

North Connector Project

Final Environmental Impact Report

**Prepared by the
Solano Transportation Authority**

May 2008

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LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix A: Proposed 2006 CWA Section 303(d) List of Water Quality Limited Segments
Appendix B: City of Fairfield Department of Community Development Letter (April 22, 2008)

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

An Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is an informational document prepared by a Lead Agency (in this case, the Solano Transportation Authority) that contains environmental analysis for public review and for agency decision-makers to use in their consideration of development proposals. The Solano Transportation Authority (STA) issued the Draft EIR for the North Connector Project on September 10, 2007 and circulated the document for a 45-day public review and comment period. A Public Hearing on the Draft EIR was held on October 2, 2007. After review of the public comments, the STA determined the EIR should be revised to include additional information and recirculated for public review and comment. The Recirculated Draft EIR was issued by STA on January 15, 2008. A Public Hearing on the Recirculated Draft EIR was held on February 19, 2008. The Recirculated Draft EIR along with the enclosed responses to comments, errata and changes to the Draft EIR, and the Mitigation Monitoring Reporting Program (MMRP) constitute the Final EIR for the proposed Project. The response to comments includes responses to both comments received on the Draft EIR issued on September 10, 2007, as well as comments on the Recirculated Draft EIR issued on January 15, 2008. The Final EIR will be considered by the STA before they take action on the proposed Project.

Before the STA may approve the Project, it must certify that the Final EIR adequately discloses the environmental effects of the proposed Project, that the Final EIR has been completed in conformance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and that the decision-making body of the Lead Agency independently reviewed and considered the information contained in the Final EIR. Certification of the Final EIR would not mean that the STA is approving the proposed Project or any of the alternatives described in the EIR. Rather, certification of the Final EIR would indicate the STA's determination that the Final EIR adequately evaluates the environmental impacts that could be associated with the proposed Project.

CEQA Guidelines specify that the Final EIR shall consist of:

- The Draft Environmental Impact Report or a revision of that Draft;
- Comments and recommendations received on the Draft EIR;
- A list of persons, organizations, and public agencies commenting on the Draft EIR;
- The response of the Lead Agency to significant environmental issues raised in the review and consultation process;
- Changes to the Draft EIR based on public comment and any additional analysis conducted as a result of public comments.

The Final EIR document includes:

Chapter 1.0 Introduction

Chapter 2.0 Comments and Responses

Chapter 3.0 Errata/Changes to the Recirculated Draft EIR

Chapter 4.0 Mitigation Monitoring Reporting Program

Appendices

Chapter 2.0 of this document includes responses to comments on environmental issues or factual data subsequently received on both the Draft EIR and the Recirculated Draft EIR. Each comment letter is numbered and the comments within each letter are assigned numbers (.1.1, 1.2, etc.). Responses to the comments within each letter immediately follow the letter. Chapter 3.0 of this document includes errata/changes to the Recirculated Draft EIR. Errata/changes are signified by strikeouts where text is removed and by bold underline where text has been added. Chapter 4.0 of this document includes the Mitigation Monitoring Report Program (MMRP) for the North Connector Project.

2.0 COMMENTS AND RESPONSES

The Solano Transportation Agency (STA) circulated the Recirculated Draft EIR for a 45-day period.

LIST OF PEOPLE AND ORGANIZATIONS COMMENTING ON THE RECIRCULATED DEIR

The following state, regional, and local agencies, organizations, and individuals have commented on the Recirculated Draft EIR during the public comment period. Each letter has been given a number. Each piece of correspondence has been organized and numbered sequentially. Each comment is referred to by a two-number code (1.1, 1.2, etc.). Comment 1.1 refers to the first statement or question from Letter 1.

Comment Letters Received on the Recirculated Draft EIR Issued January 15, 2008

- 1 Department of Conservation
- 2 Department of Transportation
- 3 City of Fairfield
- 4 Solano Land Trust
- 5 Bernard Moore
- 6 Ed and Linda Cooper
- 7 Mangels Ranch
- 8 Robert Powell

Comment Letters Received on the Draft EIR Issued September 10, 2007

- 9 Department of Conservation
- 10 Department of Fish and Game
- 11 Department of Transportation (Caltrans)
- 12 Solano County Department of Resource Management
- 13 City of Fairfield
- 14 Bay Area Ridge Trail
- 15 Greenbelt Alliance
- 16 Green Valley Landowner Association
- 17 Solano County Orderly Growth Committee
- 18 Solano County Land Trust
- 19 Grant Kreinberg
- 20 Bernard Moore

Comments Received at Public Hearing on February 19, 2008

COMMENT LETTERS AND RESPONSES

The following pages provide each of the comment letters and the corresponding comment responses.

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Comment Letters Received on the Recirculated Draft EIR Issued January 15, 2008

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ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER
GOVERNOR

STATE OF CALIFORNIA
GOVERNOR'S OFFICE *of* PLANNING AND RESEARCH
STATE CLEARINGHOUSE AND PLANNING UNIT



CYNTHIA BRYANT
DIRECTOR

March 3, 2008

RECEIVED

MAR 4 2008

Janet Adams
Solano Transportation Authority
One Harbor Center, Suite 130
Suisun City, CA 94585

SOLANO TRANSPORTATION
AUTHORITY

Subject: North Connector Project
SCH#: 2006112062

Dear Janet Adams:

The State Clearinghouse submitted the above named Subsequent EIR to selected state agencies for review. On the enclosed Document Details Report please note that the Clearinghouse has listed the state agencies that reviewed your document. The review period closed on February 29, 2008, and the comments from the responding agency (ies) is (are) enclosed. If this comment package is not in order, please notify the State Clearinghouse immediately. Please refer to the project's ten-digit State Clearinghouse number in future correspondence so that we may respond promptly.

Please note that Section 21104(c) of the California Public Resources Code states that:

"A responsible or other public agency shall only make substantive comments regarding those activities involved in a project which are within an area of expertise of the agency or which are required to be carried out or approved by the agency. Those comments shall be supported by specific documentation."

These comments are forwarded for use in preparing your final environmental document. Should you need more information or clarification of the enclosed comments, we recommend that you contact the commenting agency directly.

This letter acknowledges that you have complied with the State Clearinghouse review requirements for draft environmental documents, pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act. Please contact the State Clearinghouse at (916) 445-0613 if you have any questions regarding the environmental review process.

Sincerely,

Terry Roberts
Director, State Clearinghouse

Enclosures
cc: Resources Agency

**Document Details Report
State Clearinghouse Data Base**

SCH# 2006112062
Project Title North Connector Project
Lead Agency Solano Transportation Authority

Type **SBE** Subsequent EIR
Description Then North Connector Project, located primarily in unincorporated Solano County near the City of Fairfield, involves the construction of two sections of roadway (the East End and West End) to provide additional east-west capacity north of U.S. I-80 for local traffic, which currently uses U.S. I-80. The project will be a total of 3.7 linear miles (including both the East and West End components). Existing land uses in the project area are comprised mostly of agricultural uses, as well as some residential and commercial development.

Lead Agency Contact

Name Janet Adams
Agency Solano Transportation Authority
Phone (707) 424-6075 **Fax**
email
Address One Harbor Center, Suite 130
City Suisun City **State** CA **Zip** 94585

Project Location

County Solano
City Fairfield
Region
Cross Streets U.S. I-80 at SR 12 West/Red Top Road (West End) to U.S. I-80 at Chadbourne Road (East End)
Parcel No. Various
Township 4N **Range** 3W **Section** 1 **Base**

Proximity to:

Highways I-80, I-680, SR-12
Airports
Railways
Waterways Suisun Creek, Green Valley Creek, and Dan Wilson Creek
Schools Nelda Mundy, Solano Community College
Land Use Commercial, agricultural, and residential
Zoning: commercial, agricultural, and residential
General Plan: commercial, agricultural, and residential

Project Issues Aesthetic/Visual; Agricultural Land; Air Quality; Archaeologic-Historic; Biological Resources; Drainage/Absorption; Flood Plain/Flooding; Geologic/Seismic; Noise; Population/Housing Balance; Public Services; Recreation/Parks; Schools/Universities; Soil Erosion/Compaction/Grading; Solid Waste; Toxic/Hazardous; Traffic/Circulation; Vegetation; Water Quality; Water Supply; Wetland/Riparian; Landuse; Cumulative Effects

Reviewing Agencies Resources Agency; Department of Conservation; Department of Fish and Game, Region 3; Office of Historic Preservation; Department of Parks and Recreation; Department of Water Resources; California Highway Patrol; Caltrans, District 4; Regional Water Quality Control Board, Region 2; Department of Toxic Substances Control; Native American Heritage Commission

Date Received 01/16/2008 **Start of Review** 01/16/2008 **End of Review** 02/29/2008



DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION

DIVISION OF LAND RESOURCE PROTECTION

801 K STREET • MS 18-01 • SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA 95814

PHONE 916 / 324-0650 • FAX 916 / 327-3430 • TDD 916 / 324-2555 • WEBSITE conservation.ca.gov

February 28, 2008

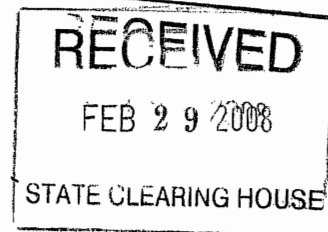
VIA EMAIL: jadams@sta-snci.com

Janet Adams

Solano Transportation Authority

One Harbor Center, Suite 130

Suisun City, CA 94585

clear
2-29-08
eSubject: North Connector Project Re-circulated Draft Environmental Impact Report
(Solano County)SCI# ~~200611262~~ 2006112662

Dear Ms. Adams

The Department of Conservation's (Department) Division of Land Resource Protection (Division) has reviewed the re-circulated Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the referenced project. The Division monitors farmland conversion on a statewide basis and administers the California Land Conservation (Williamson) Act and other agricultural land conservation programs. We offer the following comments and recommendations with respect to the project's impacts on agricultural land and resources.

Project Description

The North Connector Project (project) is intended to provide east-west transportation capacity north of I-80 for local traffic, which in turn will reduce congestion on I-80. The project is located primarily in an unincorporated portion of Solano County (County) and the City of Fairfield (City), north of I-80 in the Suisun Valley and Green Valley areas. In the West end of the project area, lands are categorized as extensive agricultural lands. In the East end of the project area, lands are categorized as intensive agricultural production lands. Within the project area, there are 262.96 acres of Prime Farmland. Additionally, 455.96 acres of the project area are under Williamson Act contracts. Implementation of the project would result in a conversion of Prime Farmland and lands subject to agricultural conservation easements to non-agricultural uses. This conversion is considered a significant adverse impact.

1.1

Ms. Janet Adams
February 28, 2008
Page 2 of 3

Impacts on Agricultural Land & Mitigation Measures

Three parcels (two of which are also under Williamson Act contract) within the Valine property (also known as the "East End") are held in agricultural easement by the Solano Land Trust (SLT). These three parcels total 79.29 acres. The agricultural easement held by the SLT restricts the use of this property to agricultural uses in perpetuity. The Department's California Farmland Conservancy Program (CFCP) provided grant funding to the SLT in 2000 to facilitate the purchase of the agricultural conservation easement on the East End. As part of the original application, the County was required to pass a resolution (Resolution 2000-50), supporting establishment of the agricultural conservation easement, which was designed to be held in perpetuity. Termination of portions of the easement and fragmentation of the remaining agricultural property is directly at odds with the intent of the easement and the County's former support of the easement.

1.2

The re-circulated DEIR suggests the impact to the agricultural conservation easement is relatively minor, with only 9.97 acres of the 79.29 acre property that is north of I-80 being directly converted. However, the impacts, both direct and indirect, are much greater. The alignment of the proposed connector through the Valine property is intended to support the future relocation of the I-80 truck scales, while this is a separate project, it is improper to ignore the impact of the alignment on the portion of the property that will be bounded by the freeway and the connector. It is highly unlikely that this remainder of the property will be capable of being commercially farmed, given its size and access issues. Therefore, the Department believes that the effective loss of prime farmland from this project will be 35.8 acres, rather than 9.97 acres.

Mitigation of the loss of farmland should relate to the quality of the farmland lost, its proximity to a larger agricultural region (the Suisun Valley), and the fact that the farmland to be converted is already protected by an agricultural conservation easement. The re-circulated DEIR's suggestion that this mitigation can be attained at a ratio of 1.25 acres for each of acre lost (9.97 acres, or approximately 12.5 acres of mitigation) appears wholly inadequate. The Department strongly recommends that mitigation be required to take place on land designated as prime farmland, that the mitigation take place within the Suisun Valley, and that the mitigation ratio be at least 2:1, reflecting the higher significance and impact of the loss and fragmentation of prime farmland that was intended to be preserved in perpetuity. Based on these recommendations, and the effective loss of 35.8 acres, the Department recommends that at least 71.6 acres of contiguous prime farmland within the Suisun Valley be preserved with an agricultural conservation easement, to partially mitigate for the farmland loss of the proposed project.

1.3

Ms. Janet Adams
February 28, 2008
Page 3 of 3

Information about agricultural conservation easements, the Williamson Act and provisions noted above is available on the Department's website, or by contacting the Division at the address and phone number listed below. The Department's website address is:

<http://www.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/index.htm>

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to comment on this re-circulated DEIR. If you have questions on our comments, or require technical assistance or information on agricultural land conservation, please contact Elliott Lum, Environmental Planner, at 801 K Street, MS 18-01, Sacramento, California 95814; or, phone (916) 324-0869.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Charles Tyson", written in a cursive style.

Charles Tyson
Program Manager

cc: State Clearinghouse

Response to Letter 1 – Department of Conservation

Comment 1.1. This comment reiterates information provided in the Recirculated Draft EIR and indicates that implementation of the Project would result in the conversion of Prime Farmland and lands subject to agricultural conservation easements to non-agricultural uses, which is a significant adverse impact.

This reiteration of information and analysis is consistent with the text and conclusions of the Recirculated Draft EIR. STA has reviewed the agricultural mitigation policies of other jurisdictions and consulted with the Department of Conservation. Based on this review, there appears to be no set policy or consistent mitigation standard for the replacement of agricultural lands. In fact, the most consistent mitigation standard used by other agencies appears to be replacement at a 1:1 ratio. The EIR mitigates impacted Prime Farmland by acquiring conservation easements on Prime Farmland at a 1:1 ratio. Additionally, the EIR increases mitigation ratio to 1.25:1 for replacing agricultural lands currently under conservation easement. Again, implementation of these mitigation measures (Mitigation Measures 4.1-1 and 4.1-2 in the EIR) will ensure that more agricultural land is preserved under conservation easement within the County. Because the land replacement ratios are well within commonly-used standards, the mitigation ratios in the EIR for agricultural impacts are reasonable and appropriate.

Comment 1.2. This comment suggests that the Project's direct and indirect impacts on agricultural land is greater than indicated in the Recirculated Draft EIR because the Draft EIR does not consider agricultural land affected by the I-80/680/SR12 Interchange Project.

The EIR is not obligated to address or mitigate farmland lost as a result of other projects. Here, the Project has been designed to minimize impacts to agricultural land, and the Recirculated Draft EIR accurately discloses the direct and indirect impacts to agricultural land.

Although the Project alignment in the East End was designed to accommodate a truck scales facility along the westbound direction of I-80, this facility will be constructed as part of the I-80/680/SR12 Interchange Project. This Project, which will increase the capacity of the interchange system, also includes relocating and expanding the I-80 truck scales facility in the westbound direction. The I-80/680/SR12 Interchange Project is a separate CEQA project, conducted by a separate lead agency, the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), and environmental review for this Project is not complete. Because the I-80/680/SR12 Interchange Project is a separate project, and is still undergoing CEQA review, the amount of agricultural land affected by the I-80/680/SR 12 Interchange Project is speculative, and STA is not obligated to address or mitigate agricultural land affected by a separate project.

However, STA has considered the potential impacts on agricultural land from this Project, in combination with the I-80/680/SR 12 Interchange Project and other future regional transportation projects. This discussion is located in the cumulative impacts section in Chapter 6.0, CEQA Required Conclusions of the Recirculated Draft EIR. The cumulative impacts analysis conducted in the Recirculated Draft EIR discloses that the North Connector, in combination with other projects in the area, will convert agricultural land to non-agricultural uses, but concludes that the Project's cumulative impact with regard to conversion of agricultural lands is less than significant because of City and County General Plans and land use policies, and mitigation measures (Mitigation Measure 4.1-1 and 4.1-2) implemented in the Project.

Comment 1.3. This comment recommends that mitigation for the loss of farmland should a) consist of lands designated as Prime Farmland, b) take place within the Suisun Valley, and c) be at a mitigation ratio of 2:1.

The mitigation measures contained in the EIR for loss of agricultural land are adequate. First, as described in Mitigation Measures 4.1-1 and 4.2-2 on page 4.1-17 of the Recirculated Draft EIR conservation easements will be acquired on Prime farmland. Ideally, conservation easements for Mitigation Measures 4.1-1 and 4.1-2 of the Recirculated Draft EIR would be acquired within Suisun Valley. However, if it is not possible to acquire conservation easements in Suisun Valley, Mitigation Measures 4.1-1 and 4.1-2 would still preserve agricultural lands within the County, and therefore support the County's goals and policies regarding the preservation of agricultural lands, as described in the Solano County General Plan, Chapter III of the Land Use Element.

STA has reviewed the agricultural mitigation policies of other jurisdictions and consulted with the Department of Conservation regarding mitigation ratios. Based on this review, there appears to be no set policy or consistent mitigation standard for the replacement of agricultural lands. In fact, the most consistent mitigation standard used by other agencies appears to be replacement at a 1:1 ratio. The EIR mitigates impacted Prime Farmland by acquiring conservation easements on Prime Farmland at a 1:1 ratio. Additionally, the EIR increases the mitigation ratio to 1.25:1 for replacing agricultural lands currently under conservation easement. Further, implementation of Mitigation Measures 4.1-1 and 4.1-2 in the Recirculated Draft EIR will ensure that more agricultural land is preserved under conservation easement within the County. Because the land replacement ratios are well within commonly-used standards, the mitigation ratios in the EIR for agricultural impacts are reasonable and appropriate.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

111 GRAND AVENUE
P. O. BOX 23660
OAKLAND, CA 94623-0660
PHONE (510) 286-5900
FAX (510) 286-5903
TTY 711

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MAR 4 2008

SOLANO TRANSPORTATION
AUTHORITY

*Flex your power!
Be energy efficient!*

February 29, 2008

SOL080376
SOL-80-11.4/17.2
SCH2006112062

Ms. Janet Adams
Solano Transportation Authority
One Harbor Center, Suite 130
Suisun City, CA 94585

Dear Ms. Adams:

North Connector Project – Recirculated Draft Environmental Impact Report

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Department) in the environmental review process for the North Connector Project. The following comments are based on the Recirculated Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR):

Traffic Operations

Table 4.2-2 and Figures 4.2-2/4.2-3 Existing conditions (2007) need corrections made to Intersections 19, 20, and 23 that are currently signalized. Please update the calculations for the existing conditions on these sheets.

2.1

The Department has improvement projects scheduled for State Route 12 (SR 12) and Interstate 80 (I-80) within the limits of the proposed North Connector Project that should be addressed in the DEIR (Sheet 4.2-10). Please contact the Department's Office of North Counties for information regarding construction and scheduling of projects. Mitigation measures will be required as part of the project and constructed at the same time.

2.2

There are inconsistencies between Traffic Operations/Impact Report dated January 2006 and the Draft Environmental Impact Report dated September 2007 (i.e. projected traffic volumes 2030 versus 2020 respectively). Appendix A states the Traffic Impact Report was amended in August 2007. The Department never received a copy of that report. The Traffic Impact Report is a support document for the draft EIR and should contain consistent information.

2.3

Dual turn lanes need to be provided at signalized intersections with turning movements that exceed 300 vehicles per hour where applicable; see Highway Design Manual (HDM) sections 405.2 and 405.3. It is available at the following website address: <http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/opd/hdm/hdmtoc.htm> Furthermore, if the proposed number of through travel lanes cannot accommodate the estimated forecasted traffic, additional through travel lanes may be required.

2.4

The proposed traffic signals at intersections within the State right of way (ROW), shown on table 4.2-3 of the DEIR must satisfy signal warrants using the latest edition of the

2.5

"Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices" (MUTCD). It is available at the following website address:

http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/traffops/signtech/mutcdsupp/ca_mutcd.htm

Once the final traffic study is completed, the calculations supporting each applicable warrant must be submitted to the Department's Office of Traffic Operations for review and approval. Please coordinate traffic signal design work with the Department's Office of Signal Operations.

2.5
(Cont.)

Highway Operations

On page 1-4 there are two additional alternatives (other than "Project" and "No Build"), which are the Improvement of Existing Roadways Alternative and the Enhanced Bus Service Alternative. The general descriptions provided indicate that the additional alternatives may meet the Need and Purpose for the Project (Page 3-1) "*to provide improved circulation so that local traffic would not have to use I-80 for local trips thereby improving traffic congestion on I-80 within the Project area.*" Were operational analyses of the two additional alternatives considered? Were there other studies conducted to evaluate the additional alternatives?

