Appendix D3

Draft Environmental Impact Report

Executive Summary

Purpose and Scope

The subject of this Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) is the Metropolitan Transportation Plan for 2035 (MTP2035) of the Sacramento Area Council of Governments. As the MTP consists of a group of discretionary actions on the part of SACOG, the MTP is subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the State CEQA Guidelines. CEQA requires that state and local government agencies consider the environmental consequences of projects over which they have discretionary authority before taking action on those projects (Public Resources Code 21000 et seq.) Although the individual programs and projects included in the MTP2035 will be implemented by various public agencies, at the regional plan level, which is the subject of this program EIR, SACOG is responsible for carrying out and approving the MTP and as such, is the lead agency for the purpose of preparing the environmental review of the proposed project. This EIR has been prepared pursuant to CEQA and the State CEQA Guidelines (14 California Code of Regulations [CCR] 15000 et seq.) by SACOG.

An environmental impact report (EIR) is an informational document used in state, regional, and local planning and decision-making processes to meet the requirements of CEQA. The EIR for a proposed project must disclose environmental effects that cannot be avoided; growth-inducing effects; effects found not to be significant; and significant cumulative impacts of all past, present, and reasonably anticipated future projects. In addition, an EIR must identify potential methods of avoiding or reducing effects (i.e., mitigation measures) and alternatives to the proposed project or program.

The purpose of this EIR is to analyze, on a program level, the environmental effects of the MTP for 2035, and to provide local decision-makers and the public with an objective analysis of the potential environmental consequences of implementation of the proposed set of improvements to the metropolitan transportation system. The information presented in this document is intended to provide a full disclosure of the potential impacts and to increase public awareness and participation in the regional transportation planning process.

This EIR concentrates on the long-term environmental impacts of the MTP components and provides the basis for further project-level CEQA (and National Environmental Policy Act [NEPA]) compliance for implementation of future transportation projects. It is anticipated that this EIR will assist SACOG's member jurisdictions and Caltrans in future project-specific environmental reviews. The focus of this Draft Program EIR is to highlight potential impacts which will need to be further evaluated once precise scopes, designs, and locations of transportation facilities are more clearly defined. This document also recommends mitigation measures which

should be incorporated into the environmental documentation for specific projects and which would be the responsibility of outside agencies to implement.

The following topics are analyzed in this EIR:

- aesthetics;
- agricultural resources;
- air quality;
- biological resources;
- cultural resources;
- energy and global climate change;
- geology, soils and seismicity;
- hazards and hazardous materials;
- hydrology and water quality;
- land use and planning;
- noise;
- population and housing;
- public services;
- noise;
- public services;
- recreation;
- transportation;
- utilities and service systems;
- cumulative impacts;
- and growth-related impacts.

Purpose of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan — Why Is this Project Being Proposed?

The MTP2035 is a 28-year long range plan, covering the years 2007 through 2035, for transportation strategies in a six-county metropolitan planning area centering on Sacramento, California. By federal law, long-range regional transportation plans are to be updated at least every four years. The Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) is the designated metropolitan planning organization (MPO) for the counties of Sacramento, Sutter, Yolo, and Yuba, and for Placer and El Dorado Counties except for the Lake Tahoe Basin, as shown in Figure ES-1.

The MTP for 2035 outlines the region's transportation needs, sets goals and objectives, and proposes solutions to meet them. It is a program of related actions designed to coordinate and manage future transportation improvements among the various counties and agencies operating within the region. The MTP covers a wide range of transportation issues, including how the land use pattern affects travel behavior, development of multiple modes of transportation, rush-hour congestion, special needs of people with limited mobility, goods movement, and long-distance travel between the SACOG region and other areas, and the air quality impacts related to travel. The MTP for 2035 is designed to guide future transportation investment decisions in a balanced manner, sufficient to make needed improvements in all modes of surface transportation, within the limits of resources. To receive federal or state funding, projects nominated by cities, counties, and agencies must be consistent with the Metropolitan Transportation Plan.

Background — How Did We Get to this Point?

In 2002, SACOG adopted the Metropolitan Transportation Plan for 2025 (MTP 2025), an MTP update that involved three years of public involvement, a new set of goals and guiding principles, and major initiatives including new regional funding programs, connector projects, and expansion of public transit. The MTP 2025 Final Environmental Impact Report was certified in June 2002.

In October 2004 SACOG lost its ability to demonstrate conformity to the 1994 State Implementation Plan (SIP) for the Sacramento Air Basin, causing an "air quality conformity lapse" to occur for that part of the region. The lapse was caused because the 1994 SIP – a plan based on older modeling and planning assumptions – did not use the latest planning assumptions and the latest emissions model, as required by federal transportation conformity regulations. As a result, no new air quality conformity determinations could be made until a new SIP, including a new motor vehicle emissions budget, was approved by the Environmental Protection Agency. For the Yuba-Sutter Air Basin, there was no air-quality conformity lapse and MTP 2025 remained in effect until July 2005.

In October 2004, SACOG approved the Interim Metropolitan Transportation Plan 2004/05 (Interim MTP) that covered only the Sacramento Air Basin. This plan contained only air-quality exempt projects, such as bicycle and pedestrian projects. The Interim MTP was intended to be a plan with a short life, effective only until a new Rate-of-Progress SIP (ROP SIP) and a new MTP that restored the air-quality non-exempt projects originally shown in the MTP 2025 could be developed. As a consequence, the Interim MTP contained only 3 years of projects, reserving the balance of funding through 2027 as un-committed funds. An Addendum to the environmental impact report (EIR) for MTP 2025 that addressed the Interim MTP was adopted in October 2004.

