact, as such events could interrupt service or unleash fuel and lead to a possible fire or explosion. Approval from the responsible agencies for the identification and removal or relocation of each utility would be required prior to commencement of construction. Mitigation is provided to reduce impacts to less than significant.

Solid Waste. Operation of the proposed roadway extension would not result in the generation of solid waste. There would be a limited amount of solid waste generated from project construction. Recyclable solid waste such as asphalt and concrete shall be disposed of at an appropriate recycling facility. Solid waste resulting from project construction would be properly disposed of at a certified landfill at the discretion of the hired contractors. Mitigation is provided to ensure that no solid waste impacts would result from project implementation.

Mitigation Measures

Potentially significant impacts to public services and utilities would be reduced to a level of insignificance through implementation of the following required mitigation measures:

- Prior to excavation activities, a detailed utility relocation plan shall be prepared by a Registered Civil Engineer, which outlines the proposed relocation of all utilities along the roadway alignment. This plan shall be submitted to the City Fire Department, Public Works Department, and other City departments for review and approval. All utility relocation activities will be undertaken in accordance with the approved plan prior to construction of the Del Amo Boulevard extension.
- Prior to construction, the construction contractor shall coordinate with all utility providers and provide advance notice to adjacent property owners to minimize disruptions to utility services from utility relocations.
- Solid waste shall be disposed of at recycling facilities and certified landfills, at the discretion of the hired contractor. The project specifications and special provisions shall include guidelines for asphalt and concrete materials to be sent to an appropriate recycling facility and, for proper disposal of non-recyclable solid waste generated during project construction.

6.0 SIGNIFICANT ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS WHICH CANNOT BE REDUCED TO A LEVEL OF INSIGNIFICANCE

This section is prepared in accordance with Section 15126.2(b) of the *CEQA Guidelines*, which requires the discussion of any significant environmental effects that cannot be avoided if a project is implemented. These include impacts that can be mitigated but cannot be reduced to a less than significant level. An analysis of environmental impacts caused by the proposed project has been conducted and is contained in the EIR/EA. As discussed in the environmental impact analysis presented in Chapter 3.0 of the EIR/EA, the proposed project would result in significant unavoidable adverse impacts in the area of transportation and circulation.

6.1 Transportation/Circulation

Impact: Significant unavoidable traffic impacts to eight local intersections.

Finding

Changes or alterations have been required in, or been incorporated into, the project which avoid or substantially lessen the significant environmental effects identified in the EIR/EA. Further mitigation measure to fully mitigate impacts to a less than significant level at these intersections are infeasible because of the built-out nature of the project area and the infeasibility of acquiring right-of-way to widen the roadway to provide additional turn lanes.

Facts in Support of Finding

Regular Operation

Of the 28 intersections analyzed, eight intersections would result in potentially significant impacts as a result of the project. As mentioned in Section 5.2, seven of the eight intersections can be mitigated to below the level of significance. Significant unavoidable traffic impacts would occur at the remaining eight intersections as a result of the project:

- Hawthorne Boulevard at 182nd Street (p.m. peak hour)
- Madrona Avenue at Del Amo Boulevard (both peak hours)
- Hawthorne Boulevard at Torrance Boulevard (a.m. peak hour)
- Crenshaw Boulevard at Maricopa Avenue (both peak hours)
- Anza Avenue at Del Amo Boulevard (p.m. peak hour)
- Prospect Avenue at Anita Street (p.m. peak hour)
- Prospect Avenue at Del Amo Boulevard (p.m. peak hour)
- Prospect Avenue at Torrance Boulevard (both peak hours)

In addition, the EIR/EA found that 10 residential segments would have significant traffic impacts as a result of the proposed project. These intersections are as follows:

- 190th Street between Van Ness Avenue and Western Avenue
- Del Amo Boulevard west of Henrietta Street
- Del Amo Boulevard between Henrietta Street and Anza Avenue
- Del Amo Boulevard between Anza Avenue and Hawthorne Boulevard
- Del Amo Boulevard between Hawthorne Boulevard and Madrona Avenue
- Del Amo Boulevard between Crenshaw Boulevard and Van Ness Avenue
- Del Amo Boulevard between Van Ness Avenue and Western Avenue
- Anza Avenue between 190th Street and Del Amo Boulevard
- Anza Avenue between Del Amo Boulevard and Torrance Avenue
- Crenshaw Boulevard between Maricopa Street and Torrance Boulevard