2.6

The proposed project would restrict left-turns from northbound Chadbourne Road/Abernathy Road to the westbound I-80 on-ramp (intersection #19). This displaced traffic would be expected to make a premature left-turn at intersection # 22 to enter westbound SR 12, which leads to westbound I-80 from Chadbourne Road. From Figure 4.2-5, the 2020 No Build Traffic Volumes from the left-turn movement to be deducted from intersection #19 (AM = 229 and PM = 157) and then added to the specified left-turn movement in intersection #22 (AM = 257 and PM = 315), yield a combined AM traffic volume of 486 AM and 472 PM. Due to the location of these two intersections, it does not appear that the proposed project would affect the left-turn volumes discussed here. Therefore, the 2020 With Project Volumes (Fig. 4.2-7) for the left-turn at intersection #22 should be roughly equal to the combined (AM) PM volume. However, the AM (PM) volume of this left-turning movement is 885 (461). The AM volume appears to be high. Please explain or reconcile this discrepancy.

2.7

Are the left-turn storage capacities for each study intersection based on the expected 95th percentile queues? In particular, the left-turn storage capacity for Intersection #22 should be sufficient to hold the expected 95th percentile queue.

2.8

For Intersection #9, though the Existing Conditions indicate that this is a stop controlled intersection, it is now signalized.

2.9

Figure 4.2-2, Existing Conditions 2007 traffic volumes are identical to the previous Existing Conditions 2002 traffic volumes. Please revise.

2.10

On page 4.2-4, 2020 Future Travel Forecast, it states that Forecast 2020 “opening day” project design considers a 20-year life from opening day (i.e. 2040 forecast). Please include analysis for the 2040 Forecast. 2.11

Signal Operations

Intersection #15, I-80 eastbound and Suisun Valley Road for Year 2020 with Project at PM peak-hour traffic will be operating at Level of Service (LOS) “E”, which is unacceptable for a state highway. Mitigation measures are needed to improve intersection #15 to LOS “D” or better. 2.12

Hydraulics

The Recirculated DEIR should discuss potential floodplain and water quality impacts to state facilities as well as mitigation measures. If there are no significant impacts, please state that fact in the DEIR and explain in detail. 2.13

The report did not state the proposed improvements for the drainage facilities. Please provide a summary of these proposed improvements. Please state what drainage design criteria will be followed by Solano County, the City of Fairfield, and in Department’s right of way, respectively. 2.14

The report did not state whether or not the project would cause impacts or whether the existing culvert could contain the design storm event. Please describe the impacts of the new bridge, and explain what the proposed project will use for hydrology calculations. Also, provide the Rainfall Frequency for the existing drainage facilities (25-year storm for the roadside ditches and 100-year storm for the cross culverts). 2.15

Please describe any off-site drainage systems that will be impacted by the proposed project. 2.16

On page 3-2, generally Best Management Practices (BMP) treatments are designed for local agencies or the Department. You may need to rephrase the sentence “*other drainage swales and culverts/pipelines requirements aside from those in the Regional Water Quality Control Board’s (RWQCB) National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) C.3 Provision.*” Please provide the requirements for Solano County and the land development requirements for road improvement standards within the Department’s ROW. Does the proposed storm water detention basin have additional capacity for flood control? Is the detention basin going to be a multi-purpose pond? Can the detention basin provide enough storage for the C.3 provision requirement? Will the size of the detention basin have a significant impact on state facilities? 2.17

On page 3-3, is the detention basin that will be constructed within the proposed project limits, along the right-of-way, solely for the collection and treatment of storm water runoff from the roadway? If so, what detention basin will be used for flood control and additional flood detention storage? Additionally, describe the project’s impacts to on-site and off-site storm water runoff. The length of the span of the pre-cast concrete 2.18

girder bridge was not specified. Please provide this information and specify the design standard specifications for the bridge and how the design meets those standards.

2.18 (Cont.)

On page 3-4, the meaning of this sentence is not clear: *“Under existing conditions, the East End portion of the Project area is flooded during a 50-year flood event; however the Project would remain subject to flooding during a larger than 10-year flood event, with the exception of the bridge that would not be subject flooding during the 50-year flood event”* Under the existing condition, the site is flooded in a 50-year storm event. However, the flooding recurrence interval is 10-year with the project. Does the proposed project actually worsen the flooding? Please clarify. What are the bridge design standards? Show the state’s right of way for the East End portion of the proposed project.

2.19

On page 4.9-1, the introduction to the report states that WRECO prepared the Flooding Study for Suisun Creek and CH2M Hill prepared the Hydraulics Report; however, the References section of the Report states that CH2M Hill prepared the Floodplain Analysis Report and WRECO prepared the Water Quality Report. Please revise accordingly.

2.20

This statement is not clear: *“The Project basis of design for the drainage and flood impacts was the 10-year storm event consistent within the latest published FEMA Study (Solano County, May 2001) for the goal of detention to provide a greater than 10 year level protection.”* The FEMA Study is only a reference tool to obtain information about the area. The 10-year storm event is the flood plain mapping from FEMA for local agencies. WRECO is working with SCWA (Sonoma County Water Agency) to come up with a Q10 detention basin, but may not be true for the bridge. Is the proposed Project following the drainage criteria by Department’s standards, Solano County, or the City of Fairfield?

2.21

Please use updated CWA Section 303(d) list, entitled “Proposed 2006 303(d) List of Water Quality Limited Segments.”

2.22

Page 4.9-2: In regards to the levee development statement, please include who is responsible for the levee development.

2.23

Page 4.9-3: The capacity of the I-80 culvert is limited by the inadequate downstream capacity of the Raines Drain. Please revise accordingly.

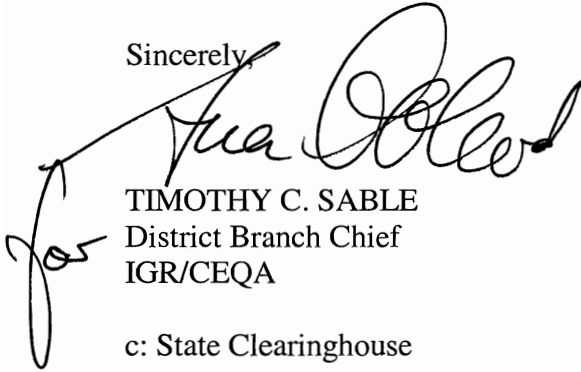
2.24

There are tripled 42-inch cross-drainage culverts, plus a 66-inch cross drainage culvert, according to WRECO’s Flooding Study for Suisun Creek at Interstate 80. Please revise the text *“In 1973, the Raines Drain under-crossing was upgraded to a 66-inch-diameter RCP”*, to reflect the correct information.

Ms. Adams
February 29, 2008
Page 5

Should you have any questions regarding this letter, please call Christian Bushong of my staff at (510) 286 -5606 or email at christian_bushong@dot.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tim Sable", with a large, stylized flourish extending from the end of the signature.

TIMOTHY C. SABLE
District Branch Chief
IGR/CEQA

c: State Clearinghouse

Response to Letter 2 – Department of Transportation

Comment 2.1. This comment states that Intersections 19, 20, and 23, as discussed in Table 4.2-2 and Figures 4.2-2 and 4.2-3, are currently signalized, and requests that the calculations for existing conditions at these intersection be revised.

The Traffic Operations Impact Report prepared for the North Connector Project was amended in August 2007. Existing Conditions were re-evaluated at that time, taking into account all improvements implemented between 2002 and 2007. During field observations in August 2007, intersections 19, 20, and 23 were noted as unsignalized. Operating conditions at that time were set at the “Existing Conditions,” and any intersection improvements implemented after that time were not considered in the EIR.

Comment 2.2. This comment suggests that improvement projects scheduled within the limits of the North Connector be addressed in the EIR.

Future improvement projects scheduled on SR12, I-680, and I-80 are included in the in the Napa Solano County Travel Demand Model forecasts, as discussed on page 4.2-17 of the Recirculated Draft EIR. These projects include I-80/I-680/SR12 Interchange improvements, and the widening of SR12 west of I-80 and all of those changes judged as reasonable by STA and local agencies. The calibrated model used for the Napa Solano County Travel Demand Model was approved by Caltrans prior to its use in the North Connector study. As such, the associated changes in traffic volumes have been taken into account in the analysis.

Comment 2.3. This comment indicates that there are discrepancies between the Traffic Operations Impact Report, dated January 2006, and the North Connector EIR, dated September 2007.

Since the Traffic Operations Impact Report dated January 2006, the following updates were made to the analysis:

- Level of Service results were presented for 28 study intersections rather than 18 study intersections.
- Several intersection improvements have been implemented since the time the original analysis was done (2002 Existing Conditions). As such, additional analysis of intersections with changed traffic control or lane geometry was done to provide an accurate depiction of 2007 Existing Conditions.
- Cumulative Conditions (Year 2020) were reevaluated at intersections where the City of Fairfield has identified funded improvements, which have been included in the analysis.
- Per the conclusions in the Addendum to Technical Memorandum 2 – Alternate Configurations for Abernathy/Chadbourne Intersections (October 2003), Year 2020 with Project Conditions were reevaluated assuming a left turn restriction at the northbound approach to the I-80 Westbound Ramps / Abernathy Road intersection.

These updates to reflect current conditions were made as part of the EIR. The Traffic Operations Report was not revised to incorporate these changes.

Comment 2.4. This comment indicates that dual turn lanes need to be provided at signalized intersection with turning movements that exceed 300 vehicles per hour, and that through travel lanes may need to be added.

Section 405.2.3 of the Caltrans Highway Design Manual states “*At signalized intersections on multilane highways and on multilane ramp terminals, double left-turn lanes should be considered if the left turn demand is 300 vehicles per hour or more*”. As part of the EIR traffic analysis, dual left turn lanes were considered at all locations wherein the left turn demand was 300 vehicles or more during either the morning or evening peak hours, as required by the Highway Design Manual. At those locations where the provision of dual left turn lanes were found to be necessary given all of the other considerations present at each individual intersection (phasing, timing, number of legs, conflicting volume, etc), they were provided for and called out in the EIR. With the exception of the impact at SR 12 and Red Top Road, the identified Project impacts were mitigated with improvements which would allow the study intersections to function appropriately, in accordance with the established standards of significance.

Additional through lanes would not be required to mitigate any Project impacts. As discussed in the EIR, all Project impacts would be mitigated to less than significant levels. Additional through lanes over and above what is specified in the EIR are not necessary.

Comment 2.5. This comment indicates that that the proposed traffic signals at intersections within the State right-of-way (ROW) must satisfy signal warrants using Caltrans’ “Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices.”

The comment is correct. Traffic signals should only be installed, and are only proposed, at locations where warrants are met. Intersections #1, #2, #3, #19, and #20 will each operate at LOS F under the 2020 with Project Conditions and would warrant signalization based on MUTCD criteria under the 2020 with Project Conditions. As such, the signalization of these intersections is included as part of the Project. Traffic signal warrant worksheets will be submitted to Caltrans.

Comment 2.6. This comment questions whether operational analyses of the Improvement of Existing Roadways and the Enhanced Bus Service Alternative were considered.

Chapter 6.0, CEQA Required Conclusions, of the Recirculated Draft EIR contains a comparative analysis of the two alternatives mentioned in the comment. A detailed traffic analysis was not conducted nor deemed necessary to provide a meaningful evaluation of the alternatives compared to the Project. As discussed on pages 5-7 through 5-8 and 5-10 through 5-11 of the Recirculated Draft EIR, the ability of the proposed alternatives to address local traffic congestion would be less efficient and effective than the North Connector roadway.

Comment 2.7. This comment suggests that the projected AM and PM peak hour traffic volumes at study Intersection #19 (I-80 Westbound and Abernathy Road) and Intersection #22 (SR12 Westbound and Chadbourne Road) under 2020 with Project conditions should be similar. The comment indicates that the AM traffic volume at Intersection #22 appears to be high and that the discrepancy between the two intersections be further explained.

Year 2020 No Project and 2020 with Project volumes were developed using separate Napa Solano County Travel Demand Model output scenarios. The changes incorporated in the with Project conditions affect regional travel patterns due to changes in roadway capacity. As such, the differences in traffic volumes between the 2020 No Project Conditions and 2020 with Project Conditions at intersections directly affected by the turn restriction will also be affected by regional travel pattern changes associated with the North Connector Project.

Comment 2.8. This comment indicates that the left-turn storage capacity at Intersection #22 (the SR12 and Chadbourne Road intersection) should be capable to hold the expected 95th percentile queue.

The storage capacity of left turn lanes is not a topic specifically examined as part of the EIR transportation analysis. In cases where intersections were projected to operate at acceptable conditions, it was assumed that excessive queuing would not occur, as this would not be typical of intersections operating at LOS D or better. Regarding the SR 12 Westbound and Chadbourne Road intersection (#22), this intersection is projected to operate at an acceptable LOS C during both peak hours with the implementation of the North Connector Project. Level of Service C is indicative of good operating conditions with moderate levels of vehicular delay wherein excessive queuing would not be expected. However, due to the close spacing with the SR 12 Eastbound and Chadbourne Road intersection (#23), during certain peak conditions during the peak hour, queues could spill back during peak periods under both 2020 No Build and 2020 plus Project Conditions. As is standard practice, the two ramp terminal intersections will be interconnected such that the green time allotted to the northbound through phase at intersection #23 would overlap with the northbound left-turn phase at intersection #22. The signal interconnection would be augmented with “KEEP CLEAR” markings at intersection #23 to ensure that vehicles do not block the intersection. As a result of this interconnection, queuing at the northbound approach to intersection #22 would not be able to spill into intersection #23.

Comment 2.9. This comment indicates that Intersection #9 is currently signalized, rather than stop controlled as presented in the Recirculated Draft EIR.

This comment is correct. Presently, the I-80 Eastbound Ramps / Green Valley Road intersection (#9) is signalized. However, when the original analysis was done in 2002, the intersection was still stop sign controlled. Updates for this intersection, as well as other intersections which have been signalized since the time of the original analysis, are documented in the supplemental level of service tables done in August of 2007 and in Table 4.2-2 of the Recirculated Draft EIR.

Comment 2.10. This comment states that the existing conditions 2007 traffic volumes in Figure 4.2-2 need to be revised, as they are identical to the existing conditions 2002 traffic volumes.

New traffic counts were not conducted as part of the August 2007 amendment to the Traffic Operations Impact Report. Existing 2002 volumes were re-analyzed taking into consideration all of the roadway improvements implemented between 2002 and 2007. The year 2002 traffic counts were reviewed by City of Fairfield engineering staff and found to be suitable for inclusion in an existing conditions analysis based on their knowledge and understanding of land use and traffic conditions throughout the study area.

Comment 2.11. This comment states that the Draft EIR should analyze traffic impacts arising from the Project as of 2040 because the Project design considers a 20-year life span from the projected 2020 “opening day” of the Project.

Future traffic volumes were estimated using the Napa Solano County Travel Demand Model. This model takes into account planned projects which are likely to be implemented by the year 2030, including improvements associated with the buildout of general plans of surrounding jurisdictions. The model is then calibrated and submitted to Caltrans for approval. Considering the information available, it would not be prudent to make assumptions about 2040 Conditions, as they would be purely speculative.

Comment 2.12. This comment indicates that the intersection of eastbound I-80 and Suisun Valley Road for Year 2020 with Project at PM traffic-hour will be operating at Level of Service (LOS) E, which is unacceptable for a state highway.

The I-80 Eastbound Ramps and Suisun Valley Road intersection operates at LOS F with an average delay of 83.4 seconds under the 2020 No Build Conditions during the PM peak hour. With the addition of the North Connector Project, this intersection would operate at LOS E with an average delay of 57.4 seconds. While this intersection would improve under the 2020 with Project condition, when compared to the 2020 No Project condition, the Recirculated Draft EIR on page 4.2-29 calls this out as a potentially significant impact and includes Mitigation Measure 4.2-2. Mitigation Measure 4.2-2 requires a double left turn lane be installed that meets Caltrans design standards. This Mitigation Measure would reduce this impact to a less than significant level.

Comment 2.13. This comment indicates that the Recirculated Draft EIR should discuss the potential floodplain and water quality impacts to state facilities.

As discussed on page 4.9-8 of the Recirculated Draft EIR, the Project would encroach on the 100-year floodplain, with portions constructed slightly above grade and portions below existing grade to provide no net fill in the 100-year floodplain inundation area. There are no significant floodplain impacts associated with Project construction.

The Project will treat runoff on-site. There are no significant water quality impacts to State facilities.

Comment 2.14. This comment indicates that the Recirculated Draft EIR did not adequately address the proposed improvements for the drainage facilities.

The proposed drainage facilities for the roadway improvements within Solano County are designed per County standards and include a series of inlets, cross culverts and vegetated swales that will transport the runoff along both sides of the roadway and eventually outfalls to existing drainage facilities, such as the Raines Drain located within the East End of the Project area.

The proposed roadway improvements within the Caltrans right-of-way will not require modification of the existing drainage system, but will require minor modification of one portion of the pavement structural section drainage outlet at the intersection of Chadbourne Road and the I-80 Eastbound On-Ramp. This, however, will be designed per Caltrans standards.

Comment 2.15. The comment indicates that the Recirculated Draft EIR does not state whether the Project would cause impacts to stormwater drainage. The comment also requests drainage criteria for Project improvements.

As discussed on page 4.9-8, paragraph 4, of the Recirculated Draft EIR, the North Connector Bridge over Suisun Creek will be raised above the top of bank elevation and will not impact existing hydraulics or hydrology. Flow in excess of the Suisun Creek channel capacity will spill from the channel and will not be impacted by the North Connector Bridge.

Comment 2.16. This comment requests that the EIR provide the Rainfall Frequency for existing drainage facilities and describe any offsite drainage systems impacted by the Project.

Hydrology for evaluating the Raines Drain is based on a 50-year rainfall intensity as from Table 3-4A, Solano County Design Rainfall for San Francisco Bay Drainage Region, from the Solano County Water Agency Hydrology Manual dated June 1999. With the proposed Project facilities, the 10-year storm event is conveyed with no inundation of the roadway.

The Project will not impact off-site drainage systems. Drainage facilities installed in the East End particularly will be designed to match the capacity of the drainage facilities under I-80 so that no impact to these downstream drainage foundations would occur. Since no downstream impacts are associated with the Project, the downstream drainage systems are not evaluated as part of this Project.

Comment 2.17. This comment requests the design specification/requirements of local agencies (Solano County) for Best Management Practices for road improvement standards, and asked various questions about the proposed stormwater detention basin.

Portions of the roadway within the State right of way (ROW) will conform to the Caltrans standards for development within the ROW. Portions of the roadway outside the State ROW will conform to Solano County design requirements. The detention basin constructed as part of the Project in the West End would be sized to accommodate runoff from the new roadway and would not include capacity for other projects or development in the area. The West End of the project area is not prone to flooding as it is not within the 100 year floodplain and in relatively hilly terrain (compared to the East End). As such the detention basis proposed in the West End does not need to be sized to accommodate flooding in the generally area

Comment 2.18. This comment indicates that more information is needed regarding the proposed detention basin to be constructed within the Project limits.

Refer to response to Comment 2.17 above. As previously discussed, the drainage facilities in the East End will be designed to match the drainage facilities under I-80 so that no impacts to these downstream facilities would occur. The length of the span of the precast concrete girder bridge is 86'-0". The bridge will be designed to the Caltrans Bridge Design Specifications – April 2000 (LFD Version), (1996 AASHTO with interims and revisions by Caltans) and Caltrans Seismic Design Criteria (SDC) Version 1.4 June 2006.

Comment 2.19. This comment asks several questions regarding potential flood impacts caused by the Project.

As stated on page 3-4 of the Recirculated Draft EIR, the Project is designed to convey a 10-year storm event. The bridge (being at a higher elevation) has a higher level of protection and is above the 50-year water level. Currently, there is no detention basin, and the Project is subject to flooding. The bridge is above the current FEMA 100-year inundation area. Water will overtop the channel banks prior to the bridge elevation affecting water levels. Thus, the potential for flooding will not be worsened as a result of the Project.

Comment 2.20. This comment indicates that there is a discrepancy in the EIR's reference to the reports used for Chapter 4.9, Hydrology and Water Quality.

The introduction paragraph of Chapter 4.9, Hydrology and Water Quality, at page 4.9-1 of the Recirculated Draft EIR and page 9-2 of Chapter 9.0, References, state that WRECO prepared the Flooding Study and that CH2M Hill prepared the Water Quality Report and the Hydraulics Report. No further discussion is necessary.

Comment 2.21. This comment indicates that the fourth paragraph on page 4.9-1 regarding the Project bases of design for drainage and flood impacts is not clear. This comment also inquires what drainage criteria the Project follows.

The comment inaccurately quotes text of the Recirculated Draft EIR. The actual Recirculated Draft EIR text, at page 4.9-1 reads:

“The Project basis of design for drainage and flood impacts was the 1-year storm event; consistent with the latest published FEMA study (Solano County, May 2001). The goal is to work cooperatively on upstream detention to ultimately provide a greater than 10-year level of protection.”