In July 2005, SACOG approved another interim plan, called the Metropolitan Transportation Plan 2027 (MTP 2027) that unified all six counties in one plan. For the Sacramento Air Basin, the MTP 2027 simply incorporated the Interim MTP. Because the Yuba-Sutter Air Basin area had been covered by the MTP 2025, which was expiring in July 2005, the MTP 2027 update was needed so that projects could continue to be implemented. Federal metropolitan transportation planning regulations require that SACOG develop a long-range transportation plan with no less than a twenty year planning horizon. Again, this plan was developed to enable the entire region (in addition to the Yuba-Sutter Air Basin) to continue to build and operate projects in the period during which a new ROP SIP was being developed, as well as an MTP that would be able to restore the original vision of the MTP 2025. An Addendum to the EIR for MTP 2025 that addressed the MTP 2027 was adopted in July 2005.

The 2006 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (2006 MTP), which restored the MTP 2025 while extending the horizon year to 2027 and adding a few projects, was developed by SACOG concurrently with the ROP SIP for the Sacramento Air Basin. An addendum to the EIR for MTP 2025 that addressed the 2006 MTP was adopted in March 2006.

From 2002 to 2007 SACOG was also conducting an extensive growth visioning process, called Blueprint, and conducting extensive public outreach and technical research to support the development of this comprehensive MTP update. The Blueprint concept map for 2050, and a set of growth principles, was unanimously adopted by the SACOG Board in December, 2004. It is a voluntary strategy that relies on the individual actions of local governments for successful implementation. The transportation and air emissions models show substantial travel and air quality impacts would result if the region is able to successfully implement the Blueprint, including shorter car trips, higher numbers of transit, walking and biking trips, and less air pollution that would result from a Base Case (trend) development pattern. The Blueprint principles that create these benefits include: efficient (compact) development, mixing land uses (jobs-housing balance), taking advantage of existing assets (through redevelopment and infill), providing a greater variety of housing choices (including small lot single family and attached housing), preserving natural resources, and high quality design. Take together, these land use practices increase transportation choices.

The land use pattern that forms the foundation for the 2035 MTP is based on the policy directions cities and counties are pursuing with the land use patterns and the estimated performance of the market. The market performance is influenced by state and federal regulations as well as local policies and codes. The land use pattern for the 2035 MTP is significantly more consistent with the Blueprint growth principles than the land use pattern that was the basis for the prior MTP. This is because many of SACOG's members have chosen to actively implement the voluntary growth strategy, and the market is also headed in a direction that in many ways is consistent with the Blueprint growth principles. This is especially true in the areas of increasing the variety of available housing products, more compact development, and increased infill and redevelopment.

The MTP is a long-range comprehensive plan for the region's multi-modal transportation system and one of SACOG's primary statutory responsibilities. An up-to-date MTP is a legal requirement if projects are to use federal or state transportation funds. Under federal and state law, SACOG must adopt an MTP and update it at least every four years if the region is to receive federal or state

transportation dollars. The MTP provides project priorities for public transit, streets/roads, bicycles, and pedestrian improvements.

SACOG is also the state-designated Regional Transportation Planning Agency (RTPA) for the counties of Sacramento, Yolo, Sutter and Yuba. A RTPA is a multi-county or county-level agency responsible for regional transportation planning to meet state planning mandates. The Placer County Transportation Planning Agency (PCTPA) and the El Dorado County Transportation Commission (EDCTC) are the state-designated RTPAs for those counties. SACOG prepares the MTP for the entire 6-county region, and under Memoranda of Understanding with the PCTPA and EDCTC, incorporate the regional transportation plans (RTPs) of those counties into the MTP.

Environmental Setting — What Is the Current Status of the Area to Be Affected by the MTP2035?

The study area for the MTP2035 includes the counties of Sacramento, Sutter, Yolo, and Yuba, and Placer and El Dorado Counties except for the Tahoe Basin. This area – also referred to as the Sacramento Metropolitan Planning Area (the MTP Plan Area) - is shown in Figure ES-1. Located in the north San Joaquin Valley in Central California, the planning area encompasses 6,500 square miles of land and is bounded by Colusa, Napa and Solano counties to the west, Butte and Nevada counties to the north, the Lake Tahoe Basin to the east, and Amador and San Joaquin counties to the south. The SACOG Region has 22 incorporated cities within its boundaries: Auburn, Citrus Heights, Colfax, Davis, Elk Grove, Folsom, Galt, Isleton, Lincoln, Live Oak, Marysville, Placerville, Rancho Cordova, Rocklin, Roseville, Sacramento, West Sacramento, Wheatland, Winters, Woodland and Yuba City, as well as the Town of Loomis. The study area consists of transportation routes, including highways, rail alignments, bicycle trails, state routes, roads, and Caltrans right-of-way in the MTP Plan Area. The major components of the existing metropolitan transportation system within the SACOG region include three interstate highways, several state highways and local arterial roadways, a deep water shipping port, a major international airport, numerous general aviation airports, freight and passenger rail service, and a public transit system that includes 37 miles of light rail transit service, and several thousand miles of regional and local bus routes throughout the MTP Plan Area.