Mitigation Measures

Mitigation measures were developed for those locations where it was feasible, and their effectiveness was analyzed, as shown in Section 5.2 above. The potential measures, which include operational improvements and potential physical improvements, were designed to increase capacity. Physical improvements involving right-of-way acquisition were not considered since the study area is a relatively built-out area with little or no easily available right-of-way for roadway improvements. No mitigation measures were feasible for the eight intersections that would have significant unavoidable environmental impacts. In addition, no mitigation measures were available for the 10 significantly impacted residential street segments.

7.0 FINDINGS REGARDING ALTERNATIVES TO THE PROPOSED PROJECT

The EIR/EA considers a range of alternatives to the proposed project to provide informed decision-making in accordance with Section 15126.6(a) of the *State CEQA Guidelines*. As described below, the alternatives analyzed in this EIR/EA include: the No Action Alternative; the 55MPH Design Speed with MSE Retaining Wall (Alternative 2); the 55 MPH Design Speed with Type 1 Retaining Wall (Alternative 3); and the 50 MPH Design Speed with MSE Retaining Wall (Alternative 4).

7.1 No Action Alternative

In the No Action Alternative, the proposed roadway extension and widening would not occur; the existing unimproved segment of Del Amo Boulevard would remain between Maple Avenue to Crenshaw Boulevard. Thus, the proposed alternate east-west route between 190th Street and Torrance Boulevard would not be established. The project alignment would remain as an industrial ROW, and the railroad ROW would be undisturbed. East-west traffic in the area would continue to use either 190th Street to the north or Torrance Boulevard to the south as alternative routes to Del Amo Boulevard.

Finding

The No Project Alternative would not meet any of the project objectives and would not alleviate traffic congestion in the project area. Traffic projections for the year 2020 would consist of existing traffic plus a 15 percent ambient traffic growth (general background regional growth). In the year 2020, 21 of the 28 analyzed intersections are projected to operate at Level of Service (LOS) E or F during one or both of the peak hours. These traffic impacts would not be a direct result of the Alternative 1; rather, these impacts

would result due to projected growth in the City and surrounding communities. Of the 28 analyzed intersections, 21 intersections would be impacted in the No Action Alternative. The build alternatives would only impact 15 intersections, seven of which can be reduced to less than significant with the implementation of mitigation measures. Implementation of the No Project Alternative would not reduce the number of impacted intersections in the project area, and would not contribute to traffic dispersion and LOS reduction at a number of intersections in the project vicinity.

7.2 55 MPH Design Speed with MSE Retaining Wall (Alternative 2)

Alternative 2 entails a 0.7-mile extension of Del Amo Boulevard between Crenshaw Boulevard and Maple Avenue, and 0.5 mile of road widening between Maple Avenue and Madrona Avenue/Prairie Avenue. The eastern segment of Del Amo Boulevard currently terminates just west of Crenshaw Boulevard near the entrance to the Dow Chemical manufacturing plant; the western segment terminates at Maple Avenue. The proposed project would connect these two segments of Del Amo Boulevard to provide a continuous road through an industrial ROW. The extension and widening of Del Amo Boulevard would include the following components:

- construction of a new four-lane roadway;
- construction of a new bridge over the Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) railroad tracks;
- realignment of a portion of a railroad spur along the southern boundary of the Exxon-Mobil property;
- construction of mechanically stabilized embankment (MSE) retaining walls;
- drainage improvements;
- relocation of affected utilities;
- relocation/reconstruction of affected off-site facilities;
- modification of the traffic signal at the intersections of Madrona Avenue/Prairie Avenue at Del Amo Boulevard and Crenshaw Boulevard at Del Amo Boulevard;
- installation of a new traffic signal at Maple Avenue; and
- optional bicycle lane and pedestrian facility on the south side of Del Amo Boulevard only.