Additionally the Solano County Water Agency (SCWA) is working to design a 10-year storm event detention basin north of I-80 along Suisun Creek which could have a beneficial effect on flooding in the Project area. The Project is following the drainage criteria and standards of Solano County. The bridge over Suisun Creek is being designed to be above the existing channel banks, where excess Creek flow will spill from the channel prior to reaching the North Connector Bridge.

Comment 2.22. This comment requests that the Proposed 2006 303(d) List of Water Quality Limited Segments be used in the EIR's description of the hydrological sub-areas (HSA's) in the Project area.

A copy of the 2006 list of Water Quality Limited Segments in the San Francisco Bay Region is contained in Appendix A of this FEIR. Neither, Suisun Creek or Jameson Creek are included on this list.

Comment 2.23. This comment requests the name of the agency responsible for the levee development.

As noted on page 4.9-3 of the Recirculated Draft EIR, the Solano County Water Agency is responsible for the maintenance of the levee system along Suisun Creek.

Comment 2.24. This comment indicates that the capacity of the I-80 culvert is limited by the downstream capacity of the Raines Drain and notes that the Raines Drain was upgraded to a 66-inch diameter RCP in 1973.

The Recirculated Draft EIR addresses this comment. Page 4.9-3 of the Recirculated Draft EIR states that the Raines Drain passes under I-80 in a 66-inch-diameter reinforced concrete culvert pipe (RCP) and indicates the limited capacity of the existing drainage culverts under the I-80 freeway.



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707.429.6298
Frank Kardos
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Matt Garcia

Solano Transportation Authority
c/o Janet Adams
One Harbor Center, Suite 130
Suisun City, CA 94585

Re: Draft Environmental Impact Report for the North Connector Project

Dear Ms. Adams:

Thank you for providing the City of Fairfield with the opportunity to review the re-circulated Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) prepared for the North Connector Project dated January 2008. As you are aware, the City supports this project as an essential component for relief of traffic congestion. The City offers the following recommendations for revisions to the DEIR.

1. Page 3-4. Paragraph under "City of Fairfield General Plan Amendment". Reword the last two sentences in this paragraph as follows: 3.1

The Project would include removal of the paved trail within the Linear Park between Abernathy Road and Suisun Creek, however, City will maintain the recreational use of the existing portion of the Linear Park path being replaced by the County in a manner consistent with the conservation easement, as the existing bridge across Suisun Creek would remain and public access would still be allowed. The portion Portions of the Linear Park located to the west from of Suisun Creek connecting to Solano County Community College and east of Abernathy Road would remain.
2. Page 4.1-9 & 10. Reword the second to the last sentence in this paragraph as follows: 3.2

The Project would include removal of the paved trail within the Linear Park between Abernathy Road and Suisun Creek, however, City will maintain the recreational use of the existing portion of the Linear Park path being replaced by the County in a manner consistent with the conservation easement, as the existing bridge across Suisun Creek would remain and public access would still be allowed.
3. The Traffic and Transportation section needs to be corrected as a whole to be consistent with New Mitigation Measure 4.2.2. On page 4.2-16, the last sentence on 3.3

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Community Services
707.428.7465
...
Finance
707.428.7496
...
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...
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that page still notes that the Suisun Valley Road/I-80 EB ramps intersection will be at an LOS E. This should be changed to D and the corresponding numbers corrected. 3.3 (Cont.)

On page 4.2-17, last paragraph under "2020 with Project Intersection Peak Hour Volume Comparison" should be modified as follows to reflect the new mitigation measure: 3.4

Overall, it should be restated that the goal of the North Connector Project is to reduce congestion on I-80 and to provide a connection between the Green Valley area of Fairfield and central Fairfield. Even with the project causing over 1,000 vehicles to shift from I-80 to the North Connector during either peak hour, all study intersections would operate at acceptable levels of service, ~~the one exception being the I-80 Eastbound Ramps/Suisun Valley Road intersection, which would actually experience a decrease in delay with the build out of the North Connector.~~

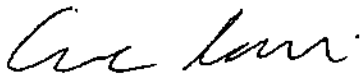
Also Table 4.2-4 #15 on Page 4.2-25 needs to be changed from LOS E to LOS D and corresponding numbers corrected. 3.5

4. The first paragraph on Page 4.12-18 should be changed as follows: 3.6

~~The Project would include removal of the paved trail within the Linear Park between Abernathy Road and Suisun Creek, however, City will maintain the recreational use of the existing portion of the Linear Park path being replaced by the County in a manner consistent with the conservation easement, as the existing bridge across Suisun Creek would remain and public access would still be allowed.~~

If you should have any questions, please feel free to contact Joe Lucchio of my staff at (707) 428-7647. Thank you again for the opportunity to comment on the DEIR.

Sincerely,



EVE SOMJEN
Director

ESS:JAL:ccs

c: Joe Lucchio
Erin Beavers
Sean Quinn
Gene Cortright
Greg Stepanicich

Response to Letter 3 – City of Fairfield

Comment 3.1. The City of Fairfield submitted a letter to the STA, dated April 22, 2008, which supersedes this Comment and indicates that the City and the Solano County Land Trust have entered into discussions to transfer the existing open space conservation easement over this portion of the Linear Park to a new segment of the Linear Trail planned in the northeast portion of the City. Once the conservation easement is transferred and the new multi-use path and greenway are constructed as part of the Project, the City will abandon the existing trail segment and close it off to public access. The City's letter is contained in Appendix B of this FEIR.

Based on this comment, the text discussion on page 3-4 of the Recirculated Draft EIR, as well as elsewhere in the EIR has been revised. The text revisions to the EIR are shown in Chapter 3.0, Errata/Changes to the Recirculated Draft EIR, of this Final EIR.

Comment 3.2. Refer to response to Comment 3.1 above.

Based on this comment, the text discussion on page 4.1-9 of the Recirculated Draft EIR has been revised and is shown in Chapter 3.0, Errata/Changes to the Recirculated Draft EIR, of this Final EIR.

Comment 3.3. This comment states that Chapter 4.2, Traffic and Transportation, be corrected to maintain consistency with Mitigation Measure 4.2.2, which requires the construction of a double left turn lane from Suisun Valley Road onto I-80 Eastbound to reduce the LOS from E to D. As such, 2020 With Project conditions would reduce the LOS from E to D at this intersection.

The discussion on page 4.2-16 of the Recirculated Draft EIR reflects the traffic analysis of the 2020 with Project conditions prior to the implementation of mitigation. Prior to Mitigation Measure 4.2-2, the intersection of I-80 Eastbound and Suisun Valley Road has a Level of Service (LOS) E with a delay of 57.4 seconds. Thus, because the text on page 4.2-16 reflects Project conditions without mitigation, the EIR does not require this revision.

Comment 3.4. This comment recommends modifying the language of the discussion of the peak hour volume comparison to maintain consistency with Mitigation Measure 4.2-2.

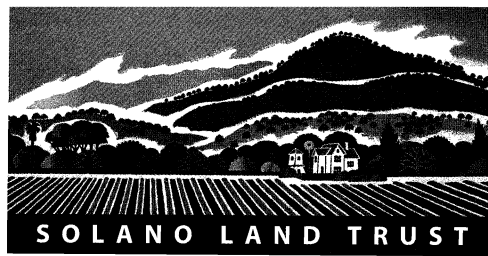
Refer to response to Comment 3.3 above. This discussion of intersection volume comparisons on page 4.2-17 describes the 2020 with Project conditions prior to the proposed mitigation. Thus, the volume calculations at I-80 Eastbound and Suisun Valley Road are accurate.

Comment 3.5. This comment suggests that Table 4.2-4 be revised to reflect the changes in LOS as a result of Mitigation Measure 4.2-2, as the construction of the double left turn lane from Suisun Valley Road onto I-80 Eastbound under the 2020 With Project conditions would reduce LOS from E to D.

Refer to response to Comments 3.3 and 3.4 above. Table 4.2-4 of the Recirculated Draft EIR presents 2020 with Project conditions prior to mitigation, therefore, requiring no changes within this context.

Comment 3.6. Refer to response to Comment 3.1 above.

Based on this comment, the text discussion on page 4.12-8 of the Recirculated Draft EIR has been revised as shown in Chapter 3.0, Errata/Changes to the Recirculated Draft EIR, of this Final EIR.



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SOLANO TRANSPORTATION
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LETTER 4

March 3, 2008

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Solano Transportation Authority
North Connector Project
One Harbor Center, Suite 130
Suisun, CA 94585

**Subject: Comments on North Connector Project, Recirculated Draft
Environmental Impact Report, Prepared by the Solano Transportation Authority,
January 2008**

Solano Land Trust (SLT) holds a conservation easement in perpetuity on property along the route of the proposed North Connector, known as the Valine easement, APNs: 27-251-33; 27-271-06 (Williamson Act); and 27-251-34; 27-251-40; 27-251-42; 27-251-44 (panhandle area). Solano Land Trust also holds a conservation easement over Fairfield's Linear Park which extends from Solano Community College eastward to Fairfield's northeast quadrant.

Since STA in transmitting the recirculated draft is silent on requirements of Title 14 California Code of Regulations re Section 15088.5 regarding recirculation of comments, we conclude that the STA will respond to all comments received during the earlier circulation of the Draft EIR as well as comments on the Recirculated Draft EIR.

4.1

As a result, this letter is intended to supplement the comments Solano Land Trust provided in response to the EIR dated September 2007. (Our letter was dated Oct. 26, 2007, signed by Rob Goldstein, Land Transaction Specialist, and submitted with approval of our Board of Directors.) We are resubmitting these Oct. 26 comments (attached) to make sure they will be taken into account in the final EIR.

Table 4.1-1 (p. 4.1-4 and again on p. 4.1-15) in the recirculated draft has slightly different numbers than the previous draft. Some of the APNs appear to be incorrect; for example, 0027-207-060 should be 0027-271-060. Numbers needs to be rechecked and verified.

4.2

Chapter 6.0, CEQA Required Conclusions discussed mitigation to replace impacted farmland at a 1:1 ratio. It neglects to mention mitigation for loss of conservation easements. This needs to be remedied. As we stated in our Oct. 26 letter, this mitigation needs to occur on prime lands in Suisun Valley and at a greater ratio than the proposed 1:1.25 given the intent that this easement be in place in perpetuity.

4.3

We continue to believe that appropriate mitigation for loss of the linear park would be to relocate the conservation easement to the new multi-modal trail.

4.4

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Marilyn Farley".

Marilyn Farley
Executive Director



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MAR 3 2008

SOLANO TRANSPORTATION
AUTHORITY

October 26, 2007

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One Harbor Center, Suite 130
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Subject: Comments on North Connector Project, Draft Environmental Impact Report, Prepared by the Solano Transportation Authority, September 2007

Solano Land Trust (SLT) holds a conservation easement in perpetuity on property along the route of the proposed North Connector, known as the Valine easement, APNs: 27-251-33; 27-271-06 (Williamson Act); and 27-251-34; 27-251-40; 27-251-42; 27-251-44 (panhandle area). Solano Land Trust also holds a conservation easement over Fairfield's Linear Park which extends from Solano Community College eastward to Fairfield's northeast quadrant.

Staff has been authorized by the Board of Directors to submit these comments by minute action at the October 23, 2007 regularly-scheduled meeting.

The following paragraphs are intended to provide context to STA as to the importance and significance of conservation easements.

Significance of Conservation Easements

Solano Land Trust is a 501(c)3 not-for profit corporation whose mission is to protect farmlands and open space in Solano County. As such, we are a member of the Land Trust Alliance (LTA). LTA requires, as a condition of membership, that members adopt LTA Land Trust Standards and Practices (See excerpt, Attachment 1). SLT, by Resolution 2005-19, adopted these standards at the September 28, 2005 meeting (See resolution, Attachment 2). Standard 11: Conservation Easement Stewardship addresses, among other things, the rights and obligations land trusts have when easements are subject to condemnation (See Standard 11, Attachment 3).

Conservation easements are the means by which land trusts across the nation protect our important farmlands in perpetuity. In so doing, land trusts are carrying out both national policy and, in the case of California, California policy.

Solano Land Trust has an Agricultural Conservation Easement Plan adopted in August, 2002 after several years of study by the Board, staff, consultants and an Ag Easement Advisory Group composed of a wide range of stakeholders representing County and local government,, business and the local agricultural interests (see Acknowledgements page, Attachment 4).

According to the Executive Summary, page ES-2, “The Ag Easement Advisory Group identified four specific areas as having high agricultural preservation priority....” Suisun Valley was one of the four. The report continues “These areas all have highly productive Class I soils capable of growing almost any crop. Soils of this quality comprise less than 2% of the Earth’s surface and are irreplaceable if lost. These areas also have reliable water sources and face a significant degree of threat. The SLT will focus its efforts on acquiring conservation easements in these areas over the next 20 years.”

The following two sections describe the easements affected by the North Connector and their significance.

Valine Easement

In the case of the Valine easement, SLT has committed to “...undertaking to honor the intentions of Grantor stated herein and to preserve and protect in perpetuity the Conservation Values of the Property for the benefit of this and future generations.” (See page 3, paragraph N of Easement – see full Easement, Attachment 5).

This easement was recorded July 6, 2000. Paragraph K (page 2) states that “The conservation purposes of this Conservation Easement are recognized by, and the grant of this Conservation Easement will serve, the following clearly delineated governmental conservation policies....” Cited are:

- Resolution 2000-50 of the Board of Supervisors which expressed support for the easement and declared it consistent with the General Plan.
- Various sections of California code and Constitution, which support conservation easements.

The easement was funded by the Department of Conservation as “a substantial investment by the people of the State of California in the long-term conservation of valuable agricultural land, and the retention of agricultural land in perpetuity.” (Page 3, paragraph M.)

The easement covers 82.35 acres, which includes a 2.49-acre driveway. Paragraph 5 (d) prohibits any subdivision or de facto subdivision, except as permitted under Article 6 (b).

Paragraph 13.1 (a) on page 12 covers condemnation. Subparagraph (1), (2), and (3) cover allocation of proceeds from any eminent domain action.

Linear Park Easement

The Grant of Conservation Easement with Covenants covering the linear park was recorded January 28, 1992 (Attachment 6) with the Solano Farmlands and Open Space Foundation, since renamed Solano Land Trust. Paragraph 3, page 1, notes that the City Council adopted resolution 90-311 on Nov. 13, 1990 “(a) to delete all references to the use of the Linear Park as an arterial roadway; and (b) to add the Linear Park to the System of Urban Recreation and Open Space ... to provide linkages among recreation, park, school, shopping, industrial, residential and other activity centers of the community as an important alternative to automotive transportation.”

The Grant further stated (paragraph 5, page 1), “The purposes of this grant of easement and its acceptance ... is to keep the Linear Park in its natural, scenic, and open-space condition all for the enjoyment and use of the public.”

Page 2, paragraphs 4 and 5, provide for enforcement. Specifically, paragraph 5 provides, “The Foundation shall be entitled to recover money damages for any injury to this conservation easement or to the interest being protected thereby or for the violation of the terms of this easement.”

Page 3, paragraph 8, prohibits amendment or abandonment without the consent of SLT. Paragraph 8 states, “This easement shall not be rescinded, altered, amended or abandoned in whole or in part as to the property or any portion thereof or as to any term, condition, restriction or covenant without the prior written consent of Foundation.”

The above narrative is intended to provide context for our specific comments on the Draft EIR which now commences.

The Draft EIR is deficient in several areas and needs to be revised. Our comments regarding information in the Draft EIR and some of the area where the Draft EIR is deficient are described below:

3.0 Project Description

On page 3-2, the Draft EIR notes (paragraph 2) that a cul de sac would be constructed at Russell Road. A footnote states there would be no vehicular access connection between Russell Road and the Project. We support this separation as consistent with City of Fairfield Land Use Policies (2.1A).

4.5

Paragraph 2 further notes that the project alignment has been designed to accommodate the proposed future relocation and expansion of the westbound I-80 truck scale facility. This alignment directly impacts the Valine easement by splitting it in two. This split violates the spirit, if not the law, of the conservation easement and the Draft EIR must be revised to address this issue. Since the alignment is occurring at this phase of the Project, the impact of the I-80 westbound truck scales needs to be identified and mitigated for in this Draft EIR.

4.6

Page 3-2, Paragraph 4 states the project would include the construction of suitable replacement access roads (for property-owner vehicles and agricultural equipment) for affected agricultural parcels in the area. This may be appropriate; however, the Draft EIR does not identify their location or anything else about them which would be necessary in order to evaluate their impact, particularly as it affects the Valine easement. The Draft EIR needs to be revised to include a discussion of the access roads.

4.7

Paragraph 5 describes facilities designed to meet stormwater treatment requirements. It is not clear if these are to affect the Valine property. The project description needs to be revised to include these facilities and the Draft EIR needs to discuss impacts and any required mitigation identified.

4.8

Paragraph 6 proposes a new 10-foot wide multi-use path along the north side of the new roadway within an approximately 13-foot wide landscaped area. The Project Description does not adequately describe the multi-use path. For example, does this mean that the project will include 6.5 feet of landscaping on either side of a 10-foot wide path or something else? It is also stated that the City of Fairfield will "pursue" a General Plan Amendment to remove the existing Linear Park. Is this a part of the proposed project? If yes, the Project Description needs to be revised to include this action and the specific General Plan Amendment language needs to be included.

4.9

We also noted that the project description does not indicate that there is a conservation easement on the linear park. The loss of the conservation easement needs to be described in the Draft EIR and impacts and mitigation identified.

4.10

On page 4.1-14 it is stated that a County General Plan Amendment is proposed to clarify the interpretation of Policy 2 of the Agricultural Element. Since this is a part of the proposed project it should be included in the project description.

4.11

The project description should include a discussion of right-of-way acquisition. Will eminent domain be required to obtain the rights-of-way currently protected by a conservation easement? What about lands which are currently in Williamson Act?

4.12

Table 3-1 says it provides information about permits and approvals needed. There is however, no discussion of the General Plan Amendments (City and County), Williamson Act Contract cancellation, property acquisition, etc.

4.13

Section 4.1 Land Use and Agricultural Resources

The Linear Park is described on page 4.1-1 (last paragraph) as a 40 to 100-foot wide landscaped right of way within which is an 8 to 10-foot wide paved multi-use path. On page 4.1-4, paragraph 3, the SLT easement on the linear park is mentioned for the first time. The proposed project significantly reduces the open space width from, as best can be told from the project description, to 23 feet maximum width.

4.14

Solano County's Land Use Element, Policy 2 (discussed on page 4.1-6) discusses retaining parcels of sufficient size as to be a farmable unit. It also says, "Where parcel sizes are smaller than the defined farmable unit, these parcels should not be broken up further." The proposed project would result in the splitting of the Valine easement into a parcel that would be smaller than the farmable unit.

4.15

Per Figure 4.1-3, 26.7 acres (reserved for the truck scales) would be sandwiched between the North Connector and the remaining agricultural lands in the Suisun Valley. It is unclear how the landowner would reasonably traverse lands to conduct normal farming operations once split given that the North Connector will be a major arterial and speeds will not be conducive to farming equipment. The purported route between the two parcels from the northern side is likely to be to traverse Russell Rd. heading north to Rockville Rd. then Rockville Rd. east to Abernathy then Abernathy west to the North Connector then the North Connector west to the Cordelia area then a u-turn and east on the North Connector to exit on the southern parcel. Furthermore, this figure is insufficient in that it does not show the Linear Park easement or how it will be connected at Abernathy Rd. and Suisun Creek locations to re-connect to the proposed new multi-use path. The Draft EIR needs to be revised to respond to these concerns.

4.16

The Land Use and Agricultural Resources Impacts Analysis (pages 4.1-8 and 9) states that the Project would have a significant impact both in terms of land use and agricultural resources if there was a conflict with an existing conservation easement.

4.17

Yet in the final paragraph on page 4.1-9 and the first sentence on page 4.1-10, the Draft EIR concludes that there is no further discussion of the conflict with an existing open space conservation easement. The Draft EIR states, "Although the Project would result in the removal of the paved path and associated footbridge, the open space conservation easement would remain. Therefore, there are no impacts related to conflict with an existing open space conservation easement." This statement defies logic. The asset protected by the easement **IS** the linear park and the ability of people to traverse the park and enjoy the scenic vistas into farmland as described above.

Just as the purpose of an agricultural conservation easement is to preserve the underlying farmland for farming, so the purpose of the linear park easement is to preserve the ability of the public to use the linear park. If you were to "remove the farmland", the conservation easement would be violated. In like manner, "removing the linear park" violates the conservation easement. The Draft EIR needs to be revised to reflect the fact that the Project would result in a conflict with an existing conservation easement (for the linear park), that this is a significant impact, and that mitigation would be required.

With the Project, the easement would be sandwiched between I-80 and the North Connector and would no longer be an amenity available to the walking or bicycle-riding public. The fact that a new multi-use path is being proposed for the western edge of the North Connector is desirable and, in fact, could mitigate for the loss of the Linear Park by being an equivalent replacement. However, the Draft EIR has inadequately addressed the need to compensate for the loss of the conservation easement protecting the linear park asset.

A conservation easement on the new multi-use path could serve to deter future urban development in the Suisun Valley and thus also be considered an appropriate mitigation to avoid growth-inducing impacts on the prime agricultural soils in the Suisun Valley.