Several freeways and state highways serve the MTP Plan Area. Interstate 5, Interstate 80, SR99, SR70, and US50 all converge in Sacramento. These four highways, combined with a number of other highways and surface streets, provide access for communities throughout the SACOG region. Caltrans has the responsibility for maintaining and operating these highways. The regional roadway network is the largest mover of people and goods in the Sacramento area. I-5 travels north and south through the region while Interstate 80 runs east and west. The two intersect near downtown Sacramento and provide commute access as well as inter-regional travel for both people and goods throughout the plan area. The large majority of trips in the Sacramento region are made in private vehicles. During peak commute hours, when congestion is highest and the transportation system is used at greatest capacity, 92% of person-trips are made in private vehicles (either by a single occupant vehicle or a carpool/vanpool) and 82% of person-trips are made by people driving alone. Sharing a ride is more common in off-peak periods. In 1993, during peak periods, drivers faced daily congestion on 17% (27 out of 160 miles) of greater Sacramento urban freeways but 38% (61 miles) of freeways are congested today (SACOG, 2005).

Local roadways within the MTP Plan Area consist of arterials, collector streets, and residential or local streets. Some of these roads are considered "regionally significant" and several MTP projects are proposed for these roads. Local roads and streets provide direct access to homes, businesses, and industrial operations and include most principal urban and rural arterials, minor arterials, and collector streets. These roads provide access between neighboring locations and offer routes from the urbanized areas of communities onto the state highway system.

Transit service in the region is currently provided by 13 public transit operators and two private non-profit Consolidated Transportation Services agencies of varied size and type of service. These operators range from very large systems, such as the Sacramento Regional Transit District (RT) that operates 250 buses, 40 rail cars and 40 miles of track, to the very small systems with considerably less fleet. The Sacramento region also has access to passenger rail service through Amtrak. Three basic long haul system trains – the Coast Starlight (Los Angeles to Seattle), the California Zephyr (Oakland to Chicago), and the San Joaquins (Bakersfield to Oakland) – pass through the SACOG region with stops in Sacramento, Davis, and Roseville, and connecting bus service to Stockton. The region is also served by State supported passenger service; within the MTP Plan Area, the Capitol Corridor service operated by Amtrak is an intercity passenger train system serving Placer, Sacramento, and Yolo counties. It operates 32 round trip trains between Sacramento and Oakland, and is the third busiest Amtrak-operated route in the nation. SACOG provides support to the Capitol Corridor Joint Powers Authority, which provides administration and management of the rail service. Within the region, transit currently carries less than 1% of all daily trips, about 4% of commute trips and 20% of commute trips into downtown Sacramento. (SACOG, 2005) Travel by public transit is highest in the peak periods, but still not even 3% of total regional peak period trips. (SACOG, 2005)

The regional goods movement system within the MTP Plan Area is a complex network of highways, rail lines, streets, waterways, and airports. Freight movements are predominantly truck trips but also include air cargo (with pickup and delivery by truck), waterborne shipments (with inland transport by truck or rail), and rail carload service (direct or transloaded). The highways and rail lines converging and radiating in the SACOG region make it a crossroads for goods movements between other regions. Interstate 5 is considered the "backbone" of the state's highway system, providing a link between the Central Valley and the nation's largest international gateway to trade – the ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach. It is also the West Coast's only north-south truck thoroughfare, linking Seattle with Los Angeles. Interstate 80 provides the main corridor for goods movement between the Bay Area, Sacramento, and the areas east of the Sierra. Nevertheless, over 80% of truck trips in our region have either an origin or a destination (or both) within the region. Some 20% or fewer truck trips are just "passing through" the region.

In the absence of a network of inter-suburban highways, more and more truck traffic is being moved onto arterials. This has become even more pronounced as manufacturing, warehousing, and distribution centers move to the suburbs, and as new developments appear in areas with limited highway or freeway access and no rail access. All trips with an origin or destination in the region must typically utilize a truck for the "last mile" of a trip, and must typically use a local street or arterial for some -and in many cases all- of that trip. This becomes more of an impact on smaller, older streets that were not designed for today's larger trucks, and also becomes more noticeable on roadways where trucks must compete for limited capacity with commuter traffic.

The through movements of goods occur mostly with truck trips, but also include substantial volumes of carload and intermodal rail traffic via the Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR). The UPRR operates two main lines through the area. One runs east and west through Roseville, Sacramento, and Davis. This line ultimately connects Oakland and Salt Lake City. The north-south line passes through Sacramento, Roseville, and Marysville as it connects Los Angeles and points south with Portland to the north.

Due to its geography, California's Central Valley has the greatest potential to develop air quality problems of anywhere in the nation. The Coast Range on the west and the Sierra on the east, combined with the summer inversion layer that rests on top of the region, all contribute to trapping air pollution in the valley. With a projected population increase of another million over the next 25 years, the region will continue to face an enormous challenge in meeting and maintaining state and federal health-based air quality standards. Failure to do so will have a significant impact on the region's quality of life and economy.

Description of the Proposed Project — What Is the Project that Is Being Analyzed?

The Proposed Project, MTP2035, consists of a "revenue constrained element", which includes projects supported by revenues that are reasonably expected to be available during the 28-year planning period, per the budget limits that are required by federal metropolitan transportation planning guidance. It also includes a "vision" element of a transportation system that is generally 10% above the revenues projected for the revenue constrained plan.

