



CALAVERAS COUNCIL
of GOVERNMENTS



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CALAVERAS COUNTY REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN 2021 - 2041

**Initial Study/ Mitigated Negative Declaration
FINAL**



Prepared by LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc

INITIAL STUDY AND MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

FOR THE CALAVERAS COUNTY 2021 REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN

FINAL

Prepared for

Calaveras Council of Governments
444 East St. Charles St./Highway 49
P.O. Box 280
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Prepared by

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September 28, 2021

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|---|---|
| Project Title: | Calaveras County 2021 Regional Transportation Plan |
| Lead Agency Name and Address: | Calaveras Council of Governments 444 East St. Charles St./Highway 49 |
| Contact Persons and Phone Numbers: | Amber Collins (209)754-2094 Genevieve Evans (530)583-4053 |
| Project Location: | Calaveras County |

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Calaveras Council of Governments (CCOG) has recently prepared an updated Draft *Calaveras County 2021 Regional Transportation Plan* (RTP) (which is defined as the “Project” for purposes of this study). CCOG board members and staff members worked together with a consulting firm to guide the development of the Project. The RTP can be viewed and downloaded from the CCOG website: <https://calacog.org/project/rtp-update/>

In compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, the Lead Agency is required to prepare an Initial Study for the Project. The CCOG is defined as the Lead Agency under the provisions of CEQA. The primary objective in the preparation of an Initial Study is to disclose significant environmental effects and to identify measures to avoid or reduce significant environmental effects.

This Initial Study addresses potential impacts at a general level, leaving more project-specific impacts to be evaluated at the time that each individual project reaches the preliminary design phase. Based upon the findings of this Initial Study, and pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15070, the CCOG prepared a Mitigated Negative Declaration.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The CCOG, as the Regional Transportation Planning Agency (RTPA), is required by California law to adopt and submit an updated Regional Transportation Plan to the California Transportation Commission (CTC) and to the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) every four years. The purpose of the RTP is to provide a vision of transportation facilities and services for the region, supported by transportation goals, for ten and twenty year horizons. The RTP documents the policy direction, actions and funding strategies designed to maintain and improve the regional transportation system. The RTP is a programmatic document containing general policies, guidelines, and lists of projects. For future projects identified in the RTP, specific design details have not been developed. Each transportation project will be assessed on an individual basis under various criteria.

The RTP begins with a background discussion of Calaveras County, including projected population growth and economic conditions, as well as a description of existing transportation services and facilities. A needs assessment follows, describing existing and future transportation needs in the county. The needs assessment analyzes various aspects of transportation including streets and highways, goods movement, public transportation, bicycle and pedestrian traffic, and aviation facilities. For each aspect, goals, objectives, performance measures and policies are identified. Finally, an action element is presented that lists proposed projects, as well as proposed potential funding for future projects.

To implement the project, the CCOG must adopt the updated RTP by resolution. Once the RTP is adopted, implementation of projects identified in the RTP would depend on many factors, including the availability of funding, changes in priority of needs, and emergencies. Also, implementation would require the cooperation of other agencies, such as Caltrans, whose activities are beyond the control of the CCOG.

The RTP presents a series of goals focusing on mobility, safety, quality of life, public health, environmental impacts, and equality. In the document, capital transportation improvement projects are identified which meet regional transportation needs and are consistent with regional goals and adopted planning documents. Projects identified in the RTP consist of the following:

- Short-term, mid-term, and long-term roadway/bridge projects including roadway maintenance and bridge rehabilitation/reconstruction on state highways, county roads and city streets.
- Roadway operational improvements such as new signals and turn lanes.
- Caltrans projects consisting of culvert replacement, intersection improvements and slope stabilization.
- Multi-modal and complete streets improvements, including pedestrian improvements, sidewalks and bicycle paths in Calaveras communities.
- Transit capital improvement projects
- Aviation capital improvement projects at the Calaveras County Airport

The RTP describes environmental mitigation measures which are typically applied to transportation projects and outlines strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. In total, the financially constrained regional roadway and bridge projects identified in the RTP are forecast to cost approximately \$9.4 million over the first five years of the planning period. Funding is expected to be generated through a wide range of existing state, federal, and local sources.

PROJECT LOCATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING

Location

Calaveras County is located in the north-central portion of California and is bordered by Amador County to the north, Alpine County to the east, Tuolumne County to the south, and Stanislaus and San Joaquin Counties to the west (as shown in Figure 1). Calaveras County is located within the western foothills of the Sierra Nevada mountain range approximately 133 miles east of San Francisco and 85 miles southeast of Sacramento. The County encompasses approximately 1,100 square miles in area and varies in elevation from 200 feet in the west to 8,000 feet in the east. The County seat is in San Andreas and the only incorporated city in the County is the City of Angels, also known as Angels Camp. Other census-designated communities in the County include Arnold, Avery, Copperopolis, Dorrington, Mokelumne Hill, Murphys, Tamarack, Vallecito, Valley Springs and West Point. State Route (SR) 49 is the primary roadway for Calaveras County and runs north to south between Amador County and Tuolumne County. In addition, SR 26, SR 12 and SR 4 run east to west through the north and south portions of the county, respectively.

Transportation/Circulation

The Calaveras County regional roadway network comprises just over 1,000 miles of streets, roads, and highways. The roadway network includes paved and dirt roadways owned by the National Park Service, US Forest Service, the Army Corps of Engineers, California State Parks, Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) jurisdiction, and the Bureau of Land Management. The following state highways transverse Calaveras County:

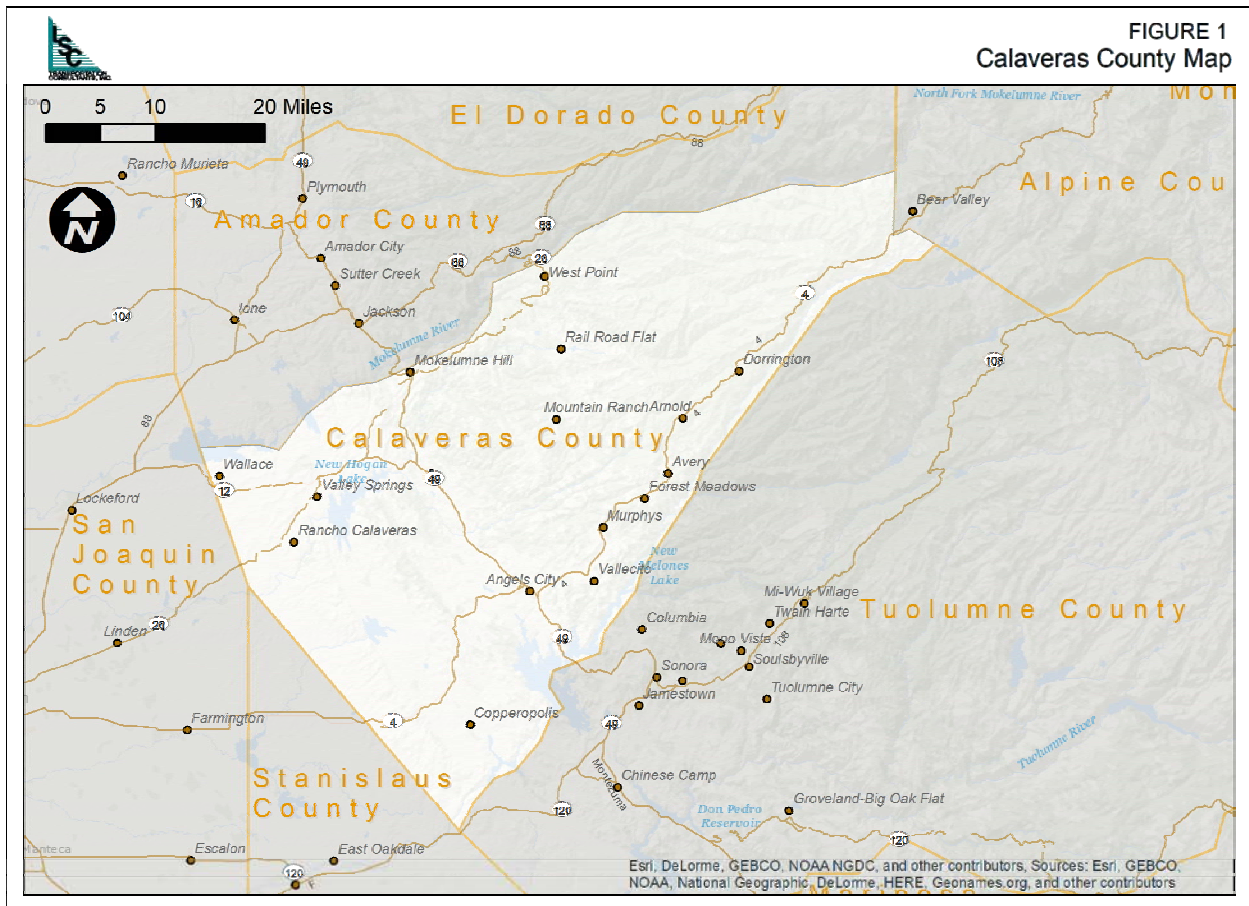
- SR 4 runs northeast and southwest along the southern portion of the County. The route enters the County through Telegraph City and makes its way up through Copperopolis, Murphys, and Arnold. It also provides access to the Calaveras Big Trees State Park. The western portions of the highway are affected by commuter and recreational traffic. The central and eastern segments of SR 4 are used by recreational and truck traffic. Travel is slow along this route in the eastern portion of the County as it winds up the Sierra and over Ebbetts Pass, which is closed during the winter months.
- SR 12 – Located in the northwest portion of the County, SR 12 connects the western county line with Wallace, Burson and Valley Springs before intersecting with SR 49 just west of San Andreas. This state route serves as connector to San Joaquin County. It is primarily two-lanes with no designated bike lanes.
- SR 26 – Providing the most direct connection from the northern portion of the county to Stockton to the west, SR 26 runs east through Valley Springs, intersecting SR 12, and continuing east through Mokelumne Hill and West Point and north to intersect with SR 88 in