Another concern that we have is that the Draft EIR states (paragraph 1 on page 4.1-14) that it is proposed that the Solano County General Plan be amended to allow parcels smaller than a definable farmable unit to break down further into smaller parcels for other uses such as residential home sites **ONLY** in the area affected by the North Connector project. This is patently inconsistent with the intent of the County General Plan to protect agricultural soils, particularly the high quality soils found in the Suisun Valley. The Draft EIR needs to explain why such a General Plan amendment is not

4.18

contrary to the spirit and intent of the County General Plan and why such an amendment would not serve as a precedent for similar General Plan amendments.

4.18
(Cont.)

In discussing City of Fairfield General Plan policies (page 4.1-15, paragraph 1), the Draft EIR says the project would affect prime farmland which would be inconsistent with the City's policies. It then says the roadway has been designed to reduce the impacts in the east end by constructing the roadway as close to the north side of I-80 as possible. This is incorrect and the Draft EIR needs to be revised to correct this. If the linear park conservation easement were moved as appropriate mitigation by placing it on the area designated for the new multi-use trail, the proposed North Connector could be 40 to 100 feet closer to I-80, thus preserving 40 to 100 feet more of farmland along its length. In addition, in the vicinity of the Valine Ranch, the roadway curves substantially further west to allow for the future planned expansion of the truck scales, yet the impact of the truck scales is neither described nor impacts and appropriate mitigation identified. It is incorrect to state that the truck scales is not a part of this project when, in fact, the North Connector is designed to accommodate the truck scales.

4.19

Significant and Potentially Significant Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Mitigation Measure 4.1-2 is directed at the Valine easement. We appreciate the increase from 1 to 1:25 for mitigation for the conservation easement and prime ag land that the Draft EIR proposes. However, we still do not think this is a high enough ratio to avoid undervaluing the loss of this easement. We would encourage STA to consider a higher ratio *or other mitigation measures* to permanently protect farmland to reduce the impacts of fragmentation would be more appropriate.

4.20

We also disagree strenuously with the omission of the requirement that prime farmland be replaced with prime farmland and with the proposal to mitigate within the limits of Solano County. Mitigation measure 4.1-2 needs to be revised to clearly state that the loss of prime farmland must be mitigated with the protection of prime farmland and that such protection shall be in the Suisun Valley in order to as closely as possible protect in perpetuity the land that is being permanently removed from farming.

4.21

We also note that on page 4.1-7 it is stated that City Program 1.4A requires "preservation of an equal amount of the same class of farmland within the area". Mitigation Measure 4.1-1 says the county shall acquire conservation easements "within the County". It is our belief that "within the County" is not consistent with "within the area". With the mitigation as proposed the Project would be inconsistent with the City of Fairfield policies.

4.22

SLT has not preserved agricultural lands with conservation easements that are below the size considered to be farmable parcels. In the Suisun Valley, this is currently 40 acres. Table 4.1-4 on page 4.1-18 suggests that a total of 42.2 acres is impacted (either directly or indirectly). SLT would strongly recommend that adequate mitigation would require that parcels of farmable size be protected by new conservation easements. The table should also be revised to show the total land to be protected by conservation easements after mitigation.

4.22
(Cont.)

There is no mitigation proposed for the damage done to the conservation easement protecting the linear park. Please see earlier comments in this letter. We conclude that an appropriate mitigation would be to place a similarly restrictive easement on the new multi-use path and to ensure that the path is wide enough to create a sense of separation similar to that achieved by the 40-100 foot right-away that is the existing linear park.

4.23

In addition, there is no discussion of timing for construction of the new multi-use path. As part of mitigation, this path should be constructed and landscaped at the same time as the North Connector and the conservation easement placed on it as a condition for finaling the roadway for use.

4.24

6.0 CEQA Required Conclusions

This section (page 6-3) describes the projects considered in the cumulative analysis. The truck scales project is not included nor described despite the fact that the North Connector is contoured to set aside land for the truck scales. This project needs to be described and its impacts considered in the cumulative analysis at the very least.

4.25

Thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments. To summarize, we make these comments with the intent of living up to our obligations as a land trust. We are ready to work with STA on the specifics.

Sincerely,

Original signed by Rob Goldstein

Rob Goldstein
Land Transaction Specialist

Response to Letter 4 – Solano Land Trust

Comment 4.1. This comment states that STA should respond to comments submitted during earlier circulation of the Draft EIR in September 2007, in addition to comments received during the circulation of the Draft Recirculated EIR in January 2008, per Title 14 California Code of Regulations, Section 15088.5.

STA has responded to all comments received during circulation of the Draft EIR, issued September 10, 2007, in addition to all comments received during circulation of the Recirculated Draft EIR, issued January 15, 2008. These comments are all located in this FEIR.

Comment 4.2. This comment states that parcel numbers (APNs) in Table 4.1-1 of the Recirculated Draft EIR should be revised to provide consistency with the text and related figures.

Based on this comment, the text discussion on page 4.1-3 of the Recirculated Draft EIR has been revised as seen in Chapter 3.0, Errata/Changes to the Recirculated Draft EIR.

Comment 4.3. The comment indicates that Chapter 6 should include mitigation for the loss of conservation easements.

Within Chapter 6.0, CEQA Required Conclusions, of the Recirculated Draft EIR, there is not a specific reference to a 1:1 mitigation ratio for farmland, as indicated in the comment. Page 6-6 of this chapter does, however, conclude that mitigation for the Project would place an equal to or greater amount of agricultural land into agricultural conservation easements. This is consistent with Mitigation Measures 4.1-1 and 4.1-2 included in Chapter 4.1, Land Use and Agricultural Resources, in the Recirculated Draft EIR.

Refer to response to Comment 1.1 for a discussion of the mitigation ratios for agricultural land.

Comment 4.4. This comment requests that the conservation easement on the Linear Park be relocated on the new multi-use trail as mitigation for the loss of the portion of the Linear Park affected by the Project.

Refer to response to Comment 3.1. The Solano Land Trust (SLT) and the City of Fairfield have entered into discussions to transfer the conservation easement to a new segment of the Linear Park planned in the northeast portion of the City.

Comment 4.5. This comment supports the construction of a cul de sac at the south end of Russell Road so that no direct vehicular connection between Russell Road and the Project would occur.

This comment is noted. No further response is required.

Comment 4.6. This comment indicates that the impacts of the relocation of the I-80 truck scales be identified and mitigated for within the EIR. The comment also states that because the Project bisects the Valine property, it is inconsistent with the conservation easement on that land.

In developing the North Connector Project, the Solano Transportation Authority (STA) chose the location of the Project to minimize to the extent feasible the impacts to agricultural land. Additionally, the Project alignment in the East End was designed to accommodate the location of a truck scales facility along the westbound direction of I-80. However, these truck scales will be constructed as part of a separate project, the I-80/I-680/SR 12 Interchange Project, as discussed on page 6-3 of the Recirculated Draft EIR. In selecting the Project's location, STA considered the conclusions and recommendations included in a separate study conducted by the STA, in cooperation with Caltrans and the California Highway Patrol (CHP) (See STA Cordelia Truck Scale Relocation Study, 2005). The Study reviewed various potential locations for the truck scales, and recommended that the truck scales be relocated and expanded within the existing I-80/680/SR12 interchange complex because it would allow the most efficient weighing and screening of trucks traveling on the I-680, I-80 and State Route 12 corridors. Other locations outside the I-80/680/SR12 interchange complex would have required multiple truck scale facilities to be constructed to weigh and screen trucks traveling on these freeway/highway corridors. (See STA Cordelia Truck Scale Relocation Study, 2005). STA adopted the findings of this study on February 16, 2005.

The impact of construction and relocation of the truck scale facility is part of a separate I-80/I-680/SR 12 Interchange Project, conducted by a separate lead agency (Caltrans). It is the responsibility of that lead agency to evaluate the environmental impacts of that project. Moreover the I-80/I-680/SR 12 Interchange Project has not completed environmental review. It would be speculative for STA to guess as to the particular environmental impacts on a specific parcel of land from a separate future project that has not undergone CEQA review.

More importantly, because the Project's location will impact agricultural land under conservation easement, STA has located the Project to minimize impacts to agricultural land, to the maximum extent feasible. The Recirculated Draft EIR accurately discloses and mitigates the direct and indirect impacts to agricultural land. Mitigation Measures 4.1-1 and 4.1-2 of the Recirculated Draft EIR mitigate impacted Prime Farmland by acquiring conservation easements on Prime Farmland at a 1:1 ratio. Additionally, the EIR increases mitigation ratio to 1.25:1 for replacing agricultural lands currently under conservation easement. Implementation of these mitigation measures will ensure that more agricultural land is preserved under conservation easements within Solano County. Thus, the loss of agricultural land on the Valine property will be fully mitigated by new conservation easement(s).

Comment 4.7. This comment indicates that the EIR should provide a discussion of the location of the access roads as part of the Project.

Figure 3-3 of the Recirculated Draft EIR illustrates the location of the proposed driveway entrances for the five affected parcels including driveway access to the Valine property both north and south of the Project. Page 4.1-16 of the Recirculated Draft EIR also indicates that the East End of the North Connector has been designed to replace access to agricultural parcels where access presently exists or where needed to maintain access for continued farming. As discussed on page 3-2 of the Recirculated Draft EIR, access would be provided by right in/right out only driveways via the North Connector.

Comment 4.8. This comment indicates that the Project Description include a discussion of the drainage facilities near the Project.

The drainage facilities necessary to carry stormwater runoff from the new roadway are to meet Solano County and Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB) requirements and have been included in the Project design (see Figure 3-4 which depicts “vegetated swales” on both sides of the new roadway). All necessary drainage facilities to accommodate stormwater runoff from the Project would be constructed within the Project right of way and have been included in the calculation of direct impacts of the Project on agricultural lands including those on the Valine property.

Comment 4.9. This comment inquires about the EIR’s description of the multi-use path located on the north side of the North Connector, in Chapter 3.0, Project Description. The comment also inquires about action taken by the City of Fairfield with regard to the portion of the Linear Park that will be affected by the Project.

Figure 3-4 of the Recirculated Draft EIR reflects a typical cross section of the Project east of Suisun Creek to Russell Road. This figure illustrates the width of the proposed multi-use path and landscaped areas.

The Recirculated Draft EIR discusses the City of Fairfield’s General Plan Amendment (GPA) on page 3-4. The text on page 3-4 has been altered slightly in response to the letter submitted by the City of Fairfield on April 22, 2008. The revised text on page 3-4 is shown in Chapter 3.0, Errata/Changes to the Recirculated Draft EIR, and the City’s letter is contained in Appendix B. The City’s GPA is not required for the Project to proceed, however, in light of the Project which will construct a new multi-use path and greenway, the City has initiated this GPA as described in the EIR as a separate proceeding. The City will utilize this EIR as the CEQA analysis for the GPA action.

Comment 4.10. This comment notes that the Project Description does not indicate that a conservation easement exists on the Linear Park .

The Recirculated Draft EIR discusses that a conservation easement for open space and recreational use is recorded on the entire length of the Linear Park on page 4.12-4.

The Recirculated Draft EIR is only required to address physical environmental impacts. The conservation easement on the Linear Park would not be physically impacted by the Project. As such, the conservation easement does not need to be relocated. Consequently, it is not required to mitigate the loss of a conservation easement on the existing portion of the Linear Park. As discussed on page 4.12-7, the Project includes construction of a new multi-use path that would replace the affected Linear Park in this area. Therefore, the physical impacts associated with the Linear Park, if any, are fully addressed by the Project.

However, the City of Fairfield and the Solano Land Trust have entered discussions to transfer the existing open space easement over this portion of the Linear Park to a new segment of the Linear Trail planned in the northeast portion of the City. Once the open space easement is transferred and the new multi-use path and greenway are constructed as part of the Project, the City will abandon the existing trail segment and close it off to public access.

Comment 4.11. This comment states that a discussion of the County General Plan Amendment should be included in the Project Description. The County General Plan Amendment is discussed in the Project Description at page 3-4.

Comment 4.12. The comment indicates that the Project Description include a discussion of right-of-way acquisition as a result of the Project.

The Recirculated Draft EIR, on page 4.1-10 and 4.1-11, describes the property to be acquired for the Project along with the procedures under which the right-of-way will be purchased, which is governed by the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisitions Policies Act of 1970, as amended (49 CFR 24). At this time it is not known if eminent domain will be required to acquire property needed for the Project. The first step will be to have the properties appraised and offers will be presented to the property owners for acquiring necessary right-of-way. However, if a negotiated sale is not successful, eminent domain may be necessary to acquire the property needed for the Project.

Comment 4.13. The comment suggest that Table 3-1 of the EIR include a discussion of the City and County General Plan Amendments, Williamson Act Contract cancellations, and property acquisition issues.

The City of Fairfield and the Solano County General Plan Amendments are discussed on page 3-4 of the Recirculated Draft EIR. Table 3-1 lists required agency permits and approvals. The County and City General Plan Amendments are not permits or approvals that are necessary for the Project to proceed, but are related actions being carried out by the local agencies in light of the Project and actions for which the EIR may be used as the CEQA documentation.

The Project would require the cancellation of portions of several Williamson Act contracts in both the West and East Ends of the Project. The process for cancellation of portions of Williamson Act contracts affected by the Project is discussed on pages 4.1-14 and 4.1-15 of the EIR.

See responses to comment 4.12 above regarding property acquisition.

Comment 4.14. This comment indicates that the Project would reduce the open space width of the Linear Park to a 23 foot maximum width.

Chapter 4.12 at pages 4.12-7 and 4.12-8 provide a more thorough evaluation of the existing Linear Park and the Multi-use path and greenway to be constructed as part of the Project. This section indicates that the existing Linear Park between Abernathy Road and Suisun Creek is approximately 1.62 miles in length consisting of a 8-10 foot wide paved path within a landscaped right of way. The total acreage of the existing Linear Park in this area is calculated to be approximately 8.5 acres. The proposed multi-use path and greenway would consist of a 10-foot wide paved path in between a vegetated swale (15-22 feet wide) and a landscaped area (7 feet wide) as shown in Figure 3-3 of the EIR. The total acreage of the multi-use path and greenway is approximately 9 acres. Based on this, the EIR concludes that the open space area between Abernathy Road and Suisun Creek would not be significantly reduced as indicated in the comment, but rather increased by approximately 0.5 acres.

Comment 4.15. This comment indicates that Policy 2 of the Solano County Land Use Element encourages the retention of agricultural parcels of sufficient size to remain as a farmable unit. The comment notes that the Project would split the parcel on which the Valine easement is located into a parcel smaller than a farmable unit.

As discussed on page 4.1-13 of the Recirculated Draft EIR, Solano County has initiated a General Plan Amendment designed to clarify that Policy 2 of Chapter III Land Use and Circulation Element, Agriculture and Open Space Land Use of the County General Plan is intended to impose limitations on the subdivision process, rather than prevent public agencies from acquiring right of way for public uses. Additionally, page 4.1-16 of the Recirculated Draft EIR recognizes that existing agricultural protection policies in the City and County General Plans limit the potential for conversion of agricultural lands. As noted on page 4.1-3 of the Recirculated Draft EIR the parcels bisected by the Project would remain one parcel and not be considered subdivided. Thus, the Project's impact on the Valine property would not encourage new development of agricultural land.

Notwithstanding the above, the Recirculated Draft EIR also discloses under Impact 4.1-1 that the Project could have indirect impacts to 10.33 acres of Prime Farmland by discouraging continued agricultural use of portions of existing parcels because of their limited size and increased proximity to the new roadway. The Recirculated Draft EIR mitigates these potential impacts to the 10.33 acres in Mitigation Measure 4.1-1. Table 4.1-5 of the Recirculated Draft EIR also calculates the amount of agricultural land STA will place under conservation easement at a 1:1 ratio to mitigate the Project's impact to agricultural land, which includes the 10.33 acres.

Comment 4.16. This comment indicates that as shown in Figure 4.1-3, the North Connector Project, specifically the area reserved for the truck scales, would limit the landowner's ability to traverse the parcel bisected by the Project. The comment also states that Figure 4.1-3 should show the Linear Park easement and its connection to Abernathy Road and Suisun Creek.

Driveway access would be provided to this parcel, as shown in Figure 3-3 of the Recirculated Draft EIR and as discussed on page 4.1-16 under the East End section. With regard to the Valine property, the owner would not be required to traverse the route described in the comment to access the southern portion of the parcel. Rather, the owner would be able to access the parcel (both north and south) via right-in/right-out driveways onto the Project. From the south portion of this parcel the owner would be able to utilize the new signalized intersection at Abernathy Road/North Connector to make a U-turn and then access the north portion of this parcel. From the north portion of the parcel, the owner would utilize the signalized intersection of Business Center Drive/Suisun Valley Road to make a U-turn and access the southern portion of the parcel. There also may be options for turning around sooner at intersections created along Business Center Drive as part of the Fairfield Corporate Commons Project.

Figure 4.1-3 depicts prime Farmland and Agricultural conservation easements. The Linear Park is discussed in Chapter 4.12 of the Recirculated Draft EIR under Public Services and Recreation. As discussed above under response to Comment 4.10, the open space conservation easement on the Linear Park would not be impacted by the Project.

Comment 4.17. This comment indicates that the removal of the portion of the Linear Park affected by the Project is a significant impact because the Linear Park's removal contradicts the open space conservation easement on the land.

The Project would not result in a direct impact to the existing Linear Park or the open space conservation easement over this property.

Furthermore, the Project will construct a new multi-use path and greenway as an in-kind replacement of the removed portion of the Linear Park. As discussed on page 4.12-4 of the

Recirculated Draft EIR, the Fairfield Linear Park (Linear Park) is a 94-acre rails-to-trails public use, publicly- owned, resource located entirely within the City of Fairfield. An 8.5-acre portion of the Linear Park is located within East End section of the Project. The length of the Linear Park east-to-west is approximately 5 miles, with an eastern terminus at the intersection of North Texas Street and East Tabor Avenue in downtown Fairfield and a western terminus at Solano Community College. The Linear Park extends without interruption between these two points, but crosses over several city streets. The existing portion of the Fairfield Linear Park is between Abernathy Road and Suisun Creek is approximately 1.62 miles in length encompassing approximately 8.5 acres consisting of a paved pathway (approximately 8-10 feet wide) within a landscaped right of way immediately adjacent to I-80.

The North Connector Project will construct a new multi-use path and greenway along the north side of the new roadway between Abernathy Road and Suisun Creek that will replace the removed portion of the Linear Park and connect to the remainder of the Linear Park. The multi-use path and greenway will be 1.56 miles long and encompass approximately 9.0-acres consisting of a 10-foot wide paved multi-use path in between a vegetated swale (15-22 foot wide) and a landscape area (7-foot wide) as shown in Figure 3-3 of Chapter 3.0, Project Description, of the Recirculated Draft EIR.¹ This multi-use path and greenway would be owned and maintained by Solano County. The new multi-use path will connect with the Linear Park Abernathy Road, and at Suisun Creek, where it would continue to Solano Community College.

Because the Project includes construction of this new multi-use path and greenway, the City of Fairfield has initiated a General Plan Amendment (GPA) that will revise Policy OS 12.7 to keep the existing Linear Park between Abernathy Road and the new bridge over Suisun Creek, and remove this portion of the Linear Park from the City General Plan Recreation and Open Space and Circulation Elements. The open space conservation easement located over this portion of the existing Linear Park would remain.

However, the City of Fairfield and the Solano Land Trust have entered discussions to transfer the existing open space easement over this portion of the Linear Park to a new segment of the Linear Trail planned in the northeast portion of the City. Once the open space easement is transferred and the new multi-use path and greenway are constructed as part of the Project, the City will abandon the existing trail segment and close it off to public access.

Comment 4.18. This comment indicates that the proposed Solano County General Plan Amendment of exempting the north Connector Project from breaking down farmable units remains inconsistent with the intent of the General Plan to protect agricultural land.

The Solano County General Plan Amendment (GPA) was clarified in the Recirculated Draft EIR on page 3-4 and 4.1-13. The GPA is designed to clarify that Policy 2 of Chapter III Land Use and Circulation Element, Agriculture and Open Space Land Use of the Solano County General Plan was intended to limit the subdivision of property on agricultural parcels, not to limit a public entity's ability to acquire right of way for a public works project.

Comment 4.19. This comment indicates that the North Connector has not been designed to reduce the impacts to Prime Farmland in the East End, and that the impacts on agricultural land associated with the relocation of the truck scales should be discussed in the EIR

¹ Roadway dimensions are subject to change per final roadway design.

Refer to responses to Comments 1.1 and 1.2. Mitigation Measures 4.1-1 and 4.1-2 of the Recirculated Draft EIR mitigate the impacts to Prime Farmland as a result on the Project.

Comment 4.20. This comment indicates that the 1:1.25 mitigation ratio for the Valine easement in mitigation Measure 4.1-2 is not high enough to avoid undervaluing the loss of this easement.

Refer to response to Comment 1.1. STA's mitigation measures for impacts to farmland are appropriate.

Comment 4.21. This comment suggests that Mitigation Measure 4.1-2 should state that the loss of Prime Farmland must be mitigated with the protection of Prime Farmland and that this protection must occur within Suisun Valley to protect the perpetuity of the land.