The MTP is a performance based plan that has been designed to provide a system that reduces vehicle miles traveled per household, holds growth in congestion to about 10%, even with a 50% growth in population, and increased transit mode share by 150%, which results in far better performance than the increasing vehicle miles traveled, a 58% increase in congestion, and 30% increased in transit mode share that resulted from MTP 2025. The basis for the improved performance lies in the plan's design to serve more compact development patterns with more infill redevelopment, mixed uses, and a much better jobs/housing balance than that of the MTP 2025. An estimated 75% of the improved performance of MTP2035 is directly correlated to its underlying land use allocation. The MTP2035 includes a better mix of activities in local communities that use the road and transit system differently, has more investments in arterials than freeways, and offers opportunities for more effective bus service, walking, and bicycle travel. The Proposed Project is designed to provide a balance of all modes in all of the key corridors. The proposed MTP2035 includes various combinations of multi-modal projects, including:

- Projects on local streets and roads: For the roadway system, a grid of improved arterial streets with sidewalks and bicycle lanes is emphasized. Road projects sponsored by local jurisdictions include proposals to widen roads, improve intersections, create expressways on local roads, complete new construction, and implement operational improvements. The plan focuses on ensuring that the arterial system performs well for the increased number of local trips, to support infill and compact development without pushing it outward, due to increased congestion, and provides a strong grid network (which offers alternative routes) wherever land uses and barriers allow. The MTP provides for a "complete streets" concept, where the right-of-way is designed for many

types of users modes of travel together, including pedestrian, bicyclists and transit as well as automobiles.

- Projects on the region's public transit systems: The region has fourteen public transit operators with capital and operating needs. Projects that provide a wide spectrum of transit options are included in the MTP2035, which emphasizes widespread and frequent bus service on arterial streets with new services and strategic rail investments for transit. More intensive transit service is proposed, providing 15-minute or less service on many corridors. BRT, express and local bus services are included, with large increases in local fixed route bus, paratransit and neighborhood shuttles. Cost effective light rail and streetcar extensions are included, along with operational improvements to improve rail service frequencies. Proposals to build passenger rail stations for intercity and commuter rail services, extensions of light rail transit, and new bus services. Additional trips are also proposed on the existing Capitol Corridor regional rail service, provided by Caltrans/Amtrak through a Joint Powers Authority of which SACOG is a member. These increased transit options will provide better ability to match transit type to the density of surrounding development and service demand. In all, the plan increases transit service throughout the MTP Plan Area by 150%.

- Projects on the state and federal highway systems: Caltrans District 3 has jurisdiction over maintenance and construction activities on state highways and interstates within the MTP Plan Area. The MTP2035 and alternatives include several types of projects proposed for these facilities. These projects include proposals to widen highways, construct or reconstruct interchanges, and create expressways on all highway facilities in the MTP Plan Area. The MTP includes new auxiliary and carpool lanes on all freeways within the plan area. An auxiliary lane provides additional capacity between interchanges by adding a lane at an on-ramp, and merging it into the next downstream off-ramp. The MTP adds carpool lanes in many interior areas of the freeway system, particularly serving suburban job centers, where it will take time to build up job densities to the point that transit become a serious option for commuting. Increased frequency of express bus service is included to maximize the capacity of the carpool lanes and to give transit a travel time advantage. The plan also focuses on accommodating trucks on the highway system, to the greatest extent possible. Reducing overall congestion is important to trucks, as they represent the equivalent of 2 – 4 automobiles in stop and go traffic. Goods movement would be most benefited by the MTP's strategic investments in new freeway lanes, new roadways connecting activity centers and geometrically improved interchanges. Additionally, new or widened bridges are proposed to span the Sacramento, Feather and American rivers. The bridges are included in order to provide access for transit, and to focus on containing the cross access to levels that are no greater than today's congestion, thereby minimizing the number of new bridges to be built.

- Projects that support investments: Increased investment in road maintenance, traffic operational improvements, bicycle and pedestrian facilities and land use projects consistent with Blueprint principles are key components of MTP2035. The concept of "complete streets" which are designed for many types of users and modes together instead of favoring automobile use only is thoroughly incorporated in this MTP.

Table ES -1 lists the projects included in the proposed project. The full list of projects to be included in the Proposed Project Alternative is provided in Appendix A.

Project Objectives — What Is the MTP2035 Intended to Accomplish?

SACOG's purpose in proposing the project is to provide a strategy to approach the many challenges faced by the Sacramento region as the population grows and the region expands over the next few decades. SACOG wants to develop a better managed transportation system for the region, based upon a more compact urban form. SACOG's mission is to "Deliver transportation projects, providing public information and serving as a dynamic forum for regional planning and collaboration in the greater Sacramento Metropolitan Area." In developing the MTP for 2035, the SACOG Board of Directors has defined specific principles, indicators and performance measures upon which to base the MTP and to use for decision-making, as it pertains to the agency's mission. They have been designed to pursue and assess the effective management of planning, programming, and transportation funding, which are integral to delivering transportation projects. The intent of the MTP2035 is to accommodate the expected growth in demand for transportation in the region through a multi-modal approach intended to achieve the following principles:

Access & Mobility
Improve opportunities for businesses and citizens to easily access goods, jobs, services and housing.

Equity & Choice
Provide real, viable travel choices for all people throughout our diverse region.

Economic Vitality
Efficiently connect people to jobs and get goods to market.

