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4 OTHER CEQA REQUIRED TOPICS

Section 15126 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines identifies the subjects that shall be discussed in an environmental impact report (EIR) including effects determined not to be significant, significant and unavoidable impacts, significant irreversible environmental changes, and growth-inducing effects, as discussed in the following subsections.

4.1 Effects Determined Not To Be Significant

Section 15128 of the CEQA Guidelines states "an EIR shall contain a brief statement indicating reasons that various possible effects of a project were determined not to be significant and not discussed in detail in the EIR." Effects determined not to be significant for the Project are summarized in this chapter. All other CEQA required environmental topics are addressed in Chapter 3.

4.1.1 Aesthetics

Scenic vistas and scenic resources, including trees and historic buildings, are located throughout the City. The urban streetscape currently includes street furniture, street trees, and lighting. The MEU establishes citywide and community-specific mobility-related goals and policies and network classifications for circulation element roadways within the City. As the MEU is a planning-level document, no specific projects or construction activities are proposed. Construction activities that could potentially occur to implement the mobility network proposed as part of the MEU could include, but are not limited to:

- Roadway improvements such as paving and restriping
- Facilities to support public transit (such as bus lanes, transit priority signal systems, managed curb space, passenger shelters, and transportation kiosks)
- Facilities to support bicycle and micromobility (such as multi-use paths, lanes, signals, loop detectors, parking, and other infrastructure and operational accommodations)
- Facilities to support pedestrian travel such as crossings, signals, sidewalks, paths, plazas, furniture, signage, and landscaping
- Other mobility-related improvement projects

According to the 2016 City of Encinitas Housing Element Update, the following roads are considered to be scenic highways and viewsheds:

- Saxony Road, from Leucadia Boulevard, north to La Costa Avenue
- Highway 101 from Encinitas Boulevard south to Santa Fe Drive
- El Camino Real from La Costa Boulevard south to Manchester Avenue
- Highway 101, La Costa Avenue, to South Carlsbad Beach
- La Costa Avenue, from just west of I-5 to El Camino Real
- Highway 101, from Encinitas Boulevard to La Costa Avenue
- Leucadia Boulevard, between Highway 101 and El Camino Real
- San Elijo Avenue (and Highway 101) south of Cardiff Beach State Park to Santa Fe Drive
- Manchester Avenue from San Elijo Avenue to Encinitas Boulevard
- I-5, crossing San Elijo Lagoon
- Rancho Santa Fe Road within Olivenhain
- Lone Jack Road from Rancho Santa Fe Road to Lone Hill Lane
- Santa Fe Drive from South Vulcan Avenue to El Camino Real

As stated above, the MEU is a planning-level document that establishes citywide and community-specific mobility-related goals and policies. Policies outlined in the MEU would ensure that the Project and future improvements would not result in aesthetic impacts. For example, Policy 1.1 ensures mobility decisions are consistent with the City's General Plan and other guiding documents and Policy 6.8 prioritizes community character preservation over development. Additionally, under the Project, roadway improvements would not cause impacts to existing scenic roadways and view corridors as all work would occur within existing public right-of-way. It is not anticipated that changes within existing rights-of-way would significantly impact a scenic vista, damage any scenic resources, change the visual character or quality of a particular area or transportation corridor, or substantially change the shading and lighting levels along a transportation corridor. Therefore, the Project would remain consistent with the City's General plan and would not significantly impact scenic resources and impacts would be less than significant. Aesthetic impacts would be less than significant.

4.1.2 Agriculture and Forest Resources

The updated MEU would be implemented within the existing public rights-of-way and, therefore, would not affect lands within an agricultural zone or subject to the Williamson Act contract. The existing right-of-way is defined as "Urban and Built-Up Land" by the California Important Farmland Finder (California Department of Conservation 2024). The California Important Farmland Finder defines "Urban and Built-Up Land" as land occupied by structures with a building density of at least 1 unit to 1.5 acres, or approximately six structures to a 10-acre parcel. Forest land and timberland are not

present within the designated public right-of-way or within the city. The Project would not convert forestland to non-forest uses, involve changes in the existing environment, or convert forest land to non-forest use. Therefore, no impact would occur.