Amador County. It is considered a minor arterial and provides access to New Hogan Reservoir.

- SR 49 – This highway runs north and south through Calaveras County, linking various Sierra foothill communities from Plumas County on the north to Mariposa County on the south. This two-lane rural minor arterial travels through the “Mother Lode” communities of Carson Hill, Angels Camp, Fourth Crossing, San Andreas, and Mokelumne Hill and serves local roads such as Pool Station Road, Mountain Ranch Road, Red Hill Road, and Murphys Grade Road.

State highways play an important role in Calaveras County’s transportation system serving as main streets for most of the communities in the county. The most recent estimate prepared for 2017 indicates a total of 428,000 daily vehicle vehicle-miles were traveled on all roadways in Calaveras County (Caltrans Public Road Data).

Calaveras County state highways and local roadways generally do not experience significant traffic congestion. Generally, traffic volumes have decreased on Calaveras County State Highways over the past nine years, on average 1.4 percent annually.



Population

According to the US Census 2013-2017 American Community Survey (2013-2017 ACS), Calaveras County has a total population of 45,057 people. This represents a 1.1 decrease from the 2010 Decennial Census counts. Of this population, approximately 92 percent of the population is living within unincorporated areas while the remaining eight percent (3,760 people) living within the Angels Camp (officially named the City of Angels). According to California Department of Finance estimates, the Calaveras County population is expected to decline at a rate of 0.7 percent annually over the next 20 years.

Given the decline in population and traffic volumes on Calaveras County regional roadways, important transportation improvement projects identified in the RTP focus on safety improvements, on-going upkeep of the regional transportation system and multi-modal improvements.

OTHER AGENCY APPROVALS

Per Government Code Section 65080 the RTP must be adopted by CCOG at a public hearing. After adoption, copies of the document must be submitted to Caltrans and the CTC.

CONSULTATION WITH CALIFORNIA NATIVE AMERICAN TRIBES

Pursuant to PUC 21080.3.1 and AB 52 CCOG consulted with Native American Tribes traditionally and culturally affiliated with Calaveras County. CCOG requested a consultation list of tribes located within Calaveras County from the Native American Heritage Commission. At the beginning of the project, May 2020, CCOG sent letters to each tribe requesting input on regional transportation needs as well to begin formal consultation. Tribes were also provided with an electronic copy of the Draft RTP. To date, no tribes have responded.

1.5 ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED

None of the environmental factors mentioned below would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is a “Potentially Significant Impact” as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

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

DETERMINATION

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

- I find that the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
- I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will **not** be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project (mitigation measures) have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION was prepared.
- I find the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.
- I find that the proposed project MAY have a “potentially significant impact” or “potentially significant unless mitigated” impact on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.
- I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.

Signed: _____
Amber Collins, Executive Director
Calaveras Council of Governments

Date: _____

Initial Study Checklist and Analysis

CHECKLIST AND ANALYSIS

The following Environmental Checklist and discussion of potential environmental effects were completed in accordance with Sections 15060 to 15065 of the CEQA Guidelines and the revised Initial Study checklist, to determine whether the Project may have a significant environmental effect. The degree of impact for each discussion topic is noted based upon the following definitions:

- **Potentially Significant Impact:** An impact which could be significant and for which no mitigation has been incorporated. Such an impact would require the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report.
- **Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation:** An impact which requires mitigation to reduce the impact to a less than significant level. For such impacts, proposed mitigation measures are identified within this Initial Study.
- **Less Than Significant Impact:** An impact which is considered less than significant under the standards of CEQA.
- **No Impact:** An issue for which the Project would have no impact.

EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

| I. Aesthetics, would the project: | Potentially Significant | Less than Significant with Mitigation | Less than Significant | No Impact |
|---|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a) Have an adverse effect on a scenic vista? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c) In non-urbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage point). If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d) Create a new source of light or glare that | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

| | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|
| would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area? | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|

Discussion: Being located in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada Mountains, Calaveras County has extensive scenic resources. It is possible that the improvements listed in the RTP may result in modification of the various scenic viewsheds throughout the county. An impact would occur if a project would change the view to the middle ground or background elements of the broad viewshed, or remove the visually important trees, rocks, or historic buildings in the foreground.

While individual projects are not anticipated to significantly disrupt mid-ground or backdrop views of scenic vistas, individual projects have not yet been designed and may involve features that may disrupt views. These projects may involve removal of trees or other visually significant features, or may result in development that would cause an intermittent interruption in views to users of the highways, roadways, and other components of the transportation system. While each jurisdiction in which the improvements may be located has policies related to the protection of scenic resources and views, the potential remains for removal of scenic features, particularly those that would be in the foreground of scenic viewsheds and vistas. The following mitigation measures require projects to include design measures to avoid or reduce removal of scenic features and scenic views. Implementation of these mitigation measures would reduce the impact to a less than significant level.

Mitigation Measure AES-1: Prior to construction, the implementing agency will consider the following measures in the design of a project:

- Design transportation systems in a manner where the surrounding landscape dominates.
- Design transportation systems to be compatible with the surrounding environment (e.g., colors and materials of construction material).
- Design transportation systems such that landscape vegetation complements the natural landscape.
- Design transportation systems such that trees are maintained intact, or if removal is necessary, incorporate new trees into the design.
- Design grades to be consistent with the construction guidelines required in the County or City of Angels.

Mitigation Measure AES-2: Prior to the design approval of a project, the implementing agency will consider whether the project would remove any significant visual resources in the project area (trees, outcroppings, buildings) or obstruct views of the identified scenic resources. If it is determined that a project would impact scenic resources, the implementing agency should

consider alternative designs that avoid, minimize or mitigate the visual impacts to the extent feasible.

There is a potential for an individual project under the RTP to create new sources of light and glare near sensitive receptors. Examples would include projects that require new roadway lighting, lit signs, and/or construction lighting.

Mitigation Measure AES-3: Prior to construction, the implementing agency will ensure that projects are designed to meet minimum safety and security standards and to avoid spillover lighting to sensitive uses. Design could include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Luminaries that cast low-angle illumination to minimize incidental spillover of light onto adjacent private properties and undeveloped open space. Fixtures that project light upward or horizontally will not be used.
- Luminaries should be directed away from habitat and open space areas adjacent to the project site.
- Luminary mountings that reduce potential for back scatter into the nighttime sky and incidental spillover of light onto adjacent private properties and undeveloped open space.
- Exterior lighting that is directed downward and shielded in order to confine light to the boundaries of the subject project.

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|--|--------------------------------|--|------------------------------|------------------|
| <p>II. AGRICULTURE RESOURCES In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model prepared by the California Dept. of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state’s inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment Project and the Forest Legacy Assessment Project; and forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air</p> | <p>Potentially Significant</p> | <p>Less than Significant with Mitigation</p> | <p>Less than Significant</p> | <p>No Impact</p> |
|--|--------------------------------|--|------------------------------|------------------|

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|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Resources Board. Would the project: | | | | |
| a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance, as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program in the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)) or timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526)? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| e) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

Discussion: The RTP includes policies that support goods movement which would support agriculture. Transportation improvements listed in the RTP would not convert prime farmland to non-agricultural use or conflict with agriculture or forest land zoning or result in the loss of forest land.

| III. AIR QUALITY Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project: | Potentially Significant | Less than Significant with Mitigation | Less than Significant | No Impact |
|--|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| d) Create objectionable odors affecting a | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

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|-------------------------------|--|--|--|--|
| substantial number of people? | | | | |
| | | | | |

Discussion: Calaveras County is part of the Mountain Counties Air Basin, with air quality managed by the Calaveras County Air Pollution Control District. Its low population density, limited industry, extensive undeveloped public lands, and limited traffic congestion make for good air quality in the region. However, the county is currently in non-attainment of state and federal Ozone standards, state PM10 standards, but not federal PM10 standards. Primary sources of PM10 pollution include wood stoves, open and prescribed burning, wind-blown dust generated from unpaved roads, and agriculture. Ozone non-attainment issues are a result of ozone generated in the San Joaquin Valley which drifts eastward with the prevailing winds. Thus, air pollution problems in the region are not from locally generated transportation sources.