Environmental Quality and Sustainability
Minimize direct and indirect transportation impacts on the environment for cleaner air and natural resource protection.

Financial Stewardship
A transportation system that delivers cost-effective results that are feasible to construct and maintain.

Smart Land Use
Design a transportation system to support good growth patterns, including increased housing and transportation options, focusing more growth inward and improving the economic viability of rural areas.

Summary of Environmental Impacts and Recommended Mitigation — What Are the Environmental Impacts of the MTP2035 and How Will They Be Mitigated?

The environmental analysis incorporated in this Draft EIR identifies the environmental impacts of the Proposed MTP2035 Project, the level of the impact, and the proposed mitigation measures. Table ES-2 contains a summary of impacts for each environmental resource area, and describes significant impacts of the Proposed MTP2035 Project and the mitigation measures identified to reduce those impacts to a less-than-significant level, where such measures are available. A complete description of the impacts and mitigation measures summarized in Table ES-2 is provided in Chapters 4 – 19 of the Draft EIR. The mitigation measures SACOG is responsible for implementing is in a table at the end of this chapter. This report identifies the following types of impacts:

- a *less-than-significant* impact is considered to cause no substantial adverse change in the environment and requires no mitigation measures,
- a *significant* impact is considered to cause a substantial adverse effect on the environment but can be reduced to a less-than-significant level by implementing mitigation measures,
- a *significant unavoidable* impact is considered to cause a substantial adverse effect on the environment for which feasible mitigation measures are not available to reduce the impact to a less-than-significant level, and
- a *beneficial* impact is considered to cause a positive change in the environment.

Summary of Significant Unavoidable Impacts — What Are the Environmental Impacts that Cannot Be Mitigated?

A significant and unavoidable impact is one that would cause a substantial adverse effect on the environment and for which no mitigation is available to reduce the impact to a less-than-significant level. The significant and unavoidable impacts of the proposed project were discussed in detail in Chapters 4 - 19 and above and are summarized in Table ES-2. The proposed project would have the following significant and unavoidable impacts:

AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

The following significant and unavoidable impact is associated with agricultural resources:

Impact AG - 1: Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance to non-agricultural use

Implementation of the following mitigation measures would reduce the impact identified above, but not to a less-than-significant level.

Mitigation Measure AG - 1: Develop Rural-Urban Connections Strategy and Create Best Practices Toolkit

Mitigation Measure AG - 2: Evaluate the Potential for Direct Farmland Conversion at the Project Level and Avoid, Minimize, and Compensate for Loss of Farmland

Mitigation Measure AG – 3: Identify Open Spaces Areas to be Preserved through Dedication or Fee Payment

LAND USE AND PLANNING

The following significant and unavoidable impact is associated with land use and planning:

Impact LU-6: Concurrent implementation of the proposed plan and forecast development of residential and employment land uses would result in expansion of urban areas and changes in land use and the character of neighborhoods and districts in the Sacramento Region

Implementation of the following mitigation measures would reduce the impact identified above, but not to a less-than-significant level.

Mitigation Measure LU-6: Continue to Implement the Sacramento Region's Blueprint growth strategy through the Community Design Grant Program and other Implementation Programs

ENERGY AND GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE

The following significant and unavoidable impact is associated with energy:

Impact ENE - 1: Construction Effects on Regional Energy Usage

Implementation of the following mitigation measures would reduce the impact identified above, but not to a less-than-significant level.

Mitigation Measure ENE – 1: Incentives for Energy Conservation Practices

NOISE

The following significant and unavoidable impact is associated with noise:

Impact NOI-3: Exposure of Noise Sensitive Land Use to Increased Noise from the Operation of New Roadway and Highway Facilities

Impact NOI-4: Exposure of Noise Sensitive Land Use to Increased Noise from the Operation of Expanded or Transit Operations

Implementation of the following mitigation measures would reduce the impact identified above, but not to a less-than-significant level.

Mitigation Measure NOI-2: Employ Measures to Reduce Noise from Transportation Systems

T R A N S P O R T A T I O N

The following significant and unavoidable impact is associated with transportation:

Impact TRN-3: Substantial Increase in Congested Vehicle Miles Traveled per Household

Implementation of the following mitigation measures would reduce the impacts identified above, but not to a less-than-significant level.

Mitigation Measure ENE – 8: Adopt Transportation Pricing Policy

Mitigation Measure ENE - 9: Create Public Education Program on Individual Transportation Behavior and Climate Change

Mitigation Measure ENE – 11: Adopt Regional Parking Regulation Policy to Provide Incentives for Use of Alternative Modes

Mitigation Measure ENE – 12: Adopt Safe Routes to School Policy and Implement Pilot Program and Conduct Workshop with Cities, Counties and School Districts to Identify other Opportunities for Collaboration that may reduce Greenhouse Emissions

Mitigation Measure ENE – 15: Adopt a "Complete Streets" Policy

Mitigation Measure LU - 2: Initiate a "Complete Streets" Technical Assistance Program

Significant and Irreversible Environmental Changes

CEQA defines the significant and irreversible changes that would be caused by the proposed alternatives should they be implemented, as the use of nonrenewable resources during the initial and continued phases of a project that require a large commitment of such resources that may make unlikely the future removal or nonuse of the resources.