4.1.3 Biological Resources

The proposed enhancements to the City's pedestrian facilities, bikeway system, transit network, and street network resulting from the Project would involve work within and adjacent to existing rights-of-way that have already been disturbed. The Project would be developed and implemented within the disturbed area within or adjacent to existing roadways and multimodal networks. Any facility associated with the MEU would be considered a minor improvement (i.e., bus stop), which would be placed adjacent to the mobility network within developed or disturbed areas. Therefore, proposed enhancements are not anticipated to affect biological resources, including riparian habitat, sensitive and migratory species, protected resources and tree preservation, and wildlife corridors. Future improvements would be subject to applicable regulatory requirements. Therefore, impacts to biological resources would be less than significant.

4.1.4 Cultural Resources and Tribal Cultural Resources

The proposed enhancements to the City's pedestrian facilities, bikeway system, transit network, and street network resulting from the Project would involve work within and adjacent to existing rights-of-way that have already been disturbed. Therefore, proposed enhancements are not anticipated to affect existing cultural, tribal cultural, or historic resources, as all work would occur within and immediately adjacent to existing rights-of-way. Minor rights-of-way would be acquired to implement the proposed enhancements. Traditional methods of construction for pedestrian facilities, bikeways, transit, and roadway improvements do not typically necessitate significant excavation. The proposed Project would involve minimal ground disturbance during construction in areas where the soil has already been disturbed as a result of the construction of the existing roadways; therefore, impacts on subsurface historical resources, cultural resources, archaeological resources, or human remains are not anticipated. In cases where excavation could go beyond previously disturbed soils, a site-specific review would be required as appropriate. If unexpected archaeological resources were encountered along the enhancement corridors, the City's standard procedure is to halt construction and require a qualified archaeologist to review the Project plans and, as appropriate, identify protective best management practices. Therefore, impacts on cultural resources and tribal cultural resources would be less than significant.

4.1.5 Energy

The Mobility Element, together with the other elements, comprises the City's General Plan and provides a long-term blueprint that guides transportation decision-making; plans for diverse modes and mobility options; envisions future mobility improvements; and includes goals, policies, and multimodal networks. The proposed update to the MEU is intended to improve the safety, interconnectivity, accessibility, and comfort of all multimodal corridors within existing rights-of-way.

The Project would not result in wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy resources as the Project is a planning-level document. Regarding long-term energy consumption, no new permanent source of energy demand would result from project implementation. The MEU incentivizes

Electric Vehicles (EV's) under policies 6.5 and 6.6, which aim to encourage EV usage Additionally, implementation of the MEU would not result in an increase in VMT and therefore, would not obstruct a state or local plan for renewable energy or energy efficiency. Therefore, energy impacts would be less than significant.

4.1.6 Geology and Soils

According to the California Department of Conservation, the Planning Area is not within a known earthquake fault or the Alquist-Priolo Fault Hazard Zones, a liquefaction zone, or a landslide zone. The nearest known faults are Newport-Inglewood Fault and the Rose Canyon Fault, which are approximately 5 miles away (California Department of Conservation). Implementation of the proposed enhancements would involve work within or immediately adjacent to existing street rights-of-way. The design and construction of any structures associated with pedestrian, bikeway, transit, and street improvements would conform to applicable codes, including the California Building Code seismic standards and other codes, as determined by the City to reduce the risk and hazards (e.g., ground shaking, liquefaction, settlement, and subsidence) associated with seismic events and unstable soils.

With respect to unique paleontological resources or sites, there are two sites identified within the planning area with moderate risk to paleontological resources (Del Mar Formation and Torrey Sandstone). Each future project site would be screened for paleontological resources including applying Policy 7.2 of the General Plan Resource Management Element aimed at protection of paleontological resources. It is important to note, however, that improvements under the Project would be within the existing ROW and unique paleontological resources would be located below the depth of expected soils disturbance. Therefore, the Project would not impact paleontological resources and impacts to geology and soils would be less than significant.