As Calaveras County is an isolated rural non-attainment maintenance area, there are no requirements to do a transportation conformity analysis in the RTP. However, project-level conformity determination must be done when a non-exempt federal transportation project needs approval.

While RTP projects are designed to improve traffic flows and reduce congestion which can contribute to poor air quality, the following mitigation measure would ensure that any impact to air quality from transportation projects is reduced to a less than significant level.

Mitigation Measure AIR-1: The implementing agency will screen individual RTP projects prior to implementation and follow any applicable local, regional, state or federal procedures.

| IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES Would the project: | Potentially Significant | Less than Significant with Mitigation | Less than Significant | No Impact |
|---|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a) Have an adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Have an adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, and regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

| | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| c) Have an adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d) Interfere with the movement of any resident or migratory fish or wildlife species, or with established resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of wildlife nursery sites? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Conservation Community Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

Discussion: The RTP contains policies to minimize environmental impacts of transportation investments. Various environmental agencies were consulted as part of the RTP process. Calaveras County will continue to consult with environmental agencies as part of individual project review. As the RTP is a programmatic document and the proposed projects will be reviewed on a project-by-project basis, no direct physical effects will result from the adoption of this RTP. Most RTP projects are reconstruction/rehabilitation of existing facilities and therefore will not have a significant impact on wildlife or habitat. For individual projects where biological resources may be minimally impacted, the following mitigation measures will reduce the impact to less than a significant level:

Mitigation Measure BIO-1: Prior to final design approval of RTP projects, the implementing agency shall take steps to identify and protect any biological resources associated with the project. Potential steps could include, but shall not be limited to, the following:

- Employ the services of a qualified biologist to conduct a field reconnaissance of the limits of the project area to identify special status plants, animals, and their habitats, as well as protected natural communities including wetland and terrestrial communities. If the biologist identifies protected biological resources within the limits of the project area, the implementing agency should do the following:
 - Consider alternative designs that seek to avoid and/or minimize impacts to the biological resources.

- If the project cannot be designed to completely avoid impacts, the implementing agency should coordinate with the appropriate regulatory agency (i.e. USFWS, NMFS, CDFW, ACOE) to obtain regulatory permits and implement project-specific mitigation prior to any construction activities.

Mitigation Measure BIO-2: Prior to construction, the implementing agency shall take steps to identify and protect environmentally sensitive areas around habitat. Avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures would be determined by a qualified professional in consultation with the appropriate resource agencies. All stabilization efforts should use accepted best practices and materials. Construction specification should include the following wording:

“The Contractor’s attention is directed to the areas designated as “environmental sensitive areas.” These areas are protected, and no entry by the Contractor for any purpose will be allowed unless specifically authorized in writing by the Contracting Agency. The Contractor will take measures to ensure that Contractor’s forces do not enter or disturb these areas, including giving written notice to employees and subcontractors.”

Mitigation Measure BIO-3: Prior to design approval of individual projects, the implementing agency will incorporate economically viable design measures, as applicable and necessary, to allow wildlife or fish to move through the transportation corridor, both during construction activities and post construction. Potential measures could include, but shall not be limited to the following:

- Appropriately spaced breaks in a center barrier,
- Other measures that are designed to allow wildlife to move through the transportation corridor.

If the project cannot be designed with these design measures (i.e. due to traffic safety, etc.) the implementing agency should coordinate with the appropriate regulatory agency (i.e. USFWS, NMFS, CDFW) to obtain regulatory permits and implement alternative project-specific mitigation prior to any construction activities.

| V. CULTURAL RESOURCES Would the project: | Potentially Significant | Less than Significant with Mitigation | Less than Significant | No Impact |
|--|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a) Cause an adverse change in the significance of a historical resource, as defined in Section 15064.5? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Cause an adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource, pursuant to Section 15064.5? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

| | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| geologic feature? | | | | |
| d) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Discussion: Those Tribal Governments that have sacred lands within Calaveras County were contacted via mail with a notification letter and email that defined the RTP, requested their input in the RTP process, and requested they make contact for a one-on-one meeting. To date, none of the tribes have responded. Copies of this Initial Study and the Draft RTP document have been sent to tribal representatives.

Most of the RTP improvements would be constructed within the existing rights-of-way, which have less potential to have a significant impact. The RTP is a programmatic document. Specific environmental impacts of proposed projects discussed in the RTP will be addressed on an individual basis at the time of project review. If individual projects have the potential to have an impact on cultural resources, the following mitigation measures would reduce the impact to less than significant.

Mitigation Measure CLT-1: During environmental review of RTP projects, and prior to construction, if architectural resources are deemed as potentially eligible for the California Register of Historic Resources or the National Register of Historic Places as determined by a qualified architectural historian, the implementing agencies will:

- Consider avoidance through project redesign as feasible.
- If avoidance is not feasible, the implementing agencies will request that the historic resource is formally documented through the use of large-format photography, measured drawings, written architectural descriptions, and historical narratives.
- The documentation should be entered into the Library of Congress and archived in the California Historical Resources Information System.
- In the event of building relocation, the implementing agency shall ensure that any alterations to significant buildings or structures conform to the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings.

Mitigation Measure CLT-2: During environmental review of RTP projects, the implementing agencies shall consult with the Native American Heritage Commission to determine whether known sacred sites are in the project area. If recommended, a qualified archaeologist should be consulted to conduct archaeological surveys. The significance of any resources that are determined to be in the project area shall be assessed according to the applicable local, state, and federal significance criteria.

Mitigation Measure CLT-3: During construction of RTP projects, the implementing agencies shall take steps to identify and protect cultural materials. The implementing agencies and the contractors performing the improvements could implement the following requirements:

- If a project is located in an area rich with cultural materials, the implementing agency shall retain a qualified archaeologist to monitor any subsurface operations, including but not limited to grading, excavation, trenching, or removal of existing features of the subject property.
- If, during the course of construction cultural resources (i.e., prehistoric sites, historic sites, and isolated artifacts and features) are discovered, work shall be halted immediately within 50 meters (165 feet) of the discovery, the implementing agency shall be notified, and a qualified archaeologist that meets the Secretary of the Interior’s Professional Qualifications Standards in prehistoric or historical archaeology shall be retained to determine the significance of the discovery.
- The implementing agency shall consider mitigation recommendations presented by a professional archaeologist that meets the Secretary of the Interior’s Professional Qualifications Standards in prehistoric or historical archaeology for any unanticipated discoveries and shall carry out the measures deemed feasible and appropriate. Such measures may include avoidance, preservation in place, excavation, documentation, curation, data recovery, or other appropriate measures. The project proponent shall be required to implement any mitigation necessary for the protection of cultural resources.

Mitigation Measure CLT-4: During environmental review of RTP projects, the implementing agencies shall take steps to identify and protect paleontological resources. When the project scope and/or location indicate potential impacts to paleontological resources, the implementing agency should retain a qualified paleontologist to identify resources and potential impacts and to determine appropriate avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures.

Mitigation Measure CLT-5: In the event of discovery or recognition of any human remains during construction or excavation activities associated with an RTP project, the implementing agency shall cease further excavation or disturbance of the site or any nearby area reasonably suspected to overlie adjacent human remains until the following steps are taken:

- The Calaveras County Coroner has been informed and has determined that no investigation of the cause of death is required.
- If the remains are of Native American origin, either of the following steps will be taken:
 - The coroner should contact the Native American Heritage Commission in order to ascertain the proper descendants from the deceased individual. The coroner will make a recommendation to the landowner or the person responsible for the excavation work,

for means of treating or disposing of, with appropriate dignity, the human remains and any associated grave goods, which may include obtaining a qualified archaeologist or team of archaeologists to properly excavate the human remains.