As discussed in Chapter 5, *Agricultural Resources*, an estimated 1,998 acres of farmland within the MTP Plan Area would be converted to new roadways. Most converted land would be in the form of long, narrow bands adjacent to roadways (lane improvements or modifications), not large, contiguous parcels. The magnitude of this impact won't be fully known until design of improvements (facilities) is completed. However, effect would represent a significant irreversible change to the environment because open space would be permanently converted.

Energy is a non-renewable resource. As discussed in Chapter 18, *Transportation*, vehicle trips would not be reduced and vehicle miles traveled would continue to increase with the No-Project Alternative. As discussed in Chapter 9, *Energy and Global Climate Change*, under the No Project Alternative, the SACOG region would consume 206,200 billion British Thermal Units (BTUs) from transportation fossil fuel combustion. With the implementation of the MTP2035, the transportation sector would consume approximately 191,100 billion BTUs from fossil fuel combustion in 2035. Therefore, the proposed MTP2035 project would reduce annual energy consumption by 5,100 billion BTUs in 2035 as compared to the No Project Alternative. Since the regional alternatives include projects that are common to the MTP2035, and the No-Project Alternative would result in higher overall energy consumption as compared to the proposed MTP2035 project, it is likely that the No Project Alternative would result in higher energy consumption than the regional alternatives. However, all alternatives would involve commitments of non-renewable energy resources. This would represent a significant and irreversible change to the environment.

As discussed in Chapter 13, *Land Use and Planning*, the MTP2035 will be implemented concurrently with substantial residential, commercial, and industrial development in the Sacramento region over the next 28 years. SACOG projects that 1.3 million new residents and 540,000 new jobs will be added during this time period. This growth will require the conversion or redevelopment of considerable land areas in the region. SACOG estimates that about 139,588 acres will be converted to accommodate this planned growth. This development represents conversion of approximately 3.5 percent of the land in the Sacramento region to urban uses over the next 28 years. Besides the land converted to urban uses, currently urbanized land will be intensified with infill development. This would represent a significant and irreversible change to the environment.

Summary of Growth Related Impacts — Which Alternative Has the Potential to Lead to Growth?

Section 15126.2(d) of the State CEQA Guidelines provides guidance for analyzing the growth-related impacts of a project. Growth can be induced in several ways, including the elimination of obstacles to growth or stimulation of economic activity within a region. Based on the standards of significance contained in Section 15126.2(d) a project is considered to be directly or indirectly growth-inducing if it:

- fosters economic or population growth, or the construction of additional housing in the surrounding environment; or
- removes obstacles to growth (e.g., through development of physical infrastructure, roadways, and utilities)
- encourage and facilitate other activities that could significantly affect the environment, either individually or cumulatively.

The MTP for 2035 has been developed as a response to the projected population of 3,335,106 persons in the MTP Plan Area by 2035, which represents a 63 percent increase compared to the year 2005. The proposed MTP2035 provides improvements to keep pace with the anticipated transportation needs of this population growth. This capacity will be provided in order to accommodate the projected regional population growth, and no additional capacity that could

induce growth beyond that projected by SACOG, and in accordance with local general plans will be provided. In fact, while the proposed improvements are anticipated to keep pace with the projected growth to the extent feasible, additional improvements may be needed in future MTPs to fully accommodate all of the transportation needs of this growing population. The MTP2035 is designed to serve the current and planned growth in population, housing, and employment within the next 28 years in the MTP Plan Area. The proposed project's alignment with these population and employment forecasts would therefore constitute a growth accommodating, rather than growth inducing impact. As such, the proposed project would not result in a significant environmental impact on regional resources due to an unintended increase in population.

The increase of 1.3 million people in the region by 2035 will necessitate additional housing units. This growth was assumed in the SACOG regional housing needs assessment. The proposed project's alignment with the regional growth forecasts, and consequently, the housing elements, would therefore constitute a growth accommodating, rather than growth inducing impact. As such, the proposed project would not result in a significant environmental impact on regional housing resources.

On a regional level, the transportation improvements in the MTP2035 could remove obstacles to growth and therefore could have a significant growth-inducing effect. The proposed transportation improvements are aligned with the growth projected within the MTP Plan Area, but the proposed transportation improvements will likely make areas of potential growth more accessible through the alteration and development of roadway and other facilities. Obstacles to growth could also be removed because the proposed improvements are anticipated to keep pace with the projected growth to the extent feasible. However, additional improvements may be needed in the future to fully accommodate all of the transportation needs of this growing population. Through the incorporation of smart growth principles into the general plans of the member agencies SACOG's member jurisdictions have created a smart growth approach to planning regional transportation improvements that support updated general plans, redevelopment plans, and concept plans with a more compact development focus. Therefore, the proposed project is consistent with projected and planned growth in the region overall.

On a project level, environmental review will be conducted on a project-by-project basis. Under CEQA, such review must necessarily consider growth-inducing impacts.

Growth-inducing impacts can occur if a project encourages and facilitates other activities that could significantly affect the environment, either individually or cumulatively. The environmental effects of the MTP2035 are discussed throughout this Draft EIR. Impacts on the environment have been identified, and, when possible mitigated. Where SACOG could not make a determination on the program level regarding the significance of an impact, it has proposed mitigation measures that could be utilized by implementing agencies.

As stated above, growth in the MTP Plan Area is inevitable, but design of the proposed MTP2035 was guided by adherence the smart growth principles found in the SACOG Blueprint. The projects proposed in the MTP2035, when constructed, will greatly improve the region's roadways, highways, and transit network.