Mitigation Measures 4.1-1 and 4.1-2 were revised in the Recirculated Draft EIR to require that conservation easements be purchased over Prime Farmland. Refer to response to Comment 1.2 regarding the location of the easements to be purchased.

Comment 4.22. This comment indicates that the City program 1.4A of the City of Fairfield's Farmland Policies, discussed on page 4.1-7 of the Draft EIR, is not consistent with the text of Mitigation Measure 4.1-1.

Refer to response to Comment 1.2.

Comment 4.23. This comment indicates that no mitigation is presented in protecting the conservation easement on the Linear Park and suggests an appropriate mitigation measure that addresses a similarly restrictive easement on the new multi-use path.

Refer to response to Comments 4.10 and 4.17.

Comment 4.24. This comment indicates that the timing of the construction and landscaping of the multi-use path is not indicated in the mitigation of the EIR.

The construction and landscaping of the multi-use path will occur concurrently with the construction and landscaping of the North Connector Project. This clarification was revised with the Recirculated Draft EIR on page 4.12-7.

Comment 4.25. This comment states that the truck scale project is not included in the cumulative analysis for the North Connector Project.

The Recirculated Draft EIR included revisions to address this comment. The relocation of the westbound truck scales is a part of the I-80/I-680/SR12 Interchange Project, and is discussed on page 6-3 of the Recirculated Draft EIR. Please also see response to Comment 1.2 for a discussion of the truck scale project as it relates to impacts to agricultural land.

Bernard Moore
4088 Russell Road
Fairfield, CA 94534

Affiliation: Moore Tractor Co.
Phone: 707-425-9545
Email: mooretractor2@inreach.com

Solano Transportation Authority
One Harbor Center, Suite 130
Suisun City, CA 94585
Fax: 707-424-6074
Email: jadams@sta-snci.com

I would like to submit the following comments on the North Connector Project draft environment document:

1. Make small isolated south-east portion of 0027-510-080, Jose DeGonzalez to Moore/parcel 0027-510-070. See enclosed plot 5.1
 2. Make small isolated south-east portion of 0027-510-04 Raymond Conner to Moore parcel 0027-510-070. See enclosed plot 5.2
 3. Be assured of exit and entrance from my property to new roadway. 5.3
 4. Exit and entrance to new roadway from Russell Rd. See plot no cul de sac. 5.4
 5. Install conduit under new roadway that can be used to take electric portable water, phone service from my property on northside of new roadway to my property on south side of new roadway. 5.5
- During the public meeting on February 19, 2008 on the north connector project, attendees brought forth concern of congestion on Abernathy-Rockville Road. The traffic at peak times now backs up from turn around at Abernathy and Rockville Road to Russell Road a distance of approximately ½ mile. Any relief achieved with Russell exit and entrance from Russell onto the north connector would be very desirable. The burden to our customers, delivery trucks, along with our own personal and trucks would be very burdensome. A cul de sac is now planned, this suggestion has been made and documented over the past couple of years. 5.6

FAXED

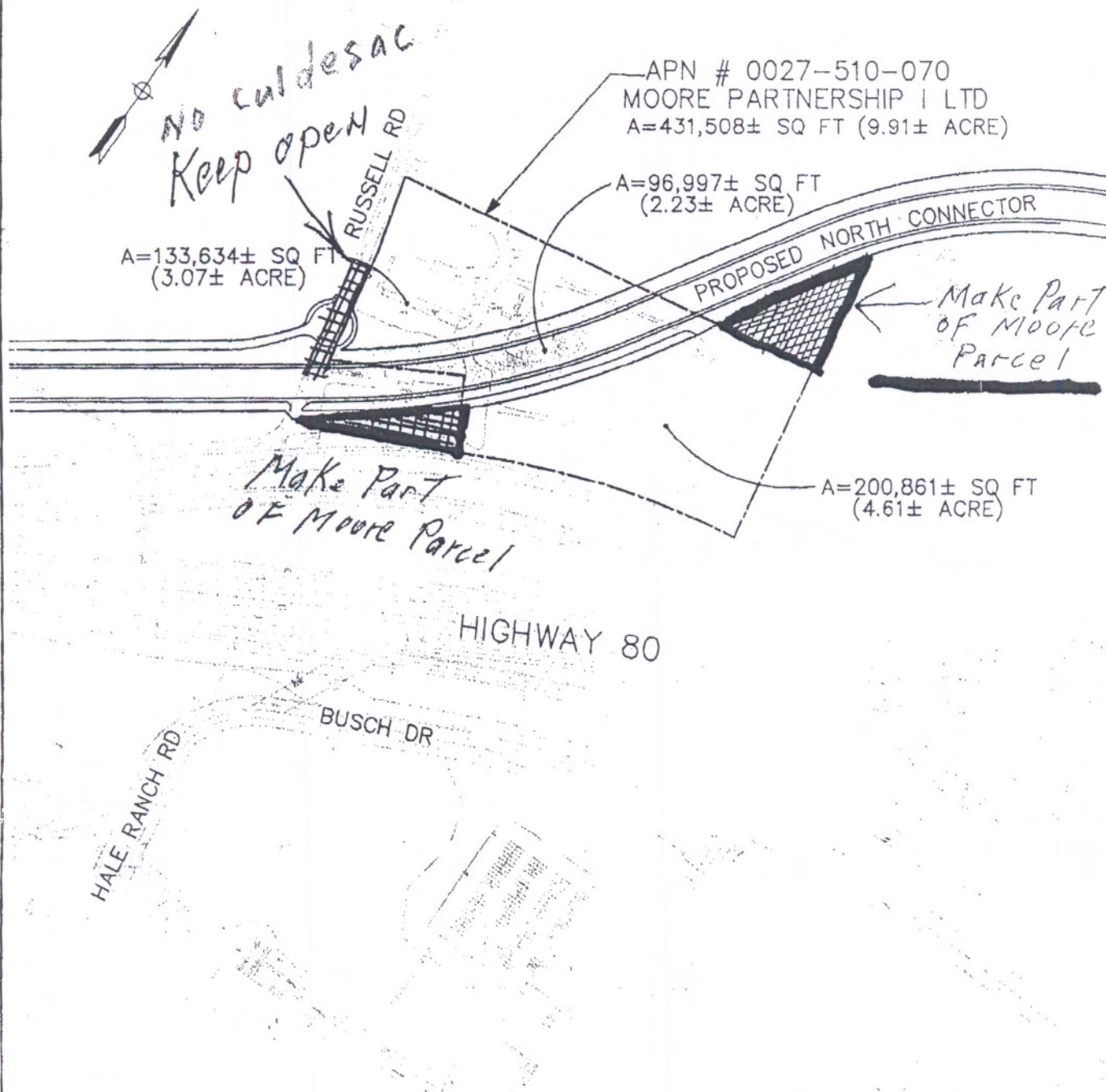
DEC 27 1999

LEGEND:

PROPOSED RIGHT OF WAY

EXISTING PARCEL LINE

RIGHT-OF-WAY ACQUISITION



MAY, 2006



4780 CHABOT DRIVE
SUITE 104
PLEASANTON, CA 94588
925/396-7700
925/396-7789 (FAX)

NO SCALE

NORTH CONNECTOR IMPROVEMENT PROJECT
RIGHT OF WAY REQUIREMENT MAP
APN # 0027-510-070

Response to Letter 5 – Bernard Moore

Comment 5.1. This comment requests the adjustment of the parcel lines shown in the environmental document so that a south-east portion of a parcel shown as Assessor's Parcel Number (APN 0027-0510-080) is shown as the Moore parcel (APN 0027-510-070).

It is too early in the process to be able to make a determination as to whether or not this request can be accommodated. The determination will be made during the right-of-way acquisition process.

Comment 5.2. This comment requests the adjustment of the parcel lines shown in the environmental document so that a south-east portion of a parcel shown as Assessor's Parcel Number (APN 0027-0510-04) is shown as the Moore parcel (APN 0027-510-070).

Refer to response to Comment 5.1 above.

Comment 5.3. This comment requests that the Project provide an entrance and exit from the Moore property (APN 0027-510-070) to the North Connector Project roadway.

The Moore property (APN 0027-510-070) will be bisected by the North Connector Project roadway. The portion of the Moore property to the north of the North Connector, where the Moore Tractor Company is located, currently has access to and from Russell Road. The Project will not affect access to Russell Road from the portion of the Moore property to the North of the Project. The resulting portion of the property to the south of the Project will have right in and right out access from the North Connector via a driveway through the acquired Conner property (see Figure 3-3 in the EIR).

Comment 5.4. This comment requests an exit and entrance from Russell Road onto the North Connector Project.

A cul-de-sac will be constructed at Russell Road, where the Project alignment would cross Russell Road. There will be no vehicular access connection between Russell Road and the Project.

Currently customers' delivery trucks and personnel associated with Moore Tractor Company (the business located on Mr. Moore's property) access the business via Rockville Road and Russell Road. The Project will not change or otherwise impact this access, and thus would not make access to Mr. Moore's property more difficult or circuitous.

Comment 5.5. This comment requests that a conduit be installed under the new roadway to take electricity, potable water, and phone service from the north side of the Moore property to the south side of the Moore property.

STA will install conduit or other means where appropriate to maintain existing utility service (electrical, telephone, water, and sewer) to all existing parcels affected by the Project. As it pertains to Mr. Moore, utility crossovers will be installed under the North Connector to provide for future utility services to the southerly portion of his parcel.

Comment 5.6. This comment indicates concern with existing traffic congestion at the intersection of Abernathy Road and Rockville Road and states that will be a need for traffic congestion relief at the proposed intersection of Russell Road and the North Connector.

The existing intersection of Abernathy and Rockville Roads currently operates at an acceptable level of service (LOS A) in both the AM and PM peak hours (see Table 4.2-2, page 4.2-6 p the Recirculated Draft EIR). This same intersection is projected to continue to operate at LOS A in both the AM and PM peak hours in the year 2020 with or without the North Connector (see Table 4.2-4, page 4.2-25 of the Recirculated Draft EIR). Based on the traffic analysis conducted for the Project and contained in Chapter 4.2 of the Recirculated Draft EIR, this intersection does not currently experience significant congestion nor would the Project significantly impact the future operation of this intersection.

From: Ed Cooper [mailto:Ed.Cooper@skyboxsecurity.com]
Sent: Friday, January 18, 2008 8:30 PM
To: jadams@sta-snci.com
Subject: DEIR - North Connector - Green Valley

Sir;

Green Valley will become Death Valley if the proposed bypass comes to reality.

Green Valley represents a lot of wealth in Solano County and was one of the nicer areas to live. But all of that changed with the recent developments in that area, especially around the proposed bypass route.

It already takes 20 minutes to get out of Green Valley today. Within the West End of the proposed project cars are line up one after another from 4pm through 6pm each work day. Imagine the traffic nightmare once a bypass goes into effect.

6.1

Highway 12 in both directions is a nothing more than a disaster today as the result of poor planning on the part of the State and County. To route even a small portion of that traffic through what is largely a residential area is a crime.

Interstate 80 in that area is already a disaster looking for real solutions. Solano County has been last on the list and on the short end for every major traffic pattern improvement over the past 10 years. It's a shame as well as a visual mess. Try coming home on a holiday period from West or East 80.

6.2

The impact will be significant from every measurable perspective - economic - environmental - financial - lifestyle - health. Green Valley residents and businesses will move out in large numbers further crippling home values and transferring vital tax and sales revenues to other Counties.

What was the planning commission thinking when they put this plan together? The State and County is ignoring the obvious when they submit such a plan as well as turn their backs on the residents that help pay their salaries. We may not be able to move out of the State, but moving out the County is real easy. The social environment is already becoming less than attractive in Solano.

This proposed bypass will significant hurt Solano County and it will kill what was the best place to live in the County, Green Valley.

Ed and Linda Cooper, residents of Green Valley, Eastridge

Response to Letter 6 – Ed and Linda Cooper

Comment 6.1. This comment states that the North Connector would increase evening peak hour traffic levels, specifically within the West End of the proposed Project.

The analysis in the Recirculated Draft EIR, as seen on page 4.2-16, demonstrates that traffic congestion in the year 2020 will improve in the West End as a result of the proposed Project. Under 2020 No Project conditions, the intersection of SR12 and Red Top Road within the West End would operate LOS F during the PM peak hours. In contrast, under 2020 With Project conditions, this intersection would operate at an improved LOS B with a decrease in average delay during the PM peak hour. Additionally, the intersections of Green Valley Road and Mangels Boulevard (Intersection #6) and Green Valley Road and Business Center Drive (Intersection #7) would remain at LOS D with the Project, as demonstrated in Table 4.2-2 of the Recirculated Draft EIR. Thus, the North Connector Project would improve or maintain similar levels of traffic within the West End and no further discussion is necessary.

Comment 6.2. This comment states that the North Connector Project will have a significant negative social and economic impacts in the Green Valley area of Solano County.

Under CEQA, Section 15131, economic and social impacts of a proposed Project are not required to be evaluated unless they would lead to a physical environmental impact. Additionally, to the extent the comment suggests that the North Connector Project will have negative environmental effects, the Recirculated Draft EIR analyzes the environmental impacts as a result of the Project and describes mitigation measures for potentially significant environmental impacts. Therefore, no further discussion is necessary. Also, as described in response to Comment 6.2 above, the traffic analysis shows that traffic flows and intersection LOS on Green Valley Road will not be significantly impacted.

FEB 29 2008

Mangels Ranch
2294 Morrison Lane
Fairfield, CA 94534

SOLANO TRANSPORTATION
AUTHORITY

February 28, 2008

Solano Transportation Authority
Attn: Janet Adams
1 Harbor Center, Suite 130
Suisun City, CA 94585

Dear Ms. Adams:

We have examined the Draft Environmental Impact Report for the North Connector Project and offer the following comments.

Alternatives to the Project: The use of Mangels Boulevard as a major section of the West End project routing should be included as an alternative. This street was designed as a large feeder thoroughfare and should not have been removed from consideration. No residences or businesses front directly on the street, and the residential neighborhoods are uniformly protected by sound walls. It is far more suited than Business Center Drive, which is already congested in the Green Valley Shopping Center area. Street curvature and median vegetation limit sight lines in that area, and along with short turnouts for left turn lanes, will further aggravate traffic congestion if Business Center remains the sole North Connector link. In lieu of totally abandoning Business Center routing, the Connector route should at the very least connect with *both* Mangels Boulevard and Business Center Drive near the present western terminus of each street.

7.1

Section 3.0 Project Description/Project Components-West End: Based on our years of observing traffic on State Route 12 from our gate directly across from Red Top Road, we think a signalized intersection at that location is a poor choice. Highway 12 westbound traffic already backs up into I-80 in the mornings, and with the increased volume of traffic generated by the North Connector Route entering the same area, prospects for improvement don't seem very bright. Further, westbound heavily loaded trucks who have to stop at the light will have to contend with a formidable hill from a dead stop. Likewise, eastbound loaded trucks will be faced with having to stop at the base of the same hill. A better solution is needed.

7.2

Section 3.0. Access provisions: The planned underpass that will connect the main portion of our property to the portion cut off by the new road is a much appreciated and necessary item. However, we are unable to discern exactly how the property will be entered, since our current entry point across from Red Top Road will be eliminated, and our present entry road would appear to terminate too close to the new intersection to permit entry/exit. We need access from directly from the new road on the north side near the area where the Connector route will cross our existing ranch road. The entry needs to be large enough to accommodate the turn radius of a full length truck and semi trailer combination. Such access could also reduce the height requirement for the proposed

7.3

under-crossing. Fire apparatus access remains an important consideration in determining under-crossing size.

7.3
(Cont.)

Section 4.0. Mitigation measure 4.5-2: We adamantly oppose the proposed mitigation measure. The North Connector routing passes through a livestock ranch, an activity cited in the United States Fish and Wildlife Service Final Ruling on Critical Habitat for the California Red Legged Frog as having a favorable effect on frog habitat. Accordingly, routine livestock ranching activities fall under special rules that reduce regulatory restrictions on ranch operators. The EIR proposal in this instance goes far beyond federal guidelines by specifying a 35.4-acre set-aside of private property and excluding any mention of continued livestock operations on that acreage. This is totally unacceptable. There is already a large stock pond on the property, which will unfortunately be cutoff by the proposed route. This measure proposes to create yet another pond *plus* a mitigation area, taking far more grassland away than will be lost to the road itself and thus marginalizing the continued viability of our livestock operation. This proposal is inconsistent with federal guidelines for livestock ranches and must be extensively reworked.

7.4

Mitigation Measure 4.5-3: Comments on 4.5-2 above apply to this area as well. The large stock pond presently on the property will remain there after road construction and should provide sufficient habitat for any turtles.

7.5

Mitigation Measure 4.5-6: As covered in comments on Measures 4.5-2 and 4.5-3, The existing pond will remain after the road is constructed. Its continued viability, however, is dependent on runoff from upland areas, therefore conduits strategically placed to channel this runoff under the roadbed so it can flow to the pond must be incorporated into the design.

7.6

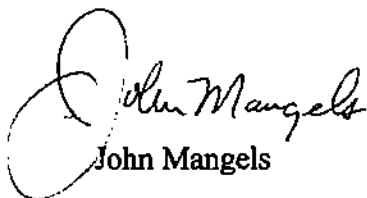
Mitigation Measure 4.6-1b: The West End route passes primarily through grass-covered hills with rock features, and provides a view to the valley below. It provides its own natural beauty. Planting trees on this portion to the route is not necessary or desirable.

7.7

Mitigation Measure 4.8-5: Minimizing cut and fill requirements is optimum. The proposed routing crosses multiple easements, including water delivery lines, North Bay Aqueduct, and two PG&E gas transmission lines.

7.8

The comments above summarize and provide information on topics presented in verbal remarks at the February 19, 2008 Public Comment Meeting for this EIR. Please call if we can provide additional information or clarification. Our numbers are: John Mangels, 916-607-7109 (cell), or Gary Mangels, 707-864-1591.


John Mangels


Gary Mangels

Response to Letter 7 – Mangels Ranch

Comment 7.1. The commenter states that Mangels Road should be considered as an alternative to the Project.

An EIR need not consider every conceivable alternative to the Project (CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(f)(i)). CEQA requires that an EIR evaluate a range of reasonable alternatives to a project that could feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the project. STA considered three alternatives, including the construction of the Project, improving existing roadways, and providing an enhanced bus service in lieu of the Project. These alternatives were all selected based on the potential to meet the Project's goal to reduce congestion on I-80 and provide a local east-west route for traffic. Because STA is required to consider only a reasonable range of alternatives, it was not required to consider the specific alternatives noted by this comment.

Comment 7.2. The commenter suggests that a signalized intersection not be constructed at the intersection of SR12 and Red Top Road, and that such an intersection could worsen traffic delays.

This comment is noted. The signalized intersection at SR12 and Red Top Road will improve traffic delays at this intersection. Table 4.2-4 of the Recirculated Draft EIR compares the differences in Level of Service (LOS) and average delays at the intersection of SR12 and Red Top Road. Under the 2020 No Project conditions (assuming no construction of the signalized intersection), the intersection would experience LOS F with average delays exceeding the meaningful range of the traffic model. Under the 2020 with Project conditions, LOS at this intersection would be improved to LOS D during AM peak hours with an average delay of 45.9 seconds and LOS B during PM peak hours with an average delay of 19.3 seconds. Therefore the analysis in the Recirculated Draft EIR demonstrates that the construction of the signalized intersection at SR12 and Red Top Road will improve the operation of this intersection and the signalized intersection would operate at an acceptable level of service (LOS D or better).

Comment 7.3. This comment states that access to the Mangels property is unclear. The comment indicates that access will be needed directly from the new roadway and must be large enough to accommodate full length truck and semi-trailers.

The existing entrance to the Mangels property off of SR12 West will be reconstructed and relocated as part of the Project. As discussed on page 4.1-11 of the Recirculated Draft EIR, the new entrance to the Mangels property will be located along the North Connector road just north of the new SR12/Red Top Road/North Connector intersection. The new entrance will be designed to accommodate normal farm and agricultural equipment and trucks.

Comment 7.4. This comment opposes Mitigation Measure 4.5-2 because it goes beyond what is required by federal guidelines by setting aside 35.4-acres of private property for conservation easement or deed restriction to reduce impacts to the California red-legged frog.

As indicated by the commenter, the USFWS recognizes that managed livestock grazing at low to moderate levels has a neutral or beneficial effect on California red-legged frog habitat by keeping a mix of open water habitat and emergent vegetation and that grazing helps contribute to the conservation of the California red-legged frog and its habitat (USFWS 2006²).

Additionally, it should be noted that projects that do not impact breeding habitat and only impact dispersal habitat, in some instances, only have a 2:1 mitigation to impacts compensation ratio. As such, this Project does not “go beyond the federal guidelines for mitigating impacts to the California red-legged frog;” rather, it maintains consistency with current policies.

STA recognizes that in 2006 the USFWS proposed a special rule to exempt routine ranching practices from regulation pursuant to the federal endangered species act for activities that could affect California red-legged frog. However, the special rule did not allow for “take” of California red-legged frog or its habitat. The special rule was proposed to encourage landowners and ranchers operating on non-Federal land to continue their livestock-related practices that are not only important for livestock operations, but that also provide habitat for the California red-legged frog. The “special rule” does not apply to the North Connector Project, and thus, USFWS will require mitigation compensation for impacts to California red-legged frog and its habitat resulting from the proposed Project.