- The implementing agency may retain a Native American monitor, an/or an archaeologist to assist in disposing of, with appropriate dignity, the human remains and any associated grave goods when any of the following conditions occurs:
 - The Native American Heritage Commission is unable to identify a descendent.
 - The descendant identified fails to make a recommendation.
 - The implementing agency or its authorized representative rejects the recommendation of the descendant, and the mediation by the Native American Heritage Commission fails to provide measures acceptable to the landowner.

| VI. Energy Would the project: | Potentially Significant | Less than Significant with Mitigation | Less than Significant | No Impact |
|--|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| a) Result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources during project construction or operation? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Conflict with or obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Discussion: The RTP will not result in wasteful or unnecessary consumption of energy during project construction or operation or conflict with a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency.

| VII. GEOLOGY AND SOILS Would the project: | Potentially Significant | Less than Significant with Mitigation | Less than Significant | No Impact |
|--|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a) Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving: | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| i. Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Publication 42. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| ii. Strong seismic ground shaking? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

| | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| iii. Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| iv. Landslides? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Result in soil erosion or the loss of topsoil? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating risks to life or property? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| f) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geological feature? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Discussion: The RTP identifies projects for reconstruction of and improvements to existing roadways and bridges, specific impacts on geology and soils associated with these projects will be addressed on an individual basis at the time of project review. Some of the bridge rehabilitation projects include seismic retrofit. The RTP is a programmatic document and the proposed projects will be reviewed on a project-by-project basis, however if an individual project has the potential for an impact on geology and soils, the following mitigation measures will reduce that impact to less than significant.

Mitigation Measure GEO-1: Prior to approval of structure plans for individual projects, the implementing agency shall ensure that a project specific seismic hazard evaluation is prepared to address seismic constraints. Where a seismic constraint is identified, appropriate design methods, in accordance with the California Building Code, shall be incorporated into the structure design to fully address any seismic constraint.

Mitigation Measure GEO-2: Prior to approval of improvement plans for individual projects, the implementing agency shall prepare a project specific geotechnical report to address geotechnical constraints. Where a geotechnical constraint is identified, appropriate and proven geotechnical engineering methods shall be incorporated into the project design to fully address the geotechnical constraint.

Mitigation Measure GE-3: The implementing agency shall take steps to comply with NPDES General Construction Permit requirements to reduce or eliminate construction-related water

quality effects. The implementing agency shall prepare a SWPPP during construction. The CCOG shall use appropriate procedures to monitor and evaluate SWPPP compliance. Potential measures may include:

- Temporary erosion control measures (such as silt fences, staked straw bales/wattles, silt/sediment basins and traps, check dams, geofabric, sandbag dikes, and temporary revegetation or other ground cover).

| VIII. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS Would the project: | Potentially Significant | Less than Significant with Mitigation | Less than Significant | No Impact |
|--|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Conflict with any applicable plan, policy or regulation of an agency adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

Discussion: The RTP includes goals, policies, and strategies aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions in Calaveras County. RTP projects such as roadway and bridge repairs are necessary to maintain a safe regional transportation system and to prevent deterioration of roadways and bridges which may require costlier repairs in the future. These projects will not result in greater traffic volumes along state highways, county roads or city streets. The RTP also includes long-term bicycle and pedestrian improvement projects which will create more bicycle and pedestrian friendly communities and potentially reduce VMT. The RTP also includes public transit elements. By expanding alternative forms of transportation, Calaveras County is in-line with statewide climate change goals. The RTP is a programmatic document and the proposed projects will be reviewed on a project-by-project basis. With implementation of all of the policies, action plans, and mitigation measures included in the RTP and this study, the proposed project will have a less than significant impact.

Mitigation Measure GHG-1: Consistent with Appendix F of the CEQA Guidelines, the implementing agencies should take steps to identify and reduce energy consumption: Potential steps could include, but shall not be limited to, the following:

- Promote measures to reduce wasteful, inefficient and unnecessary consumption of energy during construction, operation, maintenance and/or removal. As the individual RTP projects are designed there should be an explanation as to why certain measures were incorporated in the RTP project and why other measures were dismissed.
- Site, orient, and design projects to minimize energy consumption, increase water conservation and reduce solid-waste.

- Promote efforts to reduce peak energy demand in the design and operation of RTP projects.
- Promote the use of alternate fuels (particularly renewable ones) or energy systems for RTP Projects.
- Promote efforts to recycle materials used in the construction (including demolition phase) of RTP projects.

| IX. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS Would the project: | Potentially Significant | Less than Significant with Mitigation | Less than Significant | No Impact |
|--|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a) Create a hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Create a hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Have hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| d) Be located on a site that is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| e) Be located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, and consequently result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| f) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| g) Expose people or structures either directly or indirectly to the risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

Discussion: RTP projects will not increase hazards and hazardous materials. RTP projects include the installation of guardrails, curve realignment, traffic control signs and improvement of emergency access routes which will increase the safety of Calaveras County roadways. The RTP is a programmatic document. Specific environmental impacts of proposed projects discussed in the RTP will be addressed on an individual basis at the time of project review. Therefore, there is no potential for significant impact.

| X. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY Would the project: | Potentially Significant | Less than Significant with Mitigation | Less than Significant | No Impact |
|--|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a) Violate any applicable water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade surface or ground water quality? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Substantially decrease groundwater supplies or interfere with groundwater recharge such that the project may impede sustainable groundwater management of the basin? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river or through the addition of impervious surfaces, in a manner which would result in: | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| i) Result in substantial erosion or siltation on or off-site | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| ii) Substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on-or offsite; | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| iv) impede or redirect flood flows? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d) In flood hazard, tsunami or seiche zones risk release of pollutants due to project inundation? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of a water quality control plan or sustainable groundwater management plan? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

Discussion: The RTP includes several bridge repair and rehabilitation projects which are necessary to maintain a safe and reliable regional system. All bridge repair projects will undergo individual environmental review and follow Best Management Practices for stream protection, erosion, and sedimentation control. Prior to project implementation Calaveras County will consult with the Central Valley Regional Water Board as appropriate and follow the State Water Quality Control guidelines for *Potential Water Quality Impacts and Required Analysis*. The RTP is a programmatic document and the proposed projects will be reviewed on a project-by-project

basis. The following mitigation measures will reduce hydrologic and water quality impacts from RTP projects to less than significant.

Mitigation Measure HYD-1: Project design should incorporate measures to protect the integrity of the project site from storm water runoff and reduce impacts due to changes in the quality of storm water runoff. Potential measures could include, but shall not be limited to, the following:

- Implement source and treatment control measures that minimize the volume and rate of storm water runoff discharge from the project site. General site design control measures incorporated into the project design can include:
 - Conserving natural areas;
 - Protecting slopes and channels;
 - Minimizing impervious areas;
 - Storm drain identification, and appropriate messaging and signing; and
 - Minimizing effective imperviousness through the use of turf buffers and/or grass-lined channels, if feasible.
- Implement treatment control measures, if possible and when feasible, to remove pollutants from storm water runoff prior to discharge to the storm drain system or receiving water. Treatment control measures may include, but not be limited to, the following:
 - Vegetated buffer strip
 - Vegetated swale
 - Extended detention basin
 - Wet pond
 - Constructed wetland
 - Detention basin/sand filter
 - Porous pavement detention
 - Porous landscape detention
 - Infiltration basin
 - Infiltration trench
 - Media filter
 - Retention/irrigation
 - Proprietary control device

Selection and implementation of these measures would be based on a project-by-project basis depending on project size, and storm water treatment needs.

Mitigation Measure HYD-2: During project development, implementing agencies shall take steps to identify and reduce potential impacts due to changes in the quantity of storm water runoff due to project construction and use. Potential actions could include, but shall not be limited to, project-level drainage studies. If conducted, the study should address the following:

- A calculation of pre-development runoff conditions and post-development runoff scenarios using appropriate engineering methods. This analysis will evaluate potential changes to runoff through specific design criteria, and account for increased surface runoff.
- An assessment of existing drainage facilities within the project area, and an inventory of necessary upgrades, replacements, redesigns, and/or rehabilitation, including the sizing of onsite storm water detention features and pump stations.
- A description of the proposed maintenance program for the onsite drainage system.
- Standards for drainage systems to be installed on a project/parcel-specific basis.
- Proposed design measures to ensure structures are not located within 100-year floodplain areas.

Selection and implementation of these measures would be based on a project-by-project basis depending on project size and stormwater treatment needs.

| XI. LAND USE AND PLANNING Would the project: | Potentially Significant | Less than Significant with Mitigation | Less than Significant | No Impact |
|--|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a) Physically divide an established community? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Cause a significant environmental impact due to conflict with any land use plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

Discussion: Based on preliminary review of the projects proposed by the RTP, there does not appear to be any potential for impacts that might physically divide a community, conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation or conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan. Additionally, the RTP is consistent with the *Calaveras County General Plan (2020)* and the *City of Angels Camp General Plan (2019)*. Further, the RTP is a programmatic document. Specific environmental impacts of proposed projects discussed in the RTP will be addressed on an individual basis at the time of project review. Therefore, there is no potential for significant impact.

| XII. MINERAL RESOURCES Would the project: | Potentially Significant | Less than Significant with Mitigation | Less than Significant | No Impact |
|---|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

| | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|

Discussion: The RTP includes policies that support goods movement, which would support mineral resource production and does not include projects which will result in the loss of availability of a known mineral. The RTP is a programmatic document. Specific environmental impacts of proposed projects discussed in the RTP will be addressed on an individual basis at the time of project review. Therefore, there is no potential for significant impact.

| XIII. NOISE Would the project: | Potentially Significant | Less than Significant with Mitigation | Less than Significant | No Impact |
|---|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a) Generation of a substantial temporary or permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity of the project in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Generation of excessive ground-borne vibration or ground-borne noise levels? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

| | | | | |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| c) Be located within the vicinity of a private airstrip or an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, and consequently expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|

Discussion: The most probable source of noise impacts would come from construction activities associated with proposed projects in this RTP. However, as the RTP is a programmatic document, specific environmental impacts of proposed projects discussed in the RTP will be addressed on an individual basis at the time of project review. The following mitigation measures will reduce potential noise impacts resulting from construction of RTP projects to less than significant.