In summary, on a regional level, the transportation improvements in the MTP2035 would not have a significant growth-inducement effect because the proposed transportation systems lag behind the

growth that has already occurred within the MTP Plan Area. Through the incorporation of smart growth principles into the general plans of the member agencies SACOG's member jurisdictions have created a smart growth approach to planning regional transportation improvements that support updated general plans, redevelopment plans, and concept plans with a more compact development focus. Therefore, the proposed transportation improvements are consistent with projected and planned growth in the region overall and would not adversely alter land designated for future development in existing local plans.

Alternatives Carried Forward for Analysis

The alternatives described here include the No- Project Alternative and three regional alternatives in addition to the proposed MTP2035 project, which is described in Chapter 3. During the development of the proposed MTP, SACOG developed strategies that are included in the range of reasonable alternatives for the proposed MTP that are analyzed in this program EIR. All alternatives considered for the proposed MTP for 2035 includes various combinations of multi-modal projects, including:

- Projects on local streets and roads: Road projects sponsored by local jurisdictions include proposals to widen roads, improve intersections, create expressways on local roads, complete new construction, and implement operational improvements. Projects to improve existing bridges or to construct new bridges are also included.

- Projects on the region's public transit systems: The region has fourteen public transit operators with capital and operating needs. Projects that provide a wide spectrum of transit options are included in the MTP2035 and alternatives, including proposals to build passenger rail stations for intercity and commuter rail services, extensions of light rail transit, and new bus services. Additional trips are also proposed on the existing Capitol Corridor regional rail service, provided by Caltrans/Amtrak through a Joint Powers Authority of which SACOG is a member.

- Projects on the state and federal highway systems: Caltrans District 3 has jurisdiction over maintenance and construction activities on state highways and interstates within the MTP Plan Area. The MTP2035 and alternatives include several types of projects proposed for these facilities. These projects include proposals to widen highways, construct or reconstruct interchanges, and create expressways on all highway facilities in the MTP Plan Area.

- Projects that support investments: Increased investment in road maintenance, traffic operational improvements, bicycle and pedestrian facilities are key components of MTP2035. The concept of "complete streets" which are designed for many types of users and modes together instead of favoring automobile use only is thoroughly incorporated in this MTP.

The three regional alternatives that were developed throughout the public and technical process are described in more detail below. The proposed MTP2035 project and these regional alternatives

have many common transportation investments; about 3/4ths of the total funds in all alternatives is dedicated to investments that are the same. All three regional alternatives have a large increase in local bus and neighborhood shuttle services. The list of projects common to the MTP2035 and these alternatives is included in Appendix A.

1) No Project Alternative (Build-out of 2006 MTP): The State CEQA Guidelines (Section 15126.6[e]) require consideration of a no-project alternative that represents the existing conditions, as well as what would reasonably be expected to occur in the foreseeable future if the project were not approved. When a project involves the revision of an existing plan, the no-project alternative should reflect continuation of the existing plan. For purposes of this analysis, it is assumed that, SACOG's existing adopted transportation plan, the 2006 MTP, which was approved in March 2006, is continued into the future. It is assumed that the set of transportation projects contained in the 2006 MTP would likely be carried out, and that the land uses and population estimates that were assumed as the basis for the 2006 MTP are extrapolated to the planning horizon year 2035. In doing so, the projected impacts of the proposed MTP2035 are compared to the impacts that would occur under the 2006 MTP.

The three regional alternatives represent multi-modal scenarios focused on nine key corridors that represent a large percentage of the region's travel today. In addition to new projects for the planning horizon year 2035, Regional Alternative 1, and all regional alternatives, also assume land use projections and population estimates based in year 2035, similar to those underlying the proposed MTP2035 project. These alternatives are as follows:

2) Regional Alternative 1 (Auxiliary Lanes, Streetcars, and Bus Rapid Transit Emphasis):

The focus of Regional Alternative 1 is that it has the fewest new and expanded roads that are six lanes or greater. This alternative adds more miles of new auxiliary lanes than the other two alternatives, and the fewest new high-occupancy-vehicle (HOV) or carpool lane miles of the alternatives. This alternative also adds several miles of regular, or mixed flow, freeway lanes. There are also expanded and new bridges over the American and Sacramento Rivers, to improve connectivity to Downtown Sacramento, and the Feather River between Yuba City and Marysville. Transit options emphasized in this scenario are light rail, streetcars and local buses. The most extensive streetcar system would link West Sacramento and Downtown Sacramento, with streetcars also added in Rancho Cordova, Roseville and as a link from the light rail stop on Watt Avenue on I-80 into southwest Placer County. Light rail extensions south from Meadowview to Cosumnes River College and from the Downtown Sacramento train station north into the Richards Boulevard area are included. The Capitol Corridor regional rail service would continue to operate as it does today, with no significant expansion of service. Regional Alternative 1 also features a comprehensive Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) service throughout Sacramento and southwestern Placer counties.