Alternative 2 would construct the unimproved segment of Del Amo Boulevard and make it a continuous east-west arterial, as set forth in the City's Circulation Element of the General Plan. This alternative would relieve existing and future congestion along adjacent east-west streets in the City, and would improve air quality and decrease noise pollution by improving traffic circulation. It also would improve the LOS at several intersections in the project vicinity. Many intersections would remain at or reach an unacceptable LOS, as forecasted in the year 2020, unless the existing circulation system is improved.

Finding

Alternative 2 would reduce the number of significantly impacted intersections in the traffic projections for the year 2020. Impacts to geology and soils, transportation/circulation, air quality, noise, hazards and hazardous materials, cultural resources, biological resources, and public services and utilities can be reduced to a less than significant level through the implementation of mitigation measures. Significant unavoidable impacts to traffic would remain with Alternative 2

7.3 55 MPH Design Speed with Type 1 Retaining Wall (Alternative 3)

The project components under this alternative would be the same as those identified above for Alternative 2. However, a Type 1 retaining wall would be used for structural support of the elevated roadway instead of an MSE retaining wall as indicated above. (Type 1 retaining walls generally consist of cantilever or stem walls, which are comprised of reinforced concrete and are the most common type of gravity wall.) The alignment for this alternative would be the same as Alternative 2; however, this alternative would have a slightly larger footprint and would require approximately 43,800 cubic yards of additional fill material.

Although the retaining wall would be different under this alternative, the impacts would be similar to Alternative 2. The roadway extension and widening would be the same as Alternative 2 and the proposed use would not change; therefore, impacts related to land use, aesthetics, light, and glare, and cultural resources would be essentially the same as the proposed project. Similarly, impacts related to construction emissions, construction noise, geology and soils, hydrology and water quality, traffic and transportation, and hazards and hazardous materials would be similar to Alternative 2, given that the construction process would be very similar for this alternative.

Finding

Impacts under Alternative 3 would be the same as the impacts for Alternative 2. The level of significance would remain the same for all impact categories, and the mitigation measures would be the same as described Alternative 2. Significant unavoidable impacts would remain the same as Alternative 2 for transportation and circulation.

7.4 50 MPH Design Speed with MSE Retaining Wall (Alternative 4)

The project components under this alternative would be the same as those identified above for Alternative 2; however, a design speed of 50 mph would be applied. The vertical profile alignment would be the main design feature affected by a reduction in design speed. This alternative would allow the use of shorter vertical curves, which would slightly reduce roadway fill requirements and lower retaining wall heights. Motorists would experience slightly “tighter” curves with a smaller turn radius.

This alternative would require approximately 72,000 cubic yards of fill material, 2,800 cubic yards less than required for Alternative 2. Additionally, retaining wall heights would also be slightly reduced. Soil disturbance would be slightly less for this alternative; however, the level of significance of impacts associated with this alternative would be the same as described for Alternative 2. The roadway extension and widening would be the same as Alternative 2 and the proposed use would not change; therefore, impacts related to land use, aesthetics, light, and glare, and cultural resources would be essentially the same as the proposed project. Similarly, impacts related to construction emissions, construction noise, geology and soils, hydrology and water quality, traffic and transportation, and hazards and hazardous materials would be similar to Alternative 2, given that the construction process would be the same for this alternative.

Finding

Impacts under Alternative 4 would be the same as the impacts for Alternative 2. The level of significance would remain the same for all impact categories, and the mitigation measures would be the same as described Alternative 2. Significant unavoidable impacts would remain for transportation and circulation.

7.5 Environmentally Superior Alternative

Due to the reduction in traffic that would result from the build alternatives, either Alternative 2 or 3 would be the environmentally preferred/environmentally superior alternative, as each one would result in similar benefits. However, Alternative 3 would require an additional 43,800 cubic yards of fill material and would utilize a Type 1 wall to support the roadway, which would increase the construction costs. Therefore, Alternative 2 would be the environmentally superior alternative.

8.0 STATEMENT OF OVERRIDING CONSIDERATIONS

The California Environmental Quality Act and Section 15093 of the State CEQA Guidelines provide that:

CEQA requires the decision-maker to balance the benefits of a proposed project against its unavoidable adverse risks in determining whether to approve the project. If the benefits of the proposed project outweigh the unavoidable adverse environmental effects, the adverse impacts may be considered acceptable.