Mitigation Measure NOISE-1: Prior to and during construction, the implementing agency shall take steps to identify and protect sensitive receptors from construction noise and vibration impacts, as feasible. Measures to reduce noise and vibration effects to comply with all local noise control and noise rules, regulations, and ordinances may include, but are not limited to:

- Limit noise-generating construction activities, excluding those that would result in a safety concern to workers or the public, to the least noise-sensitive daytime hours, which is generally 6am to 9pm.
- Construct temporary sound barriers to shield noise-sensitive land uses.
- Locate noise-generating stationary equipment (e.g., power generators, compressors, etc.) at the furthest practical distance from nearby noise-sensitive land uses.
- Phase demolition, earth-moving and ground-impacting operations so as not to occur in the same time period.
- Use of equipment noise-reduction devices (e.g., mufflers, intake silencers, and engine shrouds) in accordance with manufacturers' recommendations.
- Substitute noise/vibration-generating equipment with equipment or procedures that would generate lower levels of noise/vibration. For instance, in comparison to impact piles, drilled piles or the use of a sonic or vibratory pile driver are preferred alternatives where geological conditions would permit their use.
- Other measures deemed appropriate by the implementing agency.

Mitigation Measure NOISE-2: The implementing agencies shall take steps to identify and reduce the effects of construction on the roadway system throughout the construction period. If needed, the implementing agency should develop a traffic control plan to minimize construction impacts to the traveling public and emergency response.

| XIV. POPULATION AND HOUSING Would the project: | Potentially Significant | Less than Significant with Mitigation | Less than Significant | No Impact |
|---|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a) Induce substantial unplanned population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

Discussion: RTP projects do not include new housing developments and therefore would not increase the population. The majority of RTP projects involve work within or adjacent to existing rights-of-way and would not involve acquisition of land and displacement of substantial

numbers of persons or housing. Furthermore, as the RTP is a programmatic document, specific environmental impacts of proposed projects discussed in the RTP will be addressed on an individual basis at the time of project review. Therefore, there is no potential for significant impact.

| XV. PUBLIC SERVICES Would the project result in 1) adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, or 2) the need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services: | Potentially Significant | Less than Significant with Mitigation | Less than Significant | No Impact |
|--|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a) Fire protection? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Police protection? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Schools? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| d) Parks? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| e) Roads? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| f) Other public facilities? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

Discussion: As the RTP projects focus primarily on the improvement to existing roadway facilities, the potential for significant impact on public services is low. Any impact would be beneficial, in that improvements to existing facilities would aid in access to public services. In addition, the update of the RTP is a programmatic document. Specific environmental impacts of proposed projects discussed in the RTP will be addressed on an individual basis at the time of project review. Therefore there is no potential for significant impact.

| XVI RECREATION | Potentially Significant | Less than Significant with Mitigation | Less than Significant | No Impact |
|--|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a) Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities that might have an adverse physical effect on the environment? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

Discussion: Adoption and implementation of the RTP will not create the need for new or expanded park and recreation facilities. The project will improve recreation opportunities by upgrading and constructing new bicycle and pedestrian paths. The impacts of construction of those facilities will be addressed on an individual basis at the time of project review. As the RTP is a programmatic document, and as the proposed projects will be reviewed on a project-by-project basis, there is no potential for significant impact.

| XVII. TRANSPORTATION Would the project: | Potentially Significant | Less than Significant with Mitigation | Less than Significant | No Impact |
|---|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a) Conflict with a program plan ordinance or policy addressing the circulation system, including transit, roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Would the project conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3 subdivision (b)? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Substantially increase hazards to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| d) Result in inadequate emergency access? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

Discussion: The RTP represents the long-term vision for transportation in the Calaveras County region and has been developed in coordination with natural resource agencies, local governments and the public. The RTP includes goals and policies to limit environmental impact and improve transportation conditions. RTP projects such as left turn pockets and complete streets projects are designed to reduce congestion and decrease vehicle miles travelled in Calaveras County. No new trip generators will be constructed as a result of adoption of the RTP; however improved roadways may induce increased travel but to a less than significant level. One of the goals of the RTP is to improve emergency access through wider roadways between outlying communities and arterials. Other safety related RTP projects will reduce hazards such as sharp curves and conflicts between motorists and non-motorized users. Overall, the RTP is a programmatic document, and as the proposed projects will be reviewed on a project-by-project basis, there is no potential for significant impact from adoption of this plan.

| XVIII. Tribal Cultural Resources Would the project: | Potentially Significant | Less than Significant with Mitigation | Less than Significant | No Impact |
|---|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a) Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code section 21074 as either a | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

| | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe that is? | | | | |
| i) Listed or eligible for listing? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| ii) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1, in applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code Section 5024.1 the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Discussion: Tribal Entities were contacted as part of the RTP planning process. No response was received. CCOG will continue to include tribal entities in the planning of transportation projects. The adoption of the RTP will not have a significant impact on Tribal Cultural Resources.

| XIX. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS Would the project: | Potentially Significant | Less than Significant with Mitigation | Less than Significant | No Impact |
|---|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a) Require or result in the relocation or construction of new or expanded water wastewater treatment or storm water drainage electric power, natural gas, or telecommunications facilities the construction or relocation of which could cause significant environmental effects? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project and reasonably foreseeable future development during normal, dry and multiple dry years? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider that serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| d) Generate solid waste in excess of State or local standards, or in excess of the capacity of local infrastructure, or otherwise impair | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

| | | | | |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| the attainment of solid waste reduction goals? | | | | |
| e) Comply with federal, state, and local management and reduction statutes and regulations related to solid waste? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

Discussion: As the RTP projects focus primarily on the improvement to existing roadway facilities, the potential for significant impacts on utilities and service system is low. The update of the RTP is a programmatic document. Specific environmental impacts of proposed projects discussed in the RTP will be addressed on an individual basis at the time of project review. Therefore, there is no potential for significant impact.

| XX. WILDFIRE – If located in or near state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, would the project: | Potentially Significant | Less than Significant with Mitigation | Less than Significant | No Impact |
|--|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| a) Substantially impair an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| b) Due to slope, prevailing winds, and other factors, exacerbate wildfire risks, and thereby expose project occupants to pollutant concentrations from a wildfire or the uncontrolled spread of a wildfire. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| c) Require the installation or maintenance of associated infrastructure (such as roads, fuel breaks, emergency water sources, power lines or other utilities) that may exacerbate fire risk or that may result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |
| d) Expose people or structures to significant risks, including downslope or downstream flooding or landslides, as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |

Discussion: Projects listed in the RTP will improve emergency evacuation due to wildfire by improving and widening roadways in Calaveras County. Roadside maintenance such as brush clearing will also help in create a fuel break. The RTP is an important part of making Calaveras County safe from wildfires.

| XXI. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE | Potentially Significant | Less than Significant with Mitigation | Less than Significant | No Impact |
|--|--------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| e) Does the project have the potential to substantially degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| f) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? "Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are significant when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| g) Does the project have environmental effects that will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly? | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

Discussion: Preparation and adoption of the RTP represents long-term transportation planning for the Calaveras County Region, and by definition does not involve individual projects that would have individual impacts. Policies are included in the RTP to minimize environmental impacts of transportation investments. Specific environmental impacts of proposed projects discussed in the RTP will be addressed on an individual basis at the time of project review.

As described throughout the analysis above, the proposed project will not result in any changes to General Plan land use designations or zoning districts, would not result in annexation of land, and would not allow development in areas that are not already planned for development in the General Plan and Zoning Ordinance. The proposed project would not result in new adverse environmental impacts. The project would not threaten a significant biological resource, nor would it eliminate important examples California history or prehistory.

The proposed project does not have impacts that are cumulatively considerable, nor would it have substantial adverse effects on human beings. Several mitigation measures are presented throughout this document. With the implementation of these mitigation measures, the proposed project would have a less than significant impact on these environmental topics.