While the drainage known to support California red-legged frogs would not be affected by the Project, there exists 0.59-acre of other drainage features, seasonal wetlands and seeps on the Mangels property (within the West End of the Project area) that may also provide habitat for California red-legged frogs, and would be impacted by the proposed roadway and associated grading activities. In accordance with guidance received from USFWS, the Project will be required to mitigate for impacts to California red-legged frog aquatic habitat by creating a breeding pond for this species in the immediate vicinity of this known California red-legged frog population. Consequently, a mitigation breeding pond is proposed to be constructed in the immediate area of the impact which will benefit the California red-legged frog population that will be impacted by the Project.

In addition, it is estimated that 17.7 acres of upland habitat that provides dispersal habitat for California red-legged frogs would also be impacted by the proposed roadway and associated grading activities. The mitigation measure provided in the DEIR provides for a 2:1 mitigation to impacts ratio for impacts to upland California red-legged frog dispersal habitat. Consequently, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is requiring that 34.5 acres of upland dispersal habitat of the California red-legged frog be set aside in a permanent preserve dedicated for this species.

While not specifically detailed in Mitigation Measure 4.5-3 of the Recirculated Draft EIR, it is anticipated that the long-term management of this preserved land surrounding the mitigation pond will include managed livestock grazing. Continued livestock operations on that acreage will not be excluded, but will be required to follow a specified management plan that will be prepared for that mitigation/preserve area. The main concern is that cattle grazing could damage the created pond’s berm or flow control features, and that grazing practices remain consistent with good stewardship of the land.

2 USFWS (U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service). 2006. Designation of critical habitat for the California red-legged frog, and special rule exemption associated with final listing for existing routine ranching activities; final rule. 50 CFR Part 17. Federal Register. Volume 71, No. 71. April 13, 2006.

It is important to note that USFWS is routinely requiring a 3:1 mitigation ratio for impacts to actual confirmed California red-legged habitat. In fact, the USFWS has required this ratio within just a few miles of the Project site. As previously stated, projects that do not impact breeding habitat and only impact dispersal habitat, in some instances, only have a 2:1 mitigation to impacts compensation ratio. As such, this Project does not “go beyond the federal guidelines for mitigating impacts to the California red-legged frog.” Rather, it remains consistent with the policies in practice today.

Finally, STA recognizes that the North Connector Project will indeed bisect this property and will isolate the large stock pond; however, the Project proposes to install an underpass under the roadway to allow continued access to this stock pond by livestock using the property, as shown in Figure 3-4 of the Recirculated Draft EIR.

Comment 7.5. The commenter indicates that the large stock pond presently located in the West End of the study area north of SR12 would remain after the construction of North Connector and should provide sufficient habitat for the Pacific pond turtle, therefore no longer requiring the preservation of 35.4 acres of upland habitat.

Refer to response to Comment 7.5 above. Mitigation measure 4.5-3 is necessary to reduce impacts to the Pacific pond turtle to a less than significant level.

While Pacific pond turtles are typically found in ponds, marshes, ditches, streams, and rivers, this species also requires upland areas where it digs nests to bury its eggs. Upland habitat extends for several hundred yards or further from a ponds edge. The Project may impact “potentially occupied upland burrow sites,” therefore, pursuant to CEQA this potentially significant impact must be addressed in the EIR. As indicated in the Recirculated Draft EIR on page 4.5-24, Mitigation Measure 4.5-2 which will require preservation of the 34.5 acres around the mitigation pond for California red-legged frog, would be considered adequate mitigation for potential impacts to the Pacific pond turtle, and would reduce any impacts to a less-than significant level pursuant to the CEQA.

Comment 7.6. The commenter indicates that conduits should be placed under the North Connector roadway and near the existing large stock ponds to channel runoff from the upland area under the roadbed into the ponds.

Conduits would be placed under the new roadway to ensure that stormwater runoff would be able to cross under the North Connector roadway and reach the existing stock pond on the property.

Comment 7.7 The commenter indicates that the planting of trees along the West End of the North Connector is not necessary under Mitigation 4.6-1b, as this area provides view to the valley below. As discussed in Mitigation Measure 4.6-1b of the Recirculated Draft EIR, the trees and landscaping would reflect the current rural character of the landscape and would be spaced to allow for views of the valley and hills within the area. The landscaping would provide a beneficial aesthetic affect.

Comment 7-8. The commenter indicates support for the cut and fill requirements as established under Mitigation Measure 4.5-8b. These measures will be implemented to reduce soil erosion impacts to a less than significant level.

COMMENT SHEET

Public Hearing
Tuesday, February 19, 2008
Solano County Administration Center
6:30 – 8:30 PM

Name: Robert Powell Affiliation: _____
Address: 35 Buena Vista Phone: _____
City/State/Zip: Vallejo, CA 94590 Email: roadlesrage@hotmail.com

**I would like to submit the following comments on the North Connector Project
Re-circulated Draft Environmental Impact Report:**

Bike path on present, completed Business Center
needs to be continued to stop light at Red Top

8.1

(Please use reverse side if additional space is needed.)

Comments may be submitted tonight or mailed, faxed or emailed to:

Solano Transportation Authority
Attn: Janet Adams
One Harbor Center, Suite 130
Suisun City, CA 94585
Fax: 707-424-6074
Email: jadams@sta-snci.com

Please note: Comments on the draft
environmental document must be received by
5:00 PM, March 3, 2008.

Thank you for participating in tonight's public hearing.

Response to Letter 8 – Robert Powell

Comment 8.1. This comment states that the bicycle path located on Business Center Drive should be continued to the stoplight at the intersection of Red Top Road and SR12.

There is currently a Class I bicycle path from Green Valley Road that runs along I-80 to the vicinity of Red Top Road and SR12 West. Because this bicycle path currently exists, there is no need to construct a new bicycle path in the West End of the North Connector. The Project will, however, reconstruct the existing western terminus of the Class I bicycle path and extend it to connect with the proposed 4-way signalized intersection at SR12/Red Top Road/North Connector. As discussed on page 4.12-7 of the Recirculated Draft EIR. The new signalized intersection at SR12 West/Red Top Road/North Connector would provide an improved way of crossing SR12 West and would allow bicyclists and pedestrians to safely access Red Top Road and cross SR12 West to points further west and south of the Project area.

In addition, the West End of the Project from Business Center Drive to SR12 would be constructed with 10-foot outside shoulders. Refer to Figure 3-6, Cross Section of West End Near Red Top Road, of the Recirculated Draft EIR for an illustration. Roadways with 10-foot outside shoulders would be equivalent to a Class III bicycle facility. Thus, bicyclists that did not want to use the existing Class I bicycle path along I-80 could ride along the Project utilizing the 10-foot shoulder area.

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Comment Letters Received on the Draft EIR Issued September 10, 2007

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DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION

DIVISION OF LAND RESOURCE PROTECTION

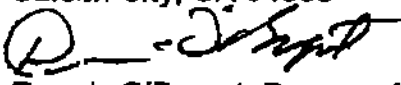
801 K STREET • MS 18-01 • SACRAMENTO, CALIFORNIA 95814

PHONE: 916 / 324-0850 • FAX 916 / 327-3430 • TDD 916 / 324-2555 • WEBSITE: conservation.ca.gov

TO: Project Coordinator
Resources Agency

VIA FACSIMILE (707) 424-6074

Daryl Halls
Solano Transportation Authority
One Harbor Center, Suite 130
Suisun City, CA 94585

FROM: 
Dennis O'Bryant, Program Manager
Department of Conservation
Division of Land Resource Protection

DATE: October 25, 2007

SUBJECT: North Connector Project Draft Environmental Impact Report (Solano County)
SCH# 200611262

The Department of Conservation's (Department) Division of Land Resource Protection (Division) has reviewed the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the referenced project. The Division monitors farmland conversion on a statewide basis and administers the California Land Conservation (Williamson) Act and other agricultural land conservation programs. We offer the following comments and recommendations with respect to the project's impacts on agricultural land and resources.

Project Description

The North Connector Project (project) is intended to provide east-west transportation capacity north of I-80 for local traffic, which in turn will reduce congestion on I-80. The project is located primarily in an unincorporated portion of Solano County (County) and the City of Fairfield (City), north of I-80 in the Suisun Valley and Green Valley areas. In the West end of the project area, lands are categorized as extensive agricultural lands. In the East end of the project area, lands are categorized as intensive agricultural production lands. Within the project area, there are 251.02 acres of Prime Farmland. Additionally, over 4,51 acres of the project area are Williamson Act contracted lands. Implementation of the project would result in a conversion of Prime Farmland and lands subject to agricultural conservation easements to non-agricultural uses. This conversion is considered a significant adverse impact.

9.1

Daryl Halls
October 25, 2007
Page 2 of 3

Impacts on Agricultural Land & Mitigation Measures

The Department's California Farmland Conservancy Program provided grant funding to the Solano Land Trust in 2000 to facilitate the purchase of the agricultural conservation easement on the Valline property, referred to in the DEIR as the agricultural conservation easements in the East End. As part of the original application, the County was required to pass a resolution (Resolution 2000-50), supporting establishment of the agricultural conservation easement, which was designed to be held in perpetuity. Termination of portions of the easement and fragmentation of the remaining agricultural property is directly at odds with the intent of the easement and the County's former support of the easement.

9.2

The DEIR suggests the impact to the agricultural conservation easement is relatively minor, with only 9.9 acres of the 82.5 acre property that is north of I-80 being directly converted. However, the impacts, both direct and indirect, are much greater. The alignment of the proposed connector through the Valline property is intended to support the future relocation of the I-80 truck scales, while this is a separate project. It is improper to ignore the impact of the alignment on the portion of the property that will be bounded by the freeway and the connector. It is highly unlikely that this remainder of the property will be capable of being commercially farmed, given its size and access issues. The Department believes therefore, that the effective loss of prime farmland from this project will be 35.8 acres, rather than 9.9 acres.

Mitigation of the loss of farmland should relate to the quality of the farmland lost, its proximity to a larger agricultural region (the Suisun Valley), and the fact that the farmland to be converted is already protected by an agricultural conservation easement. The DEIR's suggestion that this mitigation can be attained at a ratio of 1.25 acres for each of acre lost (9.9 acres, or approximately 12.5 acres of mitigation) appears wholly inadequate. The Department strongly recommends that mitigation be required to take place on land designated as prime farmland, that the mitigation take place within the Suisun Valley, and that the mitigation ratio be at least 2:1, reflecting the higher significance and impact of the loss and fragmentation of prime farmland that was intended to be preserved in perpetuity. Based on these recommendations, and the effective loss of 35.8 acres, the Department recommends that at least 71.6 acres of contiguous prime farmland within the Suisun Valley be preserved with an agricultural conservation easement, to partially mitigate for the farmland loss of the proposed project.

9.3

Information about agricultural conservation easements, the Williamson Act and provisions noted above is available on the Department's website, or by contacting the Division at the address and phone number listed below. The Department's website address is:

<http://www.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/index.htm>

Daryl Halls
October 25, 2007
Page 3 of 3

Thank you for giving us the opportunity to comment on this DEIR. If you have questions on our comments, or require technical assistance or information on agricultural land conservation, please contact Elliott Lum, Environmental Planner, at 801 K Street, MS 18-01, Sacramento, California 95814; or, phone (916) 324-0869.

Response to Letter 9 – Department of Conservation

The Department of Conservation submitted Comment Letter 1 on the Recirculated Draft EIR. Thus, the Department of Conservation comment letter (dated October 25, 2007) to the Draft EIR, issued on September 10, 2007, is superseded by the comment letter (dated March 3, 2008) to the Recirculated Draft EIR, issued January 15, 2008, because the comments are identical to Comment Letter 1.

Comment 9.1. Refer to response to Comment 1.1.

Comment 9.2. Refer to response to Comment 1.2.

Comment 9.3. Refer to response to Comment 1.3.



DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME

<http://www.dfg.ca.gov>

 POST OFFICE BOX 47
 YOUNTVILLE, CALIFORNIA 94599
 (707) 944-5500

RECEIVED



OCT 31 2007

 SOLANO TRANSPORTATION
 AUTHORITY

October 30, 2007

 Ms. Janet Adams
 Solano Transportation Authority
 One Harbor Center, Suite 130
 Suisun City, CA 94585

Dear Ms. Adams:

 Subject: North Connector Project, Draft Environmental Impact Report,
 SCH # 2006112062, City of Fairfield, Solano County

Department of Fish and Game (DFG) personnel have reviewed the above North Connector Project Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR). The North Connector Project is located within unincorporated Solano County and the City of Fairfield. The west end of the project is located between the State Route 12 (SR12) West/Red Top Road intersection and Business Center Drive. The east end is located between Suisun Creek and the Chadbourne Road undercrossing. Existing land uses in the west end portion of the project area are predominately agricultural with some commercial and residential development in surrounding areas. The topography of the west end consists of rolling grass-covered hillsides with riparian corridors along local creeks. Existing land uses in the east end portion of the project area consist of agricultural farms and orchards, interspersed with residences and small businesses. The topography of the east end is generally flat with a well-defined riparian corridor along Suisun Creek.

10.1

The Project Sponsor, Solano Transportation Authority, proposes to extend the planned four-lane roadway being constructed as part of the Fairfield Corporate Commons Project about 1.6 miles east across Suisun Creek to connect with Abernathy Road at the I-80/Abernathy Road interchange. A new bridge would be constructed to cross Suisun Creek. East of Suisun Creek the project would be constructed as a four-lane, at-grade roadway. Proposed improvements in the west end consist of extending Business Center Drive as a two-lane roadway westward 1.04 miles from its current terminus to connect with SR 12 West at Red Top Road where a four-way signalized intersection would be constructed. Increases in commercial and residential development in the western portion of the City of Fairfield have generated significant increases in demand on local roadways. In addition to increases in local traffic, regional traffic on I-80 has also increased over the last decade, resulting in frequent periods of heavy congestion and backup on the freeway. The Project is needed to address existing and future traffic congestion on local streets and I-80 in the county and city, and to close gaps in the local circulation network. DFG is identified as a Trustee Agency pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Section 15386 and

10.2

is responsible for the conservation, protection, and management of the State's biological resources. DFG considers the DEIR as a means to understand and appreciate this growth while also developing adequate conservation and protection measures to conserve some of the County's biological natural resources.

10.2
(cont.)

Section 4.5 - BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES, Biological Resources Impact Assessment

Mitigation Measure 4.5-2

The Project will impact 17.7 acres of upland habitat that provides dispersal habitat for California red-legged frog. Compensation for upland impacts is to preserve 10.8 acres of upland around a newly created breeding pond. The compensation:impact ratio should be a minimum of 2:1 for upland impacts and protected in perpetuity. The Project will also impact 0.59-acre of seasonal wetlands and seeps. Compensation for permanent impacts to California red-legged frog aquatic habitat is 2:1 by creating a breeding pond. Based on temporal impacts and uncertainty over the success of the habitat, permanent impacts to California red-legged frog habitat should be mitigated at 3:1 (1.77 acres).

10.3

Mitigation Measure 4.5-6

Any permanent impacts to streams (e.g., footings from a bridge over Suisun Creek) should be mitigated at a 3:1 ratio. Temporary impacts should be mitigated 1:1 on-site by restoring the stream to pre-project conditions.

10.4

Mitigation Measure 4.5-7a

DFG suggests conducting pre-construction surveys for nesting raptors 15 days prior to tree pruning, tree removal, staging, ground disturbing or construction activities. Surveys should be conducted a minimum of 3 separate days during the 15 days prior to disturbance.

10.5

The Swainson's hawk is listed as a threatened species by the California Fish and Game Commission pursuant to the California Endangered Species Act (CESA). Swainson's hawk nests in the Central Valley of California are generally found in scattered trees or along riparian systems adjacent to agricultural fields or pastures. These open fields and pastures are the primary foraging areas where they prey on small rodents and reptiles. The Swainson's hawk population decline has been attributed to loss of native nesting and foraging habitat, and more recently to the loss of suitable nesting trees and the conversion of agricultural lands. Agricultural lands have been converted to urban land uses and incompatible crops.

10.6

Surveys for nesting Swainson's hawks should be conducted up to ¼-mile from project activities in rural areas. If active nests are found, the ¼-mile buffer should be maintained until young have fledged the nest, unless a biological monitor is retained to observe the nest while project activities are conducted (although a 500-foot buffer should still be maintained). If a biological monitor is retained, DFG shall be consulted on monitoring protocols. Trees occupied by all other nesting raptors should have a minimum 500 foot buffer. If any ground nesting birds such as northern harriers or short-eared owls are found during pre-construction surveys, a minimum 500-foot buffer should be established until young have fledged the nest.

To mitigate for the loss of Swainson's hawk foraging habitat, appropriate mitigation shall be provided based on the following ratios:

- For projects within one mile of an active nest tree, provide one acre of land for each acre of development authorized (1:1 ratio).
- For projects within 5 miles of an active nest tree but greater than one mile from the nest tree, provide 0.75-acre of land for each acre of urban development authorized (0.75:1 ratio).
- For projects within 10 miles of an active nest tree but greater than 5 miles from an active nest tree, provide 0.5-acre of land for each acre of urban development authorized (0.5:1 ratio).

Project proponents shall ensure the mitigation lands are protected in perpetuity and shall provide for the long-term management of the lands by funding a management endowment. Swainson's hawk mitigation banks are available in Solano County.

10.6
(cont.)

Mitigation Measure 4.5-7b

If occupied burrowing owl burrows are found during pre-construction surveys, impacts shall be avoided by establishing a buffer of 160 feet during the non-breeding season (September 1 through January 31) or 250 feet during the breeding season (February 1 through August 31) for all project-related construction activities. If occupied burrows are found within 160 feet of project activities and staging areas during the non-breeding season and will be impacted, passive relocation measures shall be implemented according to the Burrowing Owl Consortium Guidelines. Passive relocation shall not occur during the breeding season unless a qualified biologist, approved by DFG, verifies that young have fledged the nest.

10.7

Ms. Janet Adams
October 30, 2007
Page 4

DFG requires mitigation for the loss of burrowing owl habitat by providing 6.5 acres of suitable habitat for every occupied burrow that is passively relocated and/or removed. The 6.5 acres shall be contiguous with known occupied burrowing owl burrows. Project proponents shall ensure the mitigation lands are protected in perpetuity and shall provide for the long-term management of the lands by funding a management endowment. Burrowing owl mitigation banks are available in Solano County.

10.7
(cont.)

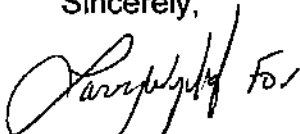
Mitigation Measure 4.5-9

Success criteria for tree replanting should include a minimum 80% survival rate at the end of the 5-year monitoring period.

10.8

If you have any questions, please contact Ms. Anna Holmes, Environmental Scientist, at (209) 948-7163 or Mr. Greg Martinelli, Water Conservation Supervisor, at (707) 944-5570.

Sincerely,



Charles Armor
Regional Manager
Bay Delta Region

cc: State Clearinghouse

Response to Letter 10 – Department of Fish and Game

Comment 10.1. This comment reiterates information provided in the Draft EIR.

The environmental setting and analysis provided in the Draft EIR is consistent with the statements in the comment. No further discussion is necessary.

Comment 10.2. This comment reiterates information provided in the Draft EIR and indicates that the Department of Fish and Game is a Trustee Agency and is responsible for the conservation, protection, and management of the State's biological resources.

No further discussion is necessary.

Comment 10.3. This comment suggests that Mitigation Measure 4.5-2 be revised to show that upland impacts to California red-legged frog be mitigated at a ratio of 2:1 (acres of habitat replaced: acres of habitat impacted), and protected in perpetuity. The comment also suggests that the mitigation ratio for permanent impacts to aquatic habitat of 2:1 be revised to 3:1.

Mitigation Measure 4.5-2 was revised in the Recirculated Draft EIR to reflect that the protected lands for the California red-legged frog be protected in perpetuity and that a total of 35.4 acres of upland around the breeding pond shall be preserved (rather than 10.8 acres as cited in the comment). The preservation of 35.4 acres equates to the 2:1 mitigation ratio requested in the comment. The Mitigation Measure also requires that the breeding pond be mitigated at a higher than 2:1 ratio.

Also please refer to response to comment 7.4 for additional discussion of why STA believes Mitigation 4.5-2 is appropriate and consistent with USFWS policies.

Comment 10.4. This comment recommends that Mitigation Measure 4.5-6 mitigate any permanent impacts to streams (e.g. footings from a bridge over Suisun Creek) be mitigated at a 3:1 ratio and that temporary impacts be mitigated at a 1:1 ratio on-site by restoring the stream to pre-Project conditions.

The new bridge to be constructed across Suisun Creek would span over the creek and not require any footing or other structures to be permanently placed in the creek. The new bridge would however result in the permanent removal of some riparian trees along the banks of Suisun Creek. Mitigation Measure 4.5-5 of the Recirculated Draft EIR is consistent with the recommendation of providing a 3:1 mitigation ratio for permanent impacts to streams. Mitigation Measure 4.5-5 requires 3:1 replacement ratio for any riparian trees that are permanently impacted (removed) by the Project.