4.1.7 Hazards and Hazardous Materials

The proposed enhancements would be developed within or immediately adjacent to existing rights-of-way and would require minimal acquisition of surrounding properties. These enhancements would include the development of bicycle and transit lanes, and other street improvements to address pedestrian needs and safety and improve the through movement of vehicular traffic. Construction of any facilities associated with pedestrian, bikeway, transit, and street improvements consistent with the MEU would involve the use of potentially hazardous materials, including vehicle fuels, oils, and transmission fluids. However, all hazardous materials would be contained, stored, and used in accordance with manufacturers' instructions and handled in compliance with federal Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and California OSHA standards and other applicable regulations. Operation of the proposed enhancements would not result in emissions or release of hazardous materials beyond existing conditions. During subsurface work, unexpected, contaminated soils could be encountered; any such soils would be evaluated and handled in accordance with applicable regulations.

The Project is not within an ALUCP Safety zone, and the nearest airport is the McClellan-Palomar Airport located approximately 2.5 miles northeast of the Planning Area in the city of Carlsbad. The Project would not result in a safety hazard or excessive noise for people residing or working in the project area. Additionally, the MEU includes policies to address emergency access and does not include any requirements that would result in inadequate emergency access. The MEU includes Policy ME 1.1

that ensures mobility decisions are consistent with the City's General Plan and other guiding documents, including the overarching vision to provide safe, accessible, and comfortable transportation for all modes of movement and all demographics. According to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Fire Hazard Severity Zones online interactive map, the Project is not in a "very high/high/moderate" fire hazard severity zone. Therefore, people or structures would not be exposed to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving wildland fires and impacts related to hazards and hazardous materials would be less than significant.

4.1.8 Hydrology and Water Quality

The proposed enhancements include future development of bicycle and transit lanes and other street improvements to address pedestrian needs and safety and improve the through movement of vehicular traffic. As previously described, the Project segments are located within existing public rights-of-way in an urbanized environment. Construction activities associated with these enhancements could include minor earth moving; maintenance and operation of construction equipment; and handling, storage, and disposal of materials that may contribute to pollutant loading in stormwater runoff. However, with conformance to applicable local and regional regulations and requirements concerning stormwater discharge, and implementation of source control and treatment best management practices, the proposed enhancements would minimize or eliminate the discharge of potential pollutants from stormwater runoff to the maximum extent practicable. In addition, the proposed enhancements would be implemented in areas currently developed with paved asphalt streets and sidewalks. Consequently, these enhancements would not measurably change the volume of stormwater runoff. Since the proposed enhancements would be located within or immediately adjacent to existing rights-of-way, they would not increase the amount of area, or the number of structures subjected to flooding or inundation. Therefore, impacts on hydrology and water quality would be less than significant.

4.1.9 Mineral Resources

The enhancement corridors consist of existing streets located in developed, urbanized areas of the city. These corridors would continue to be used for transportation under the proposed Project. Accordingly, the proposed enhancements would not result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state or 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. Therefore, no impact would occur.

4.1.10 Population and Housing

The Project would provide for, expand, and sustain a mix of transportation modes that meet the existing and future transportation needs of all Encinitas residents and visitors; and minimize impacts on the community and environmental character. The MEU would not induce substantial unplanned population growth. Through updated goals and policies, the MEU would help accommodate future city growth. Future proposed projects are anticipated to improve connectivity throughout the city and would not displace substantial numbers of existing people or housing. Therefore, no impact would occur.

4.1.11 Recreation

As discussed in Section 4.4, the proposed enhancements would not induce population growth. No residential uses would be developed under the proposed Project. The proposed enhancements would not include the construction or expansion of recreational facilities or contribute to a need that would necessitate the development of parks or other recreational facilities. The proposed enhancements could increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks and other recreational facilities including bicycle facilities. However, any increase in the use of existing parks and recreation facilities would occur throughout the city and would not be concentrated on any particular facility. Therefore, impacts on recreation would be less than significant.

4.1.12 Utilities and Service Systems

The proposed enhancements would include developing bicycle and transit lanes and other street improvements to address pedestrian needs and safety and improve the through movement of vehicular traffic. The proposed enhancements would not connect to the public water, stormwater or sewer systems. Accordingly, these enhancements would not require or result in the construction of new water, wastewater treatment, or stormwater drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities. The proposed enhancements would not generate any solid waste. Therefore, impacts on utilities and service systems would be less than significant.