PREPARERS

Report Authors:

LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc.
Genevieve Evans, Planner, AICP

Attachment 1 – Comments and Responses

Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board

20 September 2021

Amber Collins
Calaveras Council of Government
444 St. Charles Street
San Andreas, CA 95249
acollins@calacog.org

COMMENTS TO REQUEST FOR REVIEW FOR THE MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION, CALAVERAS COUNTY 2021 REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN PROJECT, SCH#2021080389, CALAVERAS COUNTY

Pursuant to the State Clearinghouse's 20 August 2021 request, the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (Central Valley Water Board) has reviewed the *Request for Review for the Mitigated Negative Declaration* for the Calaveras County 2021 Regional Transportation Plan Project, located in Calaveras County.

Our agency is delegated with the responsibility of protecting the quality of surface and groundwaters of the state; therefore our comments will address concerns surrounding those issues.

I. Regulatory Setting

Basin Plan

The Central Valley Water Board is required to formulate and adopt Basin Plans for all areas within the Central Valley region under Section 13240 of the Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act. Each Basin Plan must contain water quality objectives to ensure the reasonable protection of beneficial uses, as well as a program of implementation for achieving water quality objectives with the Basin Plans. Federal regulations require each state to adopt water quality standards to protect the public health or welfare, enhance the quality of water and serve the purposes of the Clean Water Act. In California, the beneficial uses, water quality objectives, and the Antidegradation Policy are the State's water quality standards. Water quality standards are also contained in the National Toxics Rule, 40 CFR Section 131.36, and the California Toxics Rule, 40 CFR Section 131.38.

The Basin Plan is subject to modification as necessary, considering applicable laws, policies, technologies, water quality conditions and priorities. The original Basin Plans were adopted in 1975, and have been updated and revised periodically as required, using Basin Plan amendments. Once the Central Valley Water Board has adopted a Basin Plan amendment in noticed public hearings, it must be approved by the State Water Resources Control Board (State Water Board), Office of Administrative Law (OAL) and in some cases, the United States Environmental

Protection Agency (USEPA). Basin Plan amendments only become effective after they have been approved by the OAL and in some cases, the USEPA. Every three (3) years, a review of the Basin Plan is completed that assesses the appropriateness of existing standards and evaluates and prioritizes Basin Planning issues. For more information on the *Water Quality Control Plan for the Sacramento and San Joaquin River Basins*, please visit our website:

http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/water_issues/basin_plans/

Antidegradation Considerations

All wastewater discharges must comply with the Antidegradation Policy (State Water Board Resolution 68-16) and the Antidegradation Implementation Policy contained in the Basin Plan. The Antidegradation Implementation Policy is available on page 74 at:

https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/water_issues/basin_plans/sacsjr_2018_05.pdf

In part it states:

Any discharge of waste to high quality waters must apply best practicable treatment or control not only to prevent a condition of pollution or nuisance from occurring, but also to maintain the highest water quality possible consistent with the maximum benefit to the people of the State.

This information must be presented as an analysis of the impacts and potential impacts of the discharge on water quality, as measured by background concentrations and applicable water quality objectives.

The antidegradation analysis is a mandatory element in the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System and land discharge Waste Discharge Requirements (WDRs) permitting processes. The environmental review document should evaluate potential impacts to both surface and groundwater quality.

II. Permitting Requirements

Construction Storm Water General Permit

Dischargers whose project disturb one or more acres of soil or where projects disturb less than one acre but are part of a larger common plan of development that in total disturbs one or more acres, are required to obtain coverage under the General Permit for Storm Water Discharges Associated with Construction and Land Disturbance Activities (Construction General Permit), Construction General Permit Order No. 2009-0009-DWQ. Construction activity subject to this permit includes clearing, grading, grubbing, disturbances to the ground, such as stockpiling, or excavation, but does not include regular maintenance activities performed to restore the original line, grade, or capacity of the facility. The Construction General Permit requires the development and implementation of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP). For more information on the Construction General Permit, visit the State Water Resources Control Board website at:

http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/stormwater/constpermits.shtml

Phase I and II Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Permits¹

The Phase I and II MS4 permits require the Permittees reduce pollutants and runoff flows from new development and redevelopment using Best Management Practices (BMPs) to the maximum extent practicable (MEP). MS4 Permittees have their own development standards, also known as Low Impact Development (LID)/post-construction standards that include a hydromodification component. The MS4 permits also require specific design concepts for LID/post-construction BMPs in the early stages of a project during the entitlement and CEQA process and the development plan review process.

For more information on which Phase I MS4 Permit this project applies to, visit the Central Valley Water Board website at:

http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/water_issues/storm_water/municipal_permits/

For more information on the Phase II MS4 permit and who it applies to, visit the State Water Resources Control Board at:

http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/stormwater/phase_ii_municipal.shtml

Clean Water Act Section 404 Permit

If the project will involve the discharge of dredged or fill material in navigable waters or wetlands, a permit pursuant to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act may be needed from the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). If a Section 404 permit is required by the USACE, the Central Valley Water Board will review the permit application to ensure that discharge will not violate water quality standards. If the project requires surface water drainage realignment, the applicant is advised to contact the Department of Fish and Game for information on Streambed Alteration Permit requirements. If you have any questions regarding the Clean Water Act Section 404 permits, please contact the Regulatory Division of the Sacramento District of USACE at (916) 557-5250.

Clean Water Act Section 401 Permit – Water Quality Certification

If an USACE permit (e.g., Non-Reporting Nationwide Permit, Nationwide Permit, Letter of Permission, Individual Permit, Regional General Permit, Programmatic General Permit), or any other federal permit (e.g., Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act or Section 9 from the United States Coast Guard), is required for this project due to the disturbance of waters of the United States (such as streams and wetlands), then a Water Quality Certification must be obtained from the Central Valley Water Board prior to initiation of project activities. There are no waivers for 401 Water Quality Certifications. For more information on the Water Quality

¹ Municipal Permits = The Phase I Municipal Separate Storm Water System (MS4) Permit covers medium sized Municipalities (serving between 100,000 and 250,000 people) and large sized municipalities (serving over 250,000 people). The Phase II MS4 provides coverage for small municipalities, including non-traditional Small MS4s, which include military bases, public campuses, prisons and hospitals.

Certification, visit the Central Valley Water Board website at:

https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/water_issues/water_quality_certification/

Waste Discharge Requirements – Discharges to Waters of the State

If USACE determines that only non-jurisdictional waters of the State (i.e., “non-federal” waters of the State) are present in the proposed project area, the proposed project may require a Waste Discharge Requirement (WDR) permit to be issued by Central Valley Water Board. Under the California Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act, discharges to all waters of the State, including all wetlands and other waters of the State including, but not limited to, isolated wetlands, are subject to State regulation. For more information on the Waste Discharges to Surface Water NPDES Program and WDR processes, visit the Central Valley Water Board website at: https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/water_issues/waste_to_surface_water/

Projects involving excavation or fill activities impacting less than 0.2 acre or 400 linear feet of non-jurisdictional waters of the state and projects involving dredging activities impacting less than 50 cubic yards of non-jurisdictional waters of the state may be eligible for coverage under the State Water Resources Control Board Water Quality Order No. 2004-0004-DWQ (General Order 2004-0004). For more information on the General Order 2004-0004, visit the State Water Resources Control Board website at:

https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/board_decisions/adopted_orders/water_quality/2004/wqo/wqo2004-0004.pdf

Dewatering Permit

If the proposed project includes construction or groundwater dewatering to be discharged to land, the proponent may apply for coverage under State Water Board General Water Quality Order (Low Threat General Order) 2003-0003 or the Central Valley Water Board’s Waiver of Report of Waste Discharge and Waste Discharge Requirements (Low Threat Waiver) R5-2018-0085. Small temporary construction dewatering projects are projects that discharge groundwater to land from excavation activities or dewatering of underground utility vaults. Dischargers seeking coverage under the General Order or Waiver must file a Notice of Intent with the Central Valley Water Board prior to beginning discharge.

For more information regarding the Low Threat General Order and the application process, visit the Central Valley Water Board website at:

http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/board_decisions/adopted_orders/water_quality/2003/wqo/wqo2003-0003.pdf

For more information regarding the Low Threat Waiver and the application process, visit the Central Valley Water Board website at:

https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/board_decisions/adopted_orders/waivers/r5-2018-0085.pdf

Limited Threat General NPDES Permit

If the proposed project includes construction dewatering and it is necessary to discharge the groundwater to waters of the United States, the proposed project will require coverage under a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit. Dewatering discharges are typically considered a low or limited threat to water quality and may be covered under the General Order for *Limited Threat Discharges to Surface Water* (Limited Threat General Order). A complete Notice of Intent must be submitted to the Central Valley Water Board to obtain coverage under the Limited Threat General Order. For more information regarding the Limited Threat General Order and the application process, visit the Central Valley Water Board website at:

https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/board_decisions/adopted_orders/general_orders/r5-2016-0076-01.pdf

NPDES Permit

If the proposed project discharges waste that could affect the quality of surface waters of the State, other than into a community sewer system, the proposed project will require coverage under a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit. A complete Report of Waste Discharge must be submitted with the Central Valley Water Board to obtain a NPDES Permit. For more information regarding the NPDES Permit and the application process, visit the Central Valley Water Board website at: <https://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralvalley/help/permit/>

If you have questions regarding these comments, please contact me at (916) 464-4856 or Nicholas.White@waterboards.ca.gov.