Comment 10.5. This comment suggests conducting pre-construction surveys for nesting raptors 15 days prior to tree pruning, tree removal, staging, ground disturbing, or construction activities over a minimum of 3 separate days.

Mitigation Measure 4.5-7a was revised in the Recirculated Draft EIR to reflect this comment.

Comment 10.6. This comment suggests that impacts to Swainson's hawk be addressed and mitigated in the Draft EIR.

The Recirculated Draft EIR was revised to address impacts and mitigation for Swainson's hawk within the Project area. Pages 4.5-13 and 4.5-30 of the Recirculated Draft EIR address the impacts to Swainson's hawk. Mitigation 4.5-9 was also added to mitigate the impacts to this species.

Comment 10.7. This comment suggests that if burrowing owls are found during pre-construction surveys, STA should take specified measures to avoid impacting the burrowing owls. The comment also suggests that STA preserve suitable habitat for certain impacts.

Mitigation 4.5-7b of the Recirculated Draft EIR was revised to reflect this comment.

Comment 10.8. The commenter indicates that success criteria for tree replanting in Mitigation Measure 4.5-9 should include a minimum of 80 percent survival rate at the end of the five year monitoring period.

A Creek Revegetation and Enhancement Plan has been prepared for the North Connector Project which is consistent with this comment. This plan provides a 3:1 replacement ratio for any riparian trees that are impacted by the proposed Project, and describes detailed specifications regarding the installation of replacement plants, success criteria, and a five year maintenance and monitoring prescription. Specifically, the plan requires that all plants shall have 80 percent survival rate at the end of the 5 year monitoring period. With the requirement of the 80 percent survival rate, Mitigation Measure 4.5-9 is sufficient in addressing the criteria for tree replanting as part of the Project. No further discussion is necessary.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
111 GRAND AVENUE
P. O. BOX 23660
OAKLAND, CA 94623-0660
PHONE (510) 286-5900
FAX (510) 286-5903
TTY 711



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October 24, 2007

SOL080376
SOL-80-11.4/17.2
SCH2006112062

Mr. Daryl Hall and Ms. Janet Adams
Solano Transportation Authority
One Harbor Center, Suite 130
Suisun City, CA 94585

Dear Mr. Hall and Ms. Adams:

North Connector Project – Draft Environmental Impact Report

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Department) in the environmental review process for the North Connector Project. The following comments are based on the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR):

System and Regional Planning

The potential avoidance of the truck scales by trucks that would use the North Connector should be analyzed.

11.1

Traffic Operations

There are inconsistencies between Traffic Operations/Impact Report dated January 2006 and the Draft Environmental Impact Report dated September 2007 (i.e. projected traffic volumes 2030 versus 2020 respectively). Under Appendix A, it states the Traffic Impact Report was amended in August 2007. The Department never received a copy of that report. The Traffic Impact Report is a support document for the draft EIR and should contain consistent information.

11.2

Dual turn lanes need to be provided at signalized intersections with turning movements that exceed 300 vehicles per hour where applicable. See Highway Design Manual (HDM) sections 405.2 and 405.3. It is available at the following website address: <http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/oppd/hdm/hdmtoc.htm> Furthermore, if the proposed number of through travel lanes cannot accommodate the estimated forecasted traffic, additional through travel lanes may be required.

11.3

The proposed traffic signals at intersections within the State right of way (ROW), shown on table 4.2-3 of the DEIR must satisfy signal warrants using the latest edition of the "Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices" (MUTCD). It is available at the following website address:

11.4

http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/traffops/signtech/mutcdsupp/ca_mutcd.htm Once the final traffic study is completed, the calculations supporting each applicable warrant must be submitted to the Department's Office of Traffic Operations for review and approval.

Mr. Hall and Ms. Adams
October 24, 2007
Page 2

Please coordinate traffic signal design work with the Department's Office of Signal Operations.

11.5

Improvement projects scheduled on State Route 12 (SR 12) and Interstate 80 (I-80) located within the limits of the proposed North Connector project should be addressed in the DEIR (Sheet 4.2-10). Please contact the Department for information regarding construction activities and for coordinating construction schedules. Mitigation measures will be required as part of the project and constructed at the same time.

11.6

Highway Operations

On page 1-4 there are two additional alternatives (other than "Project" and "No Build"), which are the Improvement of Existing Roadways Alternative and the Enhanced Bus Service Alternative. The general descriptions provided indicate that the additional alternatives may meet the Need and Purpose for the Project (Page 3-1) "*to provide improved circulation so that local traffic would not have to use I-80 for local trips thereby improving traffic congestion on I-80 within the Project area.*" Were operational analyses or other studies conducted to evaluate the additional alternatives?

11.7

The proposed project would restrict left-turns from northbound Chadbourne Road/Abernathy Road to the westbound I-80 on-ramp (intersection #19). This displaced traffic would be expected to make a premature left-turn at intersection #22 to enter westbound SR 12, which leads to westbound I-80 from Chadbourne Road. From Figure 4.2-5, the 2020 No Build Traffic Volumes from the left-turn movement to be omitted from intersection #19 (AM = 229 and PM = 157) added to the specified left-turn movement in intersection #22 (AM = 257 and PM = 315), yield a combined AM traffic volume of 486 AM and 472 PM. Due to the location of these two intersections, it does not appear that the proposed project would affect the left-turn volumes discussed here. Therefore, the 2020 With Project Volumes (Fig. 4.2-7) for the left-turn at intersection #22 should be roughly equal to the combined (AM) PM volume. However, the AM (PM) volume of this left-turning movement is 885 (461). The AM volume appears to be high. Please explain or reconcile this discrepancy.

11.8

Are the left-turn storage capacities for each study intersection based on the expected 95th percentile queues? In particular, the left-turn storage capacity for Intersection #22 should be sufficient to hold the expected 95th percentile queue.

11.9

For Intersection #9, though the Existing Conditions indicate that this is a stop controlled intersection, it is now signalized.

11.10

Signal Operations

Intersection #15, I-80 eastbound and Suisun Valley Road for Year 2020 with Project at PM peak-hour traffic will be operating at Level of Service (LOS) "E", which is unacceptable for a state highway. Mitigation measures are needed to improve intersection #15 to LOS "D" or better.

11.11

Mr. Hall and Ms. Adams
October 24, 2007
Page 3

Hydraulics

The report did not state the proposed improvements for the drainage facilities. Please provide a summary of these proposed improvements. Please state what drainage design criteria will be followed by Solano County, the City of Fairfield, and in Department's right of way, respectively.

11.12

The report did not state whether or not the project would cause impacts or whether the existing culvert could contain the design storm event. Please describe the impacts of the new bridge, and explain what the proposed project will use for hydrology calculations. Also, provide the Rainfall Frequency for the existing drainage facilities (25-year storm for the roadside ditches and 100-year storm for the cross culverts). Please describe any off-site drainage systems that will be impacted by the proposed project.

11.13

11.14

On page 3-2, generally Best Management Practices (BMP) treatments are designed for local agencies or the Department. You may need to rephrase the sentence "*other drainage swales and culverts/pipelines requirements aside from those in the Regional Water Quality Control Board's (RWQCB) National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) C.3 Provision.*" Please provide the requirements for Solano County and the land development requirements for road improvement standards within the Department's ROW.

11.15

On page 3-3, is the detention basin that will be constructed within the proposed project limits, along the right-of-way, solely for the collection and treatment of storm water runoff from the roadway? If so, what detention basin would be used for flood control and additional flood detention storage? Additionally, describe the project's impacts to on-site and off-site storm water runoff. The length of the span of the pre-cast concrete girder bridge was not specified. Please provide this information and specify the design standard specifications for the bridge and how the design meets those standards.

11.16

On page 3-4, the meaning of this sentence is not clear: "*Under existing conditions, the East End portion of the Project area is flooded during a 50-year flood event; however the Project would remain subject to flooding during a larger than 10-year flood event, with the exception of the bridge that would not be subject flooding during the 50-year flood event*" Is this a 10-year or 100-year storm event? What are the bridge design standards? Show the state's right of way for the East End portion of the proposed project.

11.17

On page 4.9-1, the introduction to the report states that WRECO prepared the Flooding Study for Suisun Creek and CH2M Hill prepared the Hydraulics Report; however, the References section of the Report states that CH2M Hill prepared the Floodplain Analysis Report and WRECO prepared the Water Quality Report. Please revise accordingly.

11.18

Mr. Hall and Ms. Adams
October 24, 2007
Page 4

This statement is not clear: *"The Project basis of design for the drainage and flood impacts was the 10-year storm event consistent within the latest published FEMA Study (Solano County, May 2001) for the goal of detention to provide a greater than 10 year level protection."* The FEMA Study is only a reference tool to obtain information about the area. The 10-year storm event is the flood plain mapping from FEMA for local agencies. WRECO is working with SCWA (Sonoma County Water Agency) to come up with a Q10 detention basin, but may not be true for the bridge. Is the proposed Project following the drainage criteria by Department's standards, Solano County, or the City of Fairfield?

11.19

Raines Drain, Jameson Creek, and Suisun Creek add up to three surface streams. Please rephrase this sentence to include "Raines Drain". It is part of the source of flooding in the region (Ledge wood overflows to Suisun Creek and then to Raines Drain).

11.20

Please use updated CWA Section 303(d) list, entitled "Proposed 303(d) List of Water Quality Limited Segments accordingly.

11.21

Page 4.9-2: In regards to the levee development statement, please state who previously is responsible for the levee development.

11.22

Page 4.9-3: The capacity of the I-80 culvert is limited by the inadequate downstream capacity of the Raines Drain. Please revise accordingly. There are tripled 42-inch cross-drainage culverts, plus a 66-inch cross drainage culvert, according to WRECO's Flooding Study for Suisun Creek at Interstate 80. Please revise the text *"In 1973, the Raines Drain under-crossing was upgraded to a 66-inch-diameter RCP"*, to reflect the correct information.

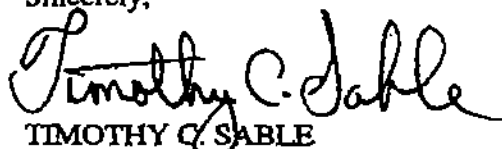
11.23

On page 4.9-5, please include the beneficial uses from the San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board, Basin Plan.

11.24

Should you have any questions regarding this letter, please call Christian Bushong of my staff at (510) 286 -5606.

Sincerely,



TIMOTHY C. SABLE
District Branch Chief
IGR/CEQA

c: State Clearinghouse

Response to Letter 11 – Department of Transportation (Caltrans)

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) submitted Comment Letter 2 on the Recirculated Draft EIR which includes many of the same comments Caltrans submitted in their comment letter (dated October 24, 2007) on the Draft EIR, issued on September 10, 2007. Where comments in this letter are identical to the comments contained in Letter 2, the response refers to Comment letter 2. Where comments in this letter are different, responses are provided below.

Comment 11.1. Refer to response to Comments 1.2 and 4.6 for discussion of the truck scales.

Page 6-3 of Chapter 6.0, CEQA Required Conclusions, of the Recirculated Draft EIR was revised to address the Cordelia Truck Scales under the I-80/I-680/SR12 Interchange Project.

Comment 11.2. Refer to response to Comment 2.3.

Comment 11.3. Refer to response to Comment 2.4.

Comment 11.4. Refer to response to Comment 2.5.

Comment 11.5. All traffic signal and roadway design work for facilities within the States right-of-way will be done in accordance with all Caltrans design requirements. The Caltrans' Office of Signal Operations will be consulted as part of the traffic signal design work and will be provided copies of Project plans for review, as it standard practice.

Comment 11.6. Refer to response to Comment 2.2.

Comment 11.7. Refer to response to Comment 2.6.

Comment 11.8. Refer to response to Comment 2.7.

Comment 11.9. Refer to response to Comment 2.8.

Comment 11.10. Refer to response to Comment 2.9.

Comment 11.11. Mitigation Measure 4.2-2 of the Recirculated Draft EIR was added to address this comment. Mitigation Measure 4.2-2 requires the construction of a double left turn land at the intersection of I-80 Eastbound and Suisun Valley Road to improve the Level of Service (LOS) E to D, which would be consistent with the Solano County General Plan policies.

Comment 11.12. Refer to response to Comment 2.14.

Comment 11.13. Refer to response to Comment 2.15.

Comment 11.14. Refer to response to Comment 2.16.

Comment 11.15. Refer to response to Comment 2.17.

Comment 11.16. Refer to response to Comment 2.18.

Comment 11.17. Refer to response to Comment 2.19.

Comment 11.18. Refer to response to Comment 2.20.

Comment 11.19. Refer to response to Comment 2.21.

Comment 11.20. Text on page 4.9-1 through 4.9-2 of the Recirculated Draft EIR has been revised to reflect the additional information.

Comment 11.21. Refer to response to Comment 2.22.

Comment 11.22. Refer to response to Comment 2.23.

Comment 11.23. Refer to response to Comment 2.24.

Comment 11.24. Beneficial water uses outlined in by the San Francisco Bay Regional 1995 Water Quality Control Plan (Basin Plan) include but are not limited to agricultural supply, marine habitat, and municipal and domestic supply. A description of the beneficial uses was added to the Recirculated Draft EIR on page 4.9-5.



Department of
Resource Management
 675 Texas Street, Ste. 5500
 Fairfield, California 94533

Planning Services Division
 Phone: (707) 784-6765 / Fax: (707) 784-4805

Mike Yankovich
 Planning Program Manager

October 25, 2007

STA, North Connector Project
 One Harbor Center, Suite 130
 Suisun City, CA 94585

RE: Comments on the North Connector Draft EIR

The Solano County Planning Division is in receipt of the Draft EIR for the North Connector Project. We appreciate the opportunity to provide comments on the environmental document. Our comments primarily relate to impacts on Land Use and Agriculture for the unincorporated portion of the project, and are listed below:

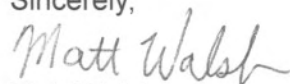
- The document references the parcels, encumbered by a Williamson Act contract, that will be effected by the proposed project (pages 4.1-10 & 4.1-11). The impact on the parcels, notably on the East End, may not be considered significant due to there being no "physical change". However, it is important to note that the bisecting of these parcels by the new road will likely make it much more difficult to continue the farming operations on the smaller segregated sections on the south side of the route. Should these parcels cease agricultural activity, a violation of the Williamson Act and breach of contract would likely be in effect. Further, for prime contracted lands, the minimum parcel size is 10 acres. Contracted parcels with a net acreage of less than 10 acres as a result of the proposed road alignment would be considered nonconforming pursuant to provisions of the Williamson Act.

12.1
- Though not a CEQA concern, it should be noted that legal parcels affected by the new road alignment will not be considered subdivided pursuant to the Subdivision Map Act as a result of the project. "Remnant" lands, resulting from the bisection of the alignment, are still legally part of the original parent parcel, and must be treated as such with regard to issuance of permits and other entitlements.

12.2
- Staff concurs with the EIR that the proposed project is consistent with the Solano County General Plan. As stated, the County will be pursuing a textual amendment to the General Plan, which will clarify the project's consistency as it pertains to farmable units.

12.3

If STA has any questions or concerns regarding this letter, please feel free to contact me at (707) 784-6765.

Sincerely,

 Matt Walsh
 Principal Planner

Response to Letter 12 – Solano County Department of Resource Management

Comment 12.1. This comment indicates that the Project's bisection of parcels that are currently under Williamson Act contract by the North Connector Project could change the use or diminish the size of these parcels, so that they would not conform to the Williamson Act requirements.

The DEIR and the Recirculated Draft EIR considered this issue. The Recirculated Draft EIR states on page 4.1-17, impact 4.1-1 that:

“the new roadway could have indirect impacts to an additional 10.33 acres of Prime Farmland through the creation of non-farmable portions of existing parcels, the continued agricultural use of which could be negatively affected by their limited size and increased proximity to the new roadway.”

As stated on page 4.1-15 of the Recirculated Draft EIR, lands under Williamson Act contracts in the East End are designated as Prime Farmlands. Thus, the 10.33 acres of Prime Farmland discussed above includes the acreage under Williamson Act contract, as shown in Table 4.1-2 of the Recirculated Draft EIR. In response to this potential impact to property under Williamson Act contract, Mitigation Measure 4.1-1 will require the that STA acquire conservation easement(s) for 1.0 acre of Prime Farmland within the County for every acre of land considered impacted within the Project that is designated as Prime farmland. As such, this issue has been adequately addressed in the EIR.

Comment 12.2. This comment states that legal parcels affected or bisected by the Project roadway will not be considered subdivided and will still be treated as part of the original parcel.

The comment is noted. Page 4.1-13, paragraph 2, of the Recirculated Draft EIR was revised to reflect this comment.

Comment 12.3. This comment states that County staff concurs with the EIR that the North Connector Project is consistent with the Solano County General Plan and states that the County will be pursuing a textual amendment to the General Plan, which will clarify the Project's consistency as it pertains to farmable units.

The comment is noted. Page 4.1-13 of the Recirculated Draft EIR was revised to reflect this comment.



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DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

October 26, 2007

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Harry T. Price
707.428.7395
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Jack Balson
707.429.6298
Councilmembers
707.429.6298
Marilyn Farley
Frank Kardos
John Mraz

City Manager
Kevin O'Rourke
707.428.7400

City Attorney
Greg Stepanovich
707.428.7419

City Clerk
Arlena Cortright
707.428.7384

City Treasurer
Oscar G. Reyes, Jr.
707.428.7496

DEPARTMENTS

Community Services
707.428.7465

Finance
707.428.7490

Fire
707.428.7375

Human Resources
707.428.7394

Planning &
Development
707.428.7461

Police
707.428.7551

Public Works
707.428.7485

Solano Transportation Authority
c/o Janet Adams
One Harbor Center, Suite 130
Suisun City, CA 94585

Re: Draft Environmental Impact Report for the North Connector Project

Dear Ms. Adams:

Thank you for providing the City of Fairfield with the opportunity to review the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) prepared for the North Connector Project. The City offers the following comments on the DEIR.

1. Table 1-1 Summary

Mitigation Measure 4.2-2: This mitigation measure should require the preparation of a Traffic Management Plan, which would require, among other things, that the STA keep a minimum number of through lanes and turning lanes open, and notify emergency service providers of road closures and detours that would affect emergency access. 13.1

Mitigation Measures 4.8-3 and 4.8-8: Both of these mitigation measures address seismic-related ground failure and liquefaction—seemingly requiring two different mitigation measures for one impact. Please clarify the distinction between these two measures. Alternately, these two different mitigation measures could be collapsed into one mitigation measure. 13.2

2. Land Use and Agricultural Resources (Section 4.1)

Open Space Conservation Easement: On page 4.1-9, the EIR should clarify that the removal of the recreational facilities in the Fairfield Linear Park and the closing of this area to public use are consistent with the terms of the open space conservation easement encumbering this property. 13.3

Williamson Act Contracts: On page 4.1-10, the EIR states that the cancellation of Williamson Act contracts will have a less than significant impact on the 13.4

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ■ HOUSING ■ NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION ■ PLANNING ■ REDEVELOPMENT

environment. This discussion would thus be more appropriate in the list of "Less than Significant Impacts" starting on page 4.1-11.

13.4
(cont.)

Conversion of Farmland to Non-Agricultural Use: We would like to see a discussion of how the smaller remainder pieces created by the Project, which are too small for profitable agricultural use, will be utilized in the future.

3. **Biological Resources (Section 4.5)**

Conflict with a Habitat Conservation Plan (Page 4.1-17): This section should clarify that the EIR does not need to discuss potential conflicts with the Solano Multi-species Habitat Conservation Plan because the plan is still in draft form, not because compliance with the Plan is not mandatory for the STA and the County. CEQA does not distinguish between mandatory and voluntary plans.

13.5

4. **Population and Housing (Section 4.11):** On page 4.11-7, the EIR concludes that the Project will have a less than significant impact on population growth in the area. However, this finding appears to be dependant on the implementation of Mitigation Measures described in the Land Use and Agricultural Resources section. Thus, the section should explicitly refer to and summarize the mitigation measures that will mitigate the impact of the project on population growth.


13.6

5. **Public Services and Recreation (Section 4.12):** Page 4.12-6 addresses whether the Project will require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities. This section adequately addresses the impact of the Project on the recreational facilities in the area. However, this section should also specifically address the potential physical impacts that the removal of the walkway and bridge in the Fairfield Linear Park, and the construction of a walkway on the new multi-use will have on the environment. Since the walkway will be constructed concurrently with the rest of the project, these construction impacts are adequately addressed in other sections of the EIR. However, it would be helpful to directly reference the applicable mitigation measures here.

13.7

If you should have any questions, please feel free to contact Joe Lucchio of my staff at (707) 428-7647. Thank you again for the opportunity to comment on the DEIR.

Sincerely,



SEAN P. QUINN
Director

SPQ:JAL:ccs

Response to Letter 13 – City of Fairfield

Comment 13.1. This comment suggests that Mitigation Measure 4.2-2 require the preparation of a Traffic Management Plan.