3) Regional Alternative 2 (Freeway Expansion, Regional and Light Rail Emphasis)

Regional Alternative 2 is focused on adding the most new and expanded major roads, freeways and expressways, including an extensive carpool network, new auxiliary lanes and new mixed-use lanes. The public transit emphasis is on express buses and longer distance passenger rail. Regional Alternative 2 does not include any streetcars; instead the rail system focuses on expanding the regional rail system, adding a new track from Downtown Sacramento to the city of Rocklin in Placer County, and more frequent service on the Capitol Corridor, from Rocklin

through Downtown Sacramento and Yolo County to the San Francisco Bay Area. Light rail transit would be extended from Downtown Sacramento through the Natomas area in northern Sacramento to the Sacramento International Airport, and south to Cosumnes River College. Light rail transit would also be double-tracked from Sunrise Boulevard to the city of Folsom. Regional Alternative 2 has a more modest BRT system than Regional Alternative 1, located mainly within Sacramento County.

4) Regional Alternative 3 (Carpool Lanes, Light Rail, Streetcars and Express Bus Emphasis)

Regional Alternative 3 would provide parallel road capacity and freeway system optimization with the largest amount of carpool lanes of all alternatives, creating a nearly continuous system of new carpool lanes on Interstate 80 (I-80), U.S. 50 and I-5. This alternative has several miles of new mixed-flow freeway lanes in Placer County. Public transit services emphasize BRT lines, increased light rail frequencies and local buses. Regional Alternative 3 extends light rail north to the Natomas Town Centre and south to Cosumnes River College, and the Gold Line is double-tracked all the way to Folsom. Regional Alternative 3 also includes a streetcar linking West Sacramento and Downtown Sacramento, and has an extensive express bus system that takes advantage of the carpool lanes in this scenario's freeway system. This alternative includes a BRT system that is more extensive than Regional Alternative 2, but less extensive than Regional Alternative 1.

These alternatives are summarized in Table ES -3, below.

Table ES -3. Alternatives Proposed for Analysis in the MTP2035 EIR

No Project Alternative	Regional Alternatives 1,2,3	Proposed Project
2006 MTP Projects[1]	2035 Alternatives Projects	2035 MTP Projects
2006 MTP Land Use[1]	2035 Land Use	2035 Land Use
2006 MTP Population Estimate[1]	2035 Population Estimate	2035 Population Estimate
NOTE: [1]Extrapolated to 2035.		
Source: SACOG, 2007.		

Environmentally Superior Alternative — Which Alternative Has the Least Impacts to the Environment?

CEQA requires that an environmentally superior alternative be selected among the alternatives that were analyzed in the EIR. When the No-Project Alternative is the environmentally superior alternative, an EIR must also identify an environmentally superior alternative among the other alternatives (CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(e)(2)). In general, the environmentally superior alternative is defined as that alternative with the least adverse impacts to the project area and its surrounding environment.

Because the proposed MTP2035 alternative, and all three regional alternatives, have many common transportation investments, and all three regional alternatives also assume land use projections and population estimates based in year 2035, the alternatives have similar component projects and therefore have similar impacts. Among the regional and proposed project alternatives evaluated in this draft EIR, there is no single alternative that is clearly environmentally superior to the others.

Mitigation Measure	Responsible Party	Time Frame for Implementation	Monitoring Agency
Mitigation Measure AG - 1: Develop Rural-Urban Connections Strategy and Create Best Practices Toolkit	SACOG	Within 3 years	SACOG
Mitigation Measure ENE – 1: Incentives for Energy Conservation Practices.	SACOG	Within 4 years	SACOG
Mitigation Measure ENE – 6: Develop Regional Climate Change Action Plan	SACOG	Within 4 years	SACOG
Mitigation Measure ENE – 7: Create Alternative Fuel Vehicle and Infrastructure Toolkit for Local Governments	SACOG	Within 3 years	SACOG
Mitigation Measure ENE – 8: Adopt Transportation Pricing Policy	SACOG	Within 3 years	SACOG
Mitigation Measure ENE – 9: Create Public Education Program on Individual Transportation Behavior and Climate Change	SACOG	Within 2 years	SACOG
Mitigation Measure ENE – 10: Provide Funding for Workshop on Global Climate Change for Local Government Officials and Create GHG Emissions Reduction Strategies Toolkit	SACOG	Within 2 years	SACOG
Mitigation Measure ENE – 11: Adopt Regional Parking Regulation Policy to Provide Incentives for Use of Alternative Modes	SACOG	Within 3 years	SACOG
Mitigation Measure ENE – 12: Adopt Safe Routes to School Policy and Implement Pilot Program and Conduct Workshop with Cities, Counties and School Districts to Identify other Opportunities for Collaboration that may reduce Greenhouse Emissions	SACOG	Within 3 years	SACOG
Mitigation Measure ENE – 13: Enhance I-PLACE3S Model to Assess Greenhouse Gas Impacts and Opportunities for Small-Scale Power Generation	SACOG	Within 2 years	SACOG
Mitigation Measure ENE – 14: Establish a baseline for SACOG's own GHG Impacts	SACOG	Within 1 year	SACOG
Mitigation Measure ENE – 15: Adopt a "Complete Streets" Policy	SACOG	Within 2 year	SACOG
Mitigation Measure ENE – 16: Recommend Draft Transportation Control Measures to Comply with the Federal Clean Act in order to Reduce GHG Emissions	SACOG	Within 1 year	SACOG
Mitigation Measure LU - 2: Initiate a "Complete Streets" Technical Assistance Program	SACOG	Within 2 years	SACOG
Mitigation Measure LU-6: Continue to Implement the Sacramento Region's Blueprint growth strategy through the Community Design Grant Program and other Implementation Programs	SACOG	Ongoing – occurs at the project level	SACOG