Nicholas White
Water Resource Control Engineer

cc: State Clearinghouse unit, Governor's Office of Planning and Research,
Sacramento

California Department of Transportation

OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT 10 PLANNING
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September 20, 2021

Mrs. Amber Collins
Executive Director
Calaveras County
Council of Governments
444 E. Saint Charles Street
San Andreas, CA 95249

**Calaveras Council of
Governments (CCOG)
Regional Transportation Plan
(RTP) 2021 Update
Initial Study Mitigated
Negative Declaration (IS-MND)
SCH 2021080389**

Dear Mrs. Collins,

Thank you for the opportunity to review and provide comments on the Calaveras County Council of Governments (CCOG) Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) 2021 update. The CCOG RTP 2021 update presents a 20-year vision for all types of transportation capital improvement projects in Calaveras County. The plan identifies transportation related issues, outlines goals, policies and objectives and includes a list of future transportation projects to address the issues. Based on our review of the Draft RTP and IS-MND, the Department would like to provide the following comments, suggestions, and questions for your consideration.

The Calaveras County Council of Governments is commended for:

- Developing a 2021 RTP that is very clear, interesting to read, well supported with a documented public involvement process, and rich with graphics and illustrations.
- Developing well-rounded Regional Transportation Goals that include seven goals for the 2021 RTP.
- The significance of the RTP as it pertains to the state's California Transportation Plan (CTP) 2050 and the interrelationship between the region's transportation goals and how they align with the state's long-range transportation policies and objectives.

Introduction, Executive Summary, Demographics and Economics

- Page 1: "1.1 decrease" in the last paragraph on the page should say "1.1 percent decrease...".

Ch 2: Existing Conditions, Residents and Workforce

- Page 30: There wasn't any chart or visual map that represented the land use types and adjacent highway connectors and arterial facilities that would support this statement. This section could be broken up and placed under Goal 7 - economic vitality and support economic resiliency. The modal discussion topic could also clearly state the other main modes of goods movement or lack thereof. A suggestion would be to reference the California Rail Plan (2018) and identify any opportunity to incorporate transit lines running directly to-and-from the High-Speed Rail stop in Stockton and any associated points of interest. This project is currently in Phase 2 and a discussion of the anticipated increase in travel and tourism to the area would align nicely with the overall transportation improvement concepts in the RTP.

Ch 3: Planning Documents

- Page 38-39: Systematic Safety Analysis Report (2018) states, "Recommendations to mitigate collision rates along these segments included high friction surface treatments, updated guardrail installation, restriping and reflective pavement markers, rumble strips, street lighting, and the posting of radar speed feedback signs."
 - Per the items mentioned above, all safety improvements must be concurred by the District Traffic Safety Engineer. Please ensure the District Traffic Safety Engineer is contacted in regard to when these improvements will be implemented so that the District Traffic Safety Team is aware of the work in the area.
- Page 44: As referenced in the Air Quality section, a majority of air pollution problems (non-attainment of PM10 standards due to fugitive dust particles and ozone non-attainment due to drift winds from San Joaquin Valley), a further detailed description on the strategic planning policy efforts could be included. An example would involve working with the regions on negotiating a carbon trade agreement to offset the fugitive emissions that have altered the attainment zones of Calaveras County. An example would be receiving funding support from adjacent jurisdictions to develop GHG mitigation banks which sequester carbon through selected native plants and other crops to offset mobile source emissions from outside the county.

Ch 4: Modal Discussion

- Page 47: State Route 49's functional classification in Calaveras County is principal arterial, not minor arterial.

- Page 61: Amtrak section where the RTP states that the San Joaquin route runs seven round trips a day, seven days a week: This Amtrak service was reduced during COVID.
 - The plan for Amtrak is to return to pre-COVID levels and then increase from there. Since it's a moving target, we would suggest that CCOG modify the wording to identify "existing (pre-COVID) service levels."
 - Please consider including something on Valley Rail since it will run to Modesto and Ceres, which is the closest rail connection to Calaveras County (https://acerail.com/valley_rail/)
- Page 71: "Typical goods movement issues in rural counties include potential conflicts between truck, recreational vehicle traffic and 40-foot tour buses on the County's narrow two-lane highways are an issue." Highway Traffic related crashes, fatalities, and injuries shown on page 69 depict the concentration along the principle arterials, where the highest concentration of goods movement activity is. The Final RTP may want to incorporate plans to improve and expand the shoulders adjacent to these critical facilities to mitigate for safety improvements along State Routes (SR) 49, SR 4, and SR 26 and Valley Springs in particular. The California Freight Mobility Plan (CFMP) 2020 project list incorporates some projects priorities, but there are no listings of shoulder widening projects on SR 26. There are also no projects of this sort listed in Appendix H of the RTP.

Ch 5: Policy Element

- Page 78: Policy 2.3 states the need to work with local partners to develop a strategy to identify the necessary infrastructure to support electrical vehicle charging integration. There could also be consideration for the adoption of Zero Emission Freight Vehicle recharging and truck parking facilities projects. This would not only apply to ZEV re-charging station sites, but also the incorporation of projects that would utilize biobased fuels (biomass) from woody remains of forest fires, the planting of woody plants (where feasible) for the adoption of feedstock fuel supply for alternative Hydrogen and Electric Vehicle refueling stations, the processing of industrial wastes and landfill gases for treatment and re-use to be transmitted and dispensed at ZEV re-charging stations. There could also be consideration for further coordination with the Calaveras County Airport and the integration of alternative fueling facilities for backup generation, development of alternative jet fuel production on or near site, and also incorporation of cargo operations for emergency events, such as earthquakes, flooding, and brush/forest fires.

Ch 6: Action Element

- Page 85: There may be further considerations pertaining to planning assumptions for the impacts of increased travel and tourism to the area and associated truck traffic, outside of overall population growth. Likewise, there may be further consideration for the demographics of tourists utilizing transit services for recreational purposes within the region.
- Page 89: Performance Measures states; "With diminishing transportation funding at the state level." Please clarify if transportation funding is actually decreasing on the state level.

Ch 7: Financial Element

- Page 107: There are additional funding programs that could be mentioned for alternative corridor project investment categories, such as the California Clean Energy Commission (CEC) Clean Transportation Program, and Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Continuous Lower Energy, Emissions, and Noise (CLEEN) program.
- Page 119: Table 22 RTP Forecast Revenue Summary shows funding levels to be higher; is this due to the budget revise? This is vaguely addressed on page 120. Can you provide source for revenue summary?

General Comments

- Will the CCOG Regional Travel Demand Model (TDM) be updated as part of the RTP? Caltrans recommends adding a section in the RTP to discuss TDM and projected traffic growth for future years.
- Please ensure that any projects associated with RTP implementation are routed to District 10 Freeway and Highway Operations Branch so impacts to the highway system can be assessed.
- Please identify which projects outlined in the constrained project list is regionally significant.

RTP Checklist Comments

General

1. Caltrans could not identify the long-range and short-range strategies/action as indicated on page 81 of the RTP checklist.
2. Caltrans could not identify the Project Intent i.e. Plan Level Purpose and Needs Statement as indicated on page 87 of the RTP checklist.

Mrs. Collins, Executive Director
September 20, 2021
Page 5

Please do not hesitate to contact Michael Casas at (209) 986-9830 (email: Michael.Casas@dot.ca.gov) or me at (209) 483-7234 (email: Gregoria.Ponce@dot.ca.gov) if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Gregoria Ponce'

Gregoria Ponce, Chief
Office of Rural Planning

c: State Clearinghouse

Marlon Regisford, Deputy District Director, Caltrans District 10

Gilbert Valencia, Associate Transportation Planner, Office of Regional and
Community Planning, Division of Transportation Planning

Gregoria Ponce, Office Chief, District 10 Office of Rural Planning

Calaveras 2021 Regional Transportation Plan Update and Initial Study Mitigated Negative Declaration Response to Comments

Response to Comments: Caltrans District 10, Office of Rural Planning

Comment: Introduction, Executive Summary, Demographics and Economics

- Page 1: “1.1 decrease” in the last paragraph on the page should say “1.1 percent decrease...”.

Response: Document revised as suggested.