Where the decision of the public agency allows the occurrence of significant effects which are identified in the final EIR but are not at least substantially mitigated, the agency shall state in writing the specific reasons to support its action based on the final EIR and/or other information in the record. This statement may be necessary if the agency also makes finding under Section 15091(a)(2) or (a)(3).

If any agency makes a statement of overriding considerations, the statement should be included in the record of the project approval and should be mentioned in the Notice of Determination.

Project benefits are defined as those improvements or gains to the community that would not occur without the proposed project.

8.1 Impacts from Proposed Project

As stated in Section 7.0, the proposed project would result in significant unavoidable impacts relative to traffic at eight intersections (during operation of the roadway).

8.2 Benefits of the Proposed Project

The City of Torrance finds that the following substantial benefits will occur as a result of approval of the proposed project:

- *Provide an Additional East-West Route Through the City.* The proposed project would provide an additional continuous east-west route between Hawthorne Boulevard and Western Avenue to relieve existing and future congestion along adjacent east-west streets in the City, including 190th Street, 182nd Street, and Torrance Boulevard between the limits of Hawthorne Boulevard and Western

Avenue. The projected traffic congestion for the year 2020 shows that 21 of the 28 intersections analyzed in the traffic study would have a significant increase in LOS. Implementation of the proposed project would alleviate anticipated traffic congestion.

- *Improve Public Safety.* The proposed project would provide direct access for emergency vehicles to the project site and adjacent areas by removing a gap in the roadway. Emergency response times would be reduced by construction of the proposed project.
- *Use of Allocated Funding.* The City has received \$13.1 million in funding for completion of the roadway, which is approximately 70% of the total project cost.
- *Improve Air Quality and Decrease Noise Pollution.* The proposed project would improve projected air quality conditions in the future and decrease noise pollution by improving traffic circulation within the City along east-west corridors, including 190th Street, 182nd Street, and Torrance Boulevard between the limits of Hawthorne Boulevard and Western Avenue. Without the roadway extension and widening, traffic congestion would continue to deteriorate in the future, which would increase air quality pollution and create more noise pollution.
- *Complete Del Amo Boulevard as Programmed.* The project would complete Del Amo Boulevard as programmed in the Southern California Association of Government's (SCAG) approved Regional Comprehensive Plan and Guide (RCPG) and Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), and the approved Federal Statewide Transportation Improvement Program and the Federal Transportation Improvement Plan (FSTIP/FTIP). The goal of these plans is to improve traffic circulation and to address impacts associated with traffic congestion.
- *Complete Del Amo Boulevard as a Major Arterial.* The proposed project would complete Del Amo Boulevard as a major arterial as designated in the City's Circulation Element of the General Plan.
- *Improve Del Amo Boulevard.* The proposed project would improve Del Amo Boulevard as a major highway, as designated in the Los Angeles County Master Plan of Highways, from the Pacific Ocean to the Orange County line. The project would not only connect the existing gap in Del Amo Boulevard, but would also involve landscaping of the parkway and medians, consistent with City design guidelines.

8.3 Statement of Overriding Considerations

The City of Torrance has considered each of the potentially unavoidable adverse environmental impacts identified above (transportation and circulation) in deciding whether to approve the proposed project. Although substantial evidence demonstrates that the unavoidable impacts identified in the EIR/EA will be substantially lessened by the mitigation measures incorporated into the proposed project, the City recognizes that approval of the proposed project will nonetheless result in certain unavoidable and potentially irreversible effects.

After balancing the proposed project's environmental risks with its benefits described above, the City specifically finds that, to the extent that adverse or potentially adverse impacts set forth above have not been mitigated to a level of significance, the specific economic, social, legal, environmental, technological or other benefits of the proposed project described above outweigh the significant effects on the environment. Furthermore, the City specifically finds that any one and each of the aforementioned benefits constitutes a significant consideration sufficient to approve the proposed project despite any one

or more of the unavoidable impacts identified in the EIR/EA. Therefore, each of the aforementioned benefits is adopted as an overriding consideration with respect to each of the significant unavoidable impacts individually. Each overriding consideration is severable from any other consideration should one or more consideration be shown to be legally insufficient for any reason. The Statement of Overriding Considerations for the proposed project is thus adopted.