

**Linden Avenue and Casitas Pass Road Interchange Project
Santa Barbara County Flood Control and Water Conservation District
CEQA Findings June 2012**

1.0 CEQA FINDINGS

1.1 FINDINGS PURSUANT TO PUBLIC RESOURCES CODE SECTION 21081
AND THE CEQA GUIDELINES SECTIONS 15090 AD 15091:

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) Linden Avenue and Casitas Pass Road Interchange Project is a Caltrans project with Caltrans acting as Lead Agency under CEQA and the Santa Barbara County Flood Control and Water Conservation District (District) acting as a Responsible Agency under CEQA. As the Lead Agency, Caltrans certified and adopted the Final Environmental Impact Report/Finding of No Significant Impact (FEIR/FONSI), State Clearinghouse Number 2008041158 for the Interchange Project on 7/20/10. Caltrans also adopted Findings related to mitigation measures. No unavoidable Significant Impacts were identified therefore no Statement of Overriding Considerations is required.

A portion of the project will require the District to grant an easement to Caltrans to allow the installation of a sound wall on District property adjacent to Franklin Creek, a distance of approximately 55 linear feet. Therefore, the District is acting as a Responsible Agency under CEQA. The District will not physically implement any portion of the project.

As a Responsible Agency, The Board of Director's role is limited as follows:

"A responsible agency has responsibility for mitigating or avoiding only the direct or indirect environmental effects of those parts of the project which it decides to carryout, finance or approve." (CEQA Guidelines § 15096(g)(1)).

The Board has reviewed each of the mitigation measures identified in the EIR that may pertain to the District's jurisdiction of this project. Many of the impacts and associated mitigation measures in the EIR apply to construction areas and project components outside of the District's jurisdiction and therefore will not apply to County approved portions of the proposed project and are not included in this document.

For a full discussion of findings related to the entire project approved by Caltrans on 7/20/10, refer to the document titled: California Department of Transportation Findings for the Linden Avenue & Casitas Pass Road Interchange Project on Route 101 in the City of Carpinteria, Santa Barbara County. This document is located at the Water Resources Division, Santa Barbara County Public Works, 123 E. Anapamu St, Santa Barbara CA 93101.

A. CONSIDERATION OF THE EIR

The Final EIR for the Linden Avenue and Casitas Pass Road Interchange Project was presented to the Board of Directors, acting as the Responsible Agency, and all voting members of the Board have reviewed and considered the EIR prior to approving this proposal. The Final EIR reflects the independent judgment of the Board of Directors and is adequate for this proposal.

B. FULL DISCLOSURE

The Board of Directors finds and accepts that the Final EIR constitutes a complete, accurate, adequate and good faith effort at full disclosure under CEQA. The Board of Directors further finds and accepts that the Final EIR has been completed in compliance with CEQA.

C. LOCATION OF DOCUMENTS

The documents and other materials which constitute the record of proceedings upon which this decision is based are in the custody of the Deputy Director of the Water Resources Division, Santa Barbara County Public Works, located at 123 E Anapamu St, Santa Barbara, CA 93101.

D. ENVIRONMENTAL REPORTING AND MONITORING PROGRAM

Pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21081.6, the Board hereby adopts the approved project description and mitigation measures, with their corresponding mitigation monitoring requirements, as the monitoring program for this project. The monitoring program is designed to ensure compliance during project implementation and mitigation or avoidance of significant effects on the environment.

E. FINDINGS THAT CERTAIN UNAVOIDABLE IMPACTS ARE MITIGATED TO THE MAXIMUM EXTENT FEASIBLE (CLASS I IMPACTS)

The Linden Avenue and Casitas Pass Road Interchange Project did not identify significant unavoidable impacts (Class I) therefore no Statement of Overriding Considerations is required for this approval process. {CEQA Guidelines Section 15096(g)(1)}

F. FINDINGS THAT CERTAIN IMPACTS ARE MITIGATED TO INSIGNIFICANCE BY CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL (CLASS II IMPACTS).

Within that portion of the project under District approval, the Linden Avenue and Casitas Pass Road Interchange Project EIR identified one subject area for which the proposed project is considered to cause or contribute to significant, but mitigable environmental impacts (Class II). The subject area is Aesthetics. With implementation of mitigation measures identified in the Final EIR, and outlined below, the Board of Directors finds that visual impacts would be reduced to less than significant levels.

Caltrans has determined that the mitigation measures will result in a reduction of the following impact which has been mitigated to a level of insignificance.

Aesthetics:

Impact: The project would degrade the existing visual character of the project area due to the addition of lanes on local roads, installation of retaining walls and sound walls, and the larger overcrossing and bridge structures.

Mitigation: Safe, maintainable landscaping shall be incorporated throughout the length of the project, wherever the opportunity is available, Aesthetic treatments and design shall be incorporated into all new bridge structures (including overcrossings), retaining walls and sound walls.

Specific mitigation measures are as follows:

- Sound walls shall include landscaping to reduce their urban appearance.
- Aesthetic treatment (for example split-face blocks, textures, and colors) and safe, maintainable planting opportunities shall be incorporated into all proposed retaining walls and sound walls.
- During the Coastal Development Permit application phase of the project, Caltrans shall work with the City of Carpinteria's Architectural Review Board, using the Santa Barbara County Highway 101 Design Guidelines, and applicable Caltrans design guidance, so that to the greatest extent feasible the project is consistent with City of Carpinteria aesthetic goals.

G. CUMULATIVE EFFECTS

Given the narrow focus of the Responsible Agency's jurisdiction regarding the Linden Avenue and Casitas Pass Road Interchange Project, no cumulative impacts will result from the portion of the project being approved by the District.

H. FINDINGS RELATED TO GROWTH INDUCING EFFECTS

Given the narrow focus of the Responsible Agency's jurisdiction regarding the Linden Avenue and Casitas Pass Road Interchange Project, no growth inducing effects will result from the portion of the project being approved by the District.

I. FINDINGS THAT IDENTIFIED PROJECT ALTERNATIVES ARE NOT FEASIBLE

Given the narrow focus of the Responsible Agency's jurisdiction regarding the Linden Avenue and Casitas Pass Road Interchange Project, findings regarding alternatives are not required for the portion of the project being approved by the District.