Comment: Ch 2: Existing Conditions, Residents and Workforce

- Page 30: One of the stated points was to encourage tourism and provide safe and efficient travel routes for agricultural goods movement. There wasn't any chart or visual map that represented the land use types and adjacent highway connectors and arterial facilities that would support this statement. This section could be broken up and placed under Goal 7 - economic vitality and support economic resiliency.

Response: No changes recommended. This statement was simply making a connection between economic conditions in Calaveras County and how that might influence transportation decisions down the road. The fact that Calaveras County has a high level of tourism indicates that non-motorized improvements in tourist towns to increase safety and walkability are relevant. Projects which improve the safety of goods movement would make for more efficient transport of agricultural goods. At this point in the document no specific projects are proposed.

Comment: The modal discussion topic could also clearly state the other main modes of goods movement or lack thereof. A suggestion would be to reference the California Rail Plan (2018) and identify any opportunity to incorporate transit lines running directly to-and-from the High-Speed Rail stop in Stockton and any associated points of interest. This project is currently in Phase 2 and a discussion of the anticipated increase in travel and tourism to the area would align nicely with the overall transportation improvement concepts in the RTP.

Response: Noted that Calaveras County goods movement modes does not include rail. Added reference to reviewing intercity transit to Stockton in light of California Rail Plan. It was also noted that intercity service to Stockton was implemented a few years ago but did not carry enough ridership to justify the cost.

Comment: Ch 3: Planning Documents

- Page 38-39: Systematic Safety Analysis Report (2018) states, “Recommendations to mitigate collision rates along these segments included high friction surface treatments, updated guardrail installation, restriping and reflective pavement markers, rumble strips, street lighting, and the posting of radar speed feedback signs.”
- Per the items mentioned above, all safety improvements must be concurred by the District Traffic Safety Engineer. Please ensure the District Traffic Safety Engineer is contacted in regard to when these improvements will be implemented so that the District Traffic Safety Team is aware of the work in the area.

Response: No changes recommended. CCOG and local agencies will work with the Caltrans District Traffic Safety Engineer prior to implementing improvements from the Systematic Safety Analysis Report.

Comment: Page 44: As referenced in the Air Quality section, a majority of air pollution problems (non-attainment of PM10 standards due to fugitive dust particles and ozone non-attainment due to drift winds from San Joaquin Valley), a further detailed description on the strategic planning policy efforts could be included. An example would involve working with the regions on negotiating a carbon trade agreement to offset the fugitive emissions that have altered the attainment zones of Calaveras County. An example would be receiving funding support from adjacent jurisdictions to develop GHG mitigation banks which sequester carbon through selected native plants and other crops to offset mobile source emissions from outside the county.

Response: Policy efforts such as carbon trade agreements is outside the scope of the RTP and the purview of the CCOG as a Regional Transportation Planning Agency. The RTP does recommend projects with the goal of improving air quality such as construction of non-motorized facilities. A policy was added to the document which further promotes coordination with other jurisdictions to implement projects which offset GHG emissions.

Comment: Ch 4: Modal Discussion

- Page 47: State Route 49's functional classification in Calaveras County is principal arterial, not minor arterial.

Response: Document revised as suggested.

Comment: Page 61: Amtrak section where the RTP states that the San Joaquin route runs seven round trips a day, seven days a week: This Amtrak service was reduced during COVID.

- The plan for Amtrak is to return to pre-COVID levels and then increase from there. Since it's a moving target, we would suggest that CCOG modify the wording to identify "existing (pre-COVID) service levels."
- Please consider including something on Valley Rail since it will run to Modesto and Ceres, which is the closest rail connection to Calaveras County (https://acerail.com/valley_rail/)

Response: Document revised to add this information.

Comment: Page 71: "Typical goods movement issues in rural counties include potential conflicts between truck, recreational vehicle traffic and 40-foot tour buses on the County's narrow two-lane highways are an issue." Highway Traffic related crashes, fatalities, and injuries shown on page 69 depict the concentration along the principal arterials, where the highest concentration of goods movement activity is. The Final RTP may want to incorporate plans to improve and expand the shoulders adjacent to these critical facilities to mitigate for safety improvements along State Routes (SR) 49, SR 4, and SR 26 and Valley Springs in particular. The California Freight Mobility Plan (CFMP) 2020 project list incorporates some projects priorities, but there are no listings of shoulder widening projects on SR 26. There are also no projects of this sort listed in Appendix H of the RTP.

Response: A policy was added to the document to continue to evaluate crash data and work with Caltrans on planning for shoulder improvements. One of the concerns with respect to goods movement is conflicts with other vehicles while trying to pass bicyclists. There are many non-motorized improvements in the RTP which address creating a safer space for bicyclists on state highways.

Comment: Ch 5: Policy Element

- Page 78: Policy 2.3 states the need to work with local partners to develop a strategy to identify the necessary infrastructure to support electrical vehicle charging integration. There could also be consideration for the adoption of Zero Emission Freight Vehicle recharging and truck parking facilities projects. This would not only apply to ZEV re-charging station sites, but also the incorporation of projects that would utilize biobased fuels (biomass) from woody remains of forest fires, the planting of woody plants (where feasible) for the adoption of feedstock fuel supply for alternative Hydrogen and Electric Vehicle refueling stations, the processing of industrial wastes and landfill gases for treatment and re-use to be transmitted and dispensed at ZEV re-charging stations. There could also be consideration for further coordination with the Calaveras County Airport and the integration of alternative fueling facilities for backup generation, development of alternative jet fuel production on or near site, and also incorporation of cargo operations for emergency events, such as earthquakes, flooding, and brush/forest fires.

Response: Noted and document revised to add “and other alternative fuel sources” into Policy 2.3

Comment: Ch 6: Action Element

- Page 85: There may be further considerations pertaining to planning assumptions for the impacts of increased travel and tourism to the area and associated truck traffic, outside of overall population growth. Likewise, there may be further consideration for the demographics of tourists utilizing transit services for recreational purposes within the region.

Response: Noted and document revised to add Language to planning assumptions section.

Comment: • Page 89: Performance Measures states; “With diminishing transportation funding at the state level.” Please clarify if transportation funding is actually decreasing on the state level.

Response: Document revised to clarify statement to say “As available regional transportation funding is not sufficient to cover all project costs, it is important to establish a method of comparing the benefits of various transportation projects...”

Comment: Ch 7: Financial Element

- Page 107: There are additional funding programs that could be mentioned for alternative corridor project investment categories, such as the California Clean Energy Commission (CEC) Clean Transportation Program, and Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Continuous Lower Energy, Emissions, and Noise (CLEEN) program.

Response: No changes recommended. The CEC program is mentioned in the RTP. The CLEEN Program does not seem relevant to CCOG.

Comment: Page 119: Table 22 RTP Forecast Revenue Summary shows funding levels to be higher; is this due to the budget revise? This is vaguely addressed on page 120. Can you provide source for revenue summary?

Response: No changes recommended. The footnotes section of Table 22 and page 32 explain how transportation revenue forecasts were developed. Generally, the most recent guidance for each funding program was reviewed and increased for inflation or population growth, depending on the funding source.

General Comments

Comment: Will the CCOG Regional Travel Demand Model (TDM) be updated as part of the RTP? Caltrans recommends adding a section in the RTP to discuss TDM and projected traffic growth for future years.

Response: According to Section 3.2 of the 2017 RTP Guidelines for RTPAs, a TDM is not required. The Travel Demand Model will not be updated as part of this RTP update. The model was recently updated as part of the General Plan process. That information was used to update the RTP. Table 9 and Appendix E discuss future traffic volumes and LOS.

Comment: Please ensure that any projects associated with RTP implementation are routed to District 10 Freeway and Highway Operations Branch so impacts to the highway system can be assessed.

Response: Noted, no changes recommended.

Comment: Please identify which projects outlined in the constrained project list is regionally significant.

Response: The SR 4 Wagon Trail Realignment project has been prioritized for Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP) funds and as such is a regionally significant project. Page 95 states “the region’s top priority project is construction of the Westerly Segment of the SR 4 Wagon Trail Project...”

Comment: Caltrans could not identify the long-range and short-range strategies/action as indicated on page 81 of the RTP checklist.

Response: No changes recommended. Tables 17 and 18 list short-term strategies and Appendix H lists long-term strategies.

Comment: Caltrans could not identify the Project Intent i.e., Plan Level Purpose and Needs Statement as indicated on page 87 of the RTP checklist.

Response: Added subheading so that this section was easier to identify.

Response to Comments: Central Valley Water Quality Control Board

The Water Quality Control Board provided a comprehensive list of requirements and best practices when a project may impact surface water and groundwater. CCOG and the implementing agency for RTP projects will follow these requirements if it is determined through each individual environmental

process that a project will have a significant impact on surface water and ground water. The best practices are also referenced in the Environmental Mitigation section of the RTP.