4.1.13 Wildfire

According to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection Fire Hazard Severity Zones online interactive map, the Project area is near, but not within a very high, high, or moderate fire hazard severity zone. Since the Planning Area is not located in state responsibility areas or lands classified as very high fire hazard severity zones, the Project would not impair an emergency response plan, expose Project occupants to pollutant concentrations from wildfire, require infrastructure that may exacerbate fire risk or result in temporary or ongoing impacts to the environment, or expose people or structures to risk as a result of runoff, post-fire slope instability, or drainage changes. Therefore, impacts due to wildfire would be less than significant.

4.1.14 Mandatory Findings of Significance

The proposed enhancements would not 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, reduce the number of or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plants or animals, or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory. These enhancements would not have impacts that are individually limited, cumulatively considerable, or cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly.

4.2 Significant and Unavoidable Impacts

This section is prepared in accordance with Section 15126.2(c) of the CEQA Guidelines, which requires the discussion of any significant environmental impacts that cannot be avoided if a project is implemented. Pursuant to the analysis in Chapter 3.0, Environmental Analysis and Chapter 5.0, Cumulative Impacts, all impacts would be less than significant.

4.3 Significant Irreversible Environmental Changes

Section 15126.2(d) of the CEQA Guidelines requires a discussion of any significant irreversible environmental changes caused by a project. Specifically, Section 15126.2(d) states:

Uses of nonrenewable resources during the initial and continued phases of the project may be irreversible, since a large commitment of such resources makes removal or nonuse thereafter unlikely. Primary impacts and, particularly, secondary impacts (such as highway improvement which provides access to a previously inaccessible area) generally commit future generations to similar uses. Also, irreversible damage can result from environmental accidents associated with the project. Irretrievable commitments of resources should be evaluated to assure that such current consumption is justified.

Generally, a project would result in significant irreversible environmental changes if any of the following would occur:

- The primary and secondary impacts would generally commit future generations to similar uses.
- The project would involve a large commitment of nonrenewable resources.
- The project involves uses in which irreversible damage could result from any potential environmental accidents associated with the project.
- The proposed consumption of resources is not justified (e.g., the project involves the wasteful use of energy).

The proposed Project would involve modifications to the existing transportation networks to allow for mobility improvements. The implementation of these improvements would require relatively little use of resources. Although the multimodal improvements would increase vehicle delay in some areas of the city, the proposed Project would result in lower VMT and less fuel consumption. Therefore, the proposed Project would not result in a significant increase in the use of fossil fuels. The amount and rate of consumption of these resources would not result in significant environmental impacts related to the unnecessary, inefficient, or wasteful use of resources.

4.4 Growth Inducing Impacts

Growth-inducing impacts are characteristics of a project that could directly or indirectly foster economic or population growth or the construction of additional housing in the surrounding environment. Such projects include those that would remove obstacles to population growth (e.g., a major expansion of a wastewater treatment plant). Increases in the population may tax existing community service facilities and require the construction of new facilities that could cause significant environmental effects.

The MEU would provide a long-term blueprint that guides transportation decision-making; plans for diverse modes and mobility options; envisions future mobility improvements; and includes updated goals, policies, and multimodal networks. Development that could occur as a result of Project implementation could include roadway improvements such as paving and restriping; facilities to support public transit (e.g., bus lanes, transit priority signal systems, managed curb space, passenger shelters, and transportation kiosks); facilities to support bicycle and micromobility (e.g., as multi-use

paths, lanes, signals, loop detectors, parking, and other infrastructure and operational accommodations); and facilities to support pedestrian travel (e.g., such as crossings, signals, sidewalks, paths, plazas, furniture, signage, and landscaping). The Project would not change any of the land use or zoning designations within the Planning Area to allow for increased density or unplanned development and thus would not increase the San Diego Association of Governments' (SANDAG's) growth projections. The proposed Project would not add substantial capacity that would induce population growth or remove impediments to growth. Therefore, the proposed Project is not anticipated to induce a substantial increase in population.