Mitigation Measure 4.2-1 of the Recirculated Draft EIR was revised to address this comment and now requires the preparation of a Transportation Management Plan prior to beginning Project construction.

Comment 13.2. This comment indicates that both Mitigation Measures 4.8-3 and 4.8-8 address seismic related ground failure and liquefaction, and requests that these Mitigation Measures be clarified.

As these Mitigation Measures are redundant, they have been combined. This change is reflected in Mitigation Measure 4.8-3 on page 4.8-6 of the Recirculated Draft EIR.

Comment 13.3. This comment requests that the EIR clarify that the removal of the recreational facilities in the Fairfield Linear Park and that the closing of this area are consistent with the terms of the open space conservation easement.

Refer to response to Comment 3.1.

Comment 13.4. This comment indicates that the discussion of Williamson Act contracts on page 4.1-10 of the Draft EIR should be moved to the Less than Significant Impacts section.

The comment is noted. Page 4.1-14 of the Recirculated Draft EIR has been revised to reflect this comment. The smaller non-farmable portions of existing parcels created by the Project as referenced in the comment have been identified in the Recirculated Draft EIR as indirect impacts (see Figure 4.1-3 and Table 4.1-5). These non-farmable portions of existing parcels have been included in the calculation of mitigation required under Mitigation Measure 4.1-1. The future use of these areas is speculative but would need to be consistent with the land use and zoning designations on these properties.

Comment 13.5. This comment indicates that a discussion of the Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) is not necessary because the HCP is in draft form.

The Recirculated Draft EIR on page 4.1-8, under Solano Multi Species Habitat Conservation Plan, was revised to reflect this comment.

Comment 13.6. This comment indicates that Chapter 4.11, Population and Housing, should refer to and summarize the mitigation measures within Chapter 4.1, Land Use and Agricultural Resources, in the discussion of the Project's impact on population growth.

The discussion in the Recirculated Draft EIR on page 4.11-7 was revised in response to this comment.

Comment 13.7. This comment is superseded by the City of Fairfield's letter dated April 22, 2008. Refer to Appendix B and response to Comment 3.1.

19 September 2007

Solano Transportation Authority
Janet Adams, Director of Projects, STA
One Harbor Center, Ste 130
Suisun, CA 94585

RE: Bay Area Ridge Trail Council's Comments on the North Connector DEIR

Dear Solano Transportation Authority,

Attached please find the Bay Area Ridge Trail Council's comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) of the North Connector Project. The comments are in reference to the non-motorized access of the project's DEIR and are not meant to nor should be interpreted as support for the project itself. Please keep us informed of all future opportunities for public input.

The Bay Area Ridge Trails Council (Ridge Trail Council) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Our mission is to complete the Bay Area Ridge Trail, a public trail route, on the ridgelines surrounding the San Francisco Bay. As planned, the Bay Area Ridge Trail (Ridge Trail) will connect public open spaces and parklands in the nine Bay Area counties and will provide over 500 miles of ridgeline vistas. Currently, there are 305 miles of dedicated Ridge Trail serving the recreational needs of hikers, equestrians, mountain cyclists, trail runners, and outdoors enthusiasts of all ages. The Ridge Trail receives widespread support from local agencies and organizations throughout the San Francisco Bay Area, including hundreds of volunteers helping to build and maintain sections of the Ride Trail. Funding support for the Ridge Trail has been generously given by individuals, groups, cities, counties, park departments and districts, open space districts, corporations, foundations, and state agencies, including the California Coastal Conservancy and the California Department of Parks and Recreation, and through statewide Propositions 12 and 40.

The Solano County Board of Supervisors, along with the cities of Fairfield, Benicia and Vallejo, have adopted resolutions of support for the Ridge Trail and share the goal of completing it in Solano County. Currently, there are 22 miles of dedicated Ridge Trail in Solano County including segments in Blue Rock Hills Park, Hiddenbrooke Open Space Preserve, Lynch Canyon Open Space Preserve and Rockville Hills Regional Park to Green Valley Road near Reservoir Road.

The Ridge Trail Council's comments on the DEIR are listed in Attachment 1 of this letter.

If you have any questions about these comments, please contact me by e-mail at ridgetrailnorth@comcast.net or by calling 707.823.3236.

Sincerely,

Dee Swanhuysen, North Bay Trail Director

Attachments: 1

CC: Janet McBride, Bay Area Ridge Trail Council ED

Attachment 1 (3 pages)

Bay Area Ridge Trail Council's Comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) of the North Connector Project.

The Bay Area Ridge Trail Council recommends the following changes be incorporated into the project.

A. Whereas the DEIR is correct in stating that a currently open and dedicated segment of the Ridge Trail is located in Rockville Hills Regional Park, this study and all future CEQA related documents for this project need to add the following references to other open and dedicated segments of the Bay Area Ridge Trail in the project area and vicinity:

14.1

1. Rockville Hills Regional Park continuing along Green Valley Road to near Reservoir Road at Green Valley Road.
2. Hiddenbrooke Open Space Preserve to McGary Road at Highway 80/American Canyon overcrossing.
3. Lynch Canyon Open Space Preserve to Lynch Road at McGary Road.

B. The North Connector Project should include a Class I multi-use path that will be designed to safely serve hikers, bicyclists and equestrians that will provide a connection within the project area to the existing and proposed Ridge Trail segments as listed below:

14.2

1. The existing Ridge Trail segment in Rockville Hills Regional Park that currently ends on Green Valley Road near Reservoir Road.
2. The proposed Ridge Trail segment that is being planned along McGary Road, connecting with Red Top Road and continuing both across Highway 12 and paralleling Highway 12 toward Napa. The Ridge Trail Council is currently working with the City of Fairfield and the Solano County to provide a multipurpose path along McGary Road that will connect to Red Top Road and with Napa and Solano County's to provide a parallel path along Highway 12.

There is an existing Class I path along Green Valley Road that intersects with Highway 12 on the north side of Hwy 12 near Red Top Road. The Solano CTP Countywide Bicycle Plan calls for a Class I path from Red Top Road to the Napa County Line. Because there are existing and planned Class I paths connecting to the project area, Class I paths should be included within the project area.

14.3

Alternatively, the DEIR needs to identify how the Ridge Trail alignment connecting to the Ridge Trail segments listed above will be accommodated with a Class I path in the project area if not by the North Connector Project itself.

14.4

Comments supporting our recommendations for the North Bay Connector Project.

A. A path along the West End would also serve towards meeting Solano County and Fairfield General Plan objectives and policies. The Solano County General Plan Land Use and Circulation Element, Chapter IV, states, “although Solano County contains a large variety of recreational opportunities, presently there is no system of riding, hiking or bicycling trails to connect these attractions or to link attractions to urban areas.” This path would work towards providing non-motorized connectivity for Fairfield residents from Fairfield’s northern side of I-80 in Green Valley to Fairfield’s southern side of I-80.

14.5

B. The Ridge Trail Council’s recommendations are supported by the Solano County and City of Fairfield General Plans.

14.6

Solano County General Plan references:

1. Solano County Transportation Objective 3: “Establish a system of trails, bikeways, and walkways as an alternate mode of travel which would provide convenient and safe movement of non-motorized traffic.”
2. Park and Recreation Element Policy 7 B: “The County shall encourage development of linkages (such as riding, hiking and biking trails) between population centers and regional recreational facilities.”
3. Park and Recreation Element Objective 6: “Plan and develop regional recreational facilities which offer opportunities for a wide variety of activities.”
4. Countywide Planning and Coordination Policy 1C: “The County shall encourage and support other public agencies and private groups in the development of regional recreation facilities that are consistent with Park and Recreation Element objectives.”
5. Countywide Planning and Coordination Policy 2B: “The County shall actively participate in the planning of projects that have regional recreation benefits.”
6. Land Use and Circulation Element: “Obtain maximum benefit and efficient use of existing and future public facilities and services and provide opportunities for social and cultural activities and services for all residents of Solano County.”
7. Land Use and Circulation Element, Chapter IV, Policy 7: “The County will plan and, if feasible, jointly undertake with other jurisdictions programs to secure inter-regional parks, other recreational opportunities, and Federal assistance for their development.”
8. Park and Recreation Element Objective 1: “Coordinate the planning and development of regional recreational facilities between federal, state, and local agencies within Solano County.”
9. Park and Recreation Element Objective 7: “Provide for the regional recreation needs of the County.”
10. Park and Recreation Element Policy 7 D: “The County shall provide technical assistance to organizations and groups who want to develop and/or operate regional parks and recreation facilities.”

City of Fairfield General Plan references:

1. Open Space Program OS 11.4 A: “Actively promote ridgetop and hillside trails along major north-south ridges connecting Benicia and eastern Vallejo, and between Benicia and Green Valley to become major links to the Bay Area Ridge Trails System.”
2. Circulation Objective 9: “Promote maximum opportunities for biking by continuing to develop and maintain a safe, convenient bikeway system which facilitates bicycle travel for commuting, recreation or other purposes.”
3. Circulation Policy CI 9.1: “Expand the City’s north-south and east-west bikeway network through the use of Class I, II and III bikeways.”
4. Circulation Policy CI 9.2: “Provide bikeways which link residential areas with major employment centers, parks, open space areas and other recreational amenities, educational facilities, and commercial areas.”
5. Circulation Policy CI 9.5: “Continue to provide multi-use trails which accommodate pedestrian and bicycle use where appropriate and work toward providing separate trail facilities for pedestrian and bicycle use.”
6. Circulation Policy CI 9.6: “Cooperate with surrounding jurisdictions and regional agencies to establish a countywide bikeway network throughout Solano County which provides linkages with regional networks.”
7. Circulation Objective 10: “Provide pedestrian facilities throughout the City to encourage walking as an alternative to short-distance vehicle travel.”
8. Circulation Policy CI 10.1: “Provide pedestrian facilities that are safe and pleasant to use.”
9. Open Space Objective 11: “Maximize public value from open space for recreational uses.”
10. Open Space Policy OS 11.2: “Promote trails systems through the open spaces, and pedestrian/bicycle linkages throughout the City.”
11. Open Space Policy OS 11.3: “Require recreation and trails programs as a condition of approval for future development projects. Plans should provide access to trail heads located on adjacent public lands.”
12. Open Space Policy OS 11.4: “Actively participate with other governmental entities (cities, county, state, and federal) or agencies in the acquisition, management, and use of recreational/open space lands and facilities of mutual interest.”
13. Open Space Program OS 11.4 B: “Actively promote trails for hikers, bicyclists, and equestrians in the Green Valley Falls/Vallejo Lakes Planning Area that link the reservoirs, Green Valley Falls, Lower Green Valley, and the Rockville Hills area.”
14. Open Space Policy OS 11.5: “Where a project involves potential open space, natural resource reserves, or recreational lands of interest to more than one entity, the City shall work cooperatively with the other involved agencies.”

Response to Letter 14 – Bay Area Ridge Trail

Comment 14.1. This comment has indicated that the EIR reference the following open and dedicated segments of the Bay Area Ridge Trail exist in the Project area and vicinity:

1. Rockville Hills Regional Park continuing along Green Valley road to near Reservoir Road at Green Valley Road.
2. Hiddenbrooke Open Space Preserve to McGary Road at Highway 80/American Canyon Overcrossing.
3. Lynch Canyon Open Space Preserve to Lynch Road at McGary Road.

Page 4.12-3 of the Recirculated Draft EIR was revised to reflect this comment.

Comment 14.2. This comment requests that the Project should include a Class I multi-use path that would connect the Project area to the existing Ridge Trail segment in Rockville Hills Regional Park and the proposed Ridge Trail that is planned along McGary Road adjacent to SR12.

The existing Ridge Trail multi-use path in Rockville Hills Regional Park is located to the northeast of the Project, and would not be severed by the North Connector Project. The discussion of the Ridge Trail on page 4.12-7 of the Recirculated Draft EIR demonstrates that construction of the Project is not anticipated to impact the ability to extend the Ridge Trail through the Project area, but rather may facilitate the implementation of the trail by creating a signalized intersection at the proposed SR12 West/North Connector/Red Top Road intersection. STA shall coordinate with the Bay Area Ridge Trail Council during the design of the West End to ensure the Ridge Trail is not precluded and thereby will allow or facilitate the future bicycle and pedestrian connectivity through the Project area.

Comment 14.3. This comment states that because there are proposed and existing Class I multi-use paths connecting with the Project area, a Class I path in the Project area is needed to serve these Class I paths.

Presently, a bicycle path extends from Green Valley Road and runs along I-80 up to the vicinity of Red Top Road and SR12 West. Because this bicycle path currently exists in the Project area, there is no need to construct a new Class I path. The Project will, however, reconstruct the existing western terminus of the existing bicycle path and extend it to connect with the proposed 4-way signalized intersection at SR12/Red Top Road/North Connector, as discussed on page 4.12-7 of the Recirculated Draft EIR. The new signalized intersection at SR12 West/Red Top Road/North Connector would provide an improved way of crossing SR12 West and would allow bicyclists and pedestrians to safely access Red Top Road and cross SR12 West to points further west and south of the Project area.

In addition, the West End of the Project from Business Center Drive to SR12 would be constructed with 10-foot outside shoulders. Refer to Figure 3-6, Cross Section of West End Near Red Top Road, of the Recirculated Draft EIR for an illustration. Roadways with 10-foot outside shoulders would be equivalent to a Class III bicycle facility. Thus, bicyclists that did not want to use the existing Class I bicycle path along I-80 could ride along the Project utilizing the 10-foot shoulder area.

Comment 14.4. This comment requests that the EIR identify how the Ridge Trail will be accommodated with a Class I path in the Project area if it is not included as part of the North Connector Project.

As discussed on page 4.12-7 of the Recirculated Draft EIR, the STA shall continue to coordinate with the Bay Area Ridge Trail Council during the final design phase of the West End to ensure the Ridge Trail is not precluded. The Project would not create a barrier to the Ridge Trail nor would it sever existing path connections, such as between Green Valley Road and SR12 West. Rather the Project would provide an improved way of crossing SR12 West by providing a signalized intersection that pedestrians and bicyclists could use to safely cross SR12.

Comment 14.5. This comment indicates that the path along the West End would serve towards meeting Solano County and Fairfield General Plan objectives and policies regarding land use circulation.

This comment is noted. No further response is required.

Comment 14.6. This comment lists several Solano County and City of Fairfield General Plan policies that support the states that the Bay Area Ridge Trail Council's recommendations.

The Recirculated Draft EIR incorporates the relevant policies and goals from the Solano County and City of Fairfield General Plans, as seen on pages 4.12-4 through 4.12-5. The Project maintains consistency with the policies discussed in the Recirculated Draft EIR.

**Comments on
September 2007 Draft Environmental Impact Report
North Connector Project**

Submitted by
Greenbelt Alliance

October 23, 2007

1 Introduction

These comments are submitted on behalf of Greenbelt Alliance, a non-profit organization whose members include residents living near the proposed North Connector Project. Greenbelt Alliance believes, based on credible and substantial evidence, that the proposed North Connector Project (“Project” or “Proposed Project”) described in the Draft Environmental Impact Report (“DEIR”) will have significant negative impacts on the environment and the quality of life for residents living near the Project and on users of nearby recreational areas, including loss of prime agricultural land, loss of a portion of Linear Park, and increases in vehicular travel and thus increases in greenhouse gas emissions. These negative impacts and the deficiencies of the DEIR are discussed further herein.

15.1

2 Project Objectives Are Inconsistent With Relevant Plans and Policies.

Under CEQA, the Project should be consistent with all relevant plans and policies; such consistency is an important means of identifying significant environmental impacts. *See* 14 Cal. Code Regs. § 15125(d). The DEIR states that the purpose of the Project “is to create additional east-west capacity north of Interstate 80 (I-80) for local traffic which currently must use I-80. (DEIR at 1-1). “The Project is needed to address existing and future traffic congestion on local streets and I-80 in the County and City, and to close gaps in the local circulation network.” (*Id.* at 3-1). The Project components include construction of a new local roadway to the north of I-80, through areas of prime farm land and grazing land and through an existing park. As discussed in detail below, the objectives of the Project are inconsistent and contrary to various County and City policies.

15.2

2.1 The Project Objectives Are Inconsistent with the Solano County General Plan and City of Fairfield Land Use Policies.

The Solano County General Plan Land Use and Circulation Element contains several goals and development strategies that are incompatible with the North Connector Project. These include: (1) managing and preserving the diverse natural resources of the County for the use and enrichment of the lives of present and future generations¹; (2) providing and maintaining a safe,

15.3

¹ Goal 2

economical, and efficient circulation and transportation system to ensure adequate multi-modal movement of people and goods within, to, and from, the County while incurring the least social, economic, and environmental harm to existing or planned activities and land uses²; and (3) encourage land use development patterns and circulation and transportation systems which minimize energy consumption.³

Similarly, Fairfield's General Plan Land Use policies and objectives seek to: (1) encourage the preservation of agricultural land surrounding the City and permanently preserve agriculture in the Suisun Valley⁴; (2) preserve identified prominent topographical features, including ridgelines, steep slopes and hillsides; and natural features such as tree stands and riparian areas⁵; and (3) have development of identified hillside areas be sensitive to preserve natural features.⁶

By its very nature as a road construction project, the North Connector Project places emphasis on development that necessitates automobile use. As discussed further below, such road projects are growth and traffic inducing and will not achieve the land preservation goals articulated in either the County General Plan or the City of Fairfield's General Plan. Greenbelt Alliance urges the Solano Transportation Authority ("STA") to consider additional feasible alternatives other than the construction of yet another road. As discussed further below, the toll of the automobile on human health and the environment make it imperative that increasing vehicular mobility not always be the first choice in addressing traffic congestion.

15.3
(Cont.)

2.2 The Project Objectives Are Inconsistent with the Solano County General Plan Agricultural Land Use Policies and the City of Fairfield Farmland Policies.

15.4

The Solano County General Plan contains the following objectives regarding agricultural land use which also contradict the goals of the North Connector Project: (1) preserve the County's high quality soils and protect and maintain essential agricultural lands including areas which possess unique characteristics for the raising of specialty crops⁷; (2) preserve and maintain essential agricultural lands including intensive agricultural areas comprised of high quality soils and irrigated lands and extensive agricultural areas with unique or significant dry land farming or grazing activities⁸; (3) encourage the formation and retention of agricultural parcels of sufficient size to be maintained as a farmable unit⁹; and (4) lands with the "Agricultural" designations may

² Goal 6

³ Objectives 2

⁴ Policy LU 2.1

⁵ Objective LU 15

⁶ Objective LU 16.

⁷ See p. 30 of the General Plan.

⁸ Policy 1

⁹ Policy 2

be re-designated to “Park & Recreation” only for public recreation and public open space uses and only if the uses permitted by the new designations will not interfere with or be in conflict with agricultural operations.¹⁰

The City of Fairfield’s General Plan has similar farmland policies. Such policies include: (1) permanently preserve productive agricultural lands within the Suisun Valley by continuing to direct new urban development away from the Suisun Valley¹¹; (2) cooperatively work with farmers, property owners, universities, colleges, and agricultural organizations and agencies to enhance the viability of agricultural uses and activities¹²; and (3) development shall not encroach upon or consume productive cropland in areas such as the Suisun Valley.¹³

15.4
(Cont.)

The North Connector Project will result in a reduction in size of 16 of the 18 parcels on the East End that are zoned for agriculture. (DEIR at 4.1-13). Construction of the East End will create five remainder parcels that, because of their small size and location, will not be considered farmable. (*Id.*). It is a non-sequitur that the DEIR later declares that there is “no evidence that the Project will contribute to the extended vacancy, deferred maintenance, or abandonment of area agricultural properties.” (*Id.* at 4.1-16). That the smaller parcels created by the Project will become unfarmable is evidence that the Project will contribute to the abandonment and vacancy of agricultural properties. Thus, the stated agricultural land preservation goals of the Solano County and Fairfield General Plans will not be achieved.

15.5

Greenbelt Alliance urges STA to consider alternatives to the Project that will obtain the goal of decreasing traffic congestion on I-80 while maintaining the integrity of the County and City farmland policies. Alternatives to road construction could include such measures as installation of metering lights/HOV lanes and implementation of commuter programs. These are just a few examples of measures that can and should be explored for achieving the Project’s stated goals without sacrificing prime agricultural resources.

15.6

3 Land Use and Agricultural Resources

3.1 The Land Use Section of the DEIR Fails To Adequately Describe Mitigation Measures For The Loss Of Agricultural Resources.

15.7

Land use on the site of the Proposed Project includes grazing land and intensive agricultural production. (DEIR at 4.1-1). Lands in the West End are categorized as “extensive agricultural lands” while lands in the East End are considered “intensive agricultural land.” (*Id.*

¹⁰ Policy 12

¹¹ Policy AG 1.4. Program 1.4A states that where land is identified as Prime Farmland, Farmland of Statewide Importance, or Unique Farmland on the most recent Important Farmland maps prepared by the California Department of Conservation is proposed for conversion to urban uses, the City shall arrange for preservation of an equal amount of the same class of farmland within the area.

¹² Policy AG 2.1

¹³ Policy AG 2.3

at 4.102). The Project would result in the conversion of “Prime” Farmland on the East End to non-agricultural use. Further, both the East and West Ends contain land parcels protected under the Williamson Act – a state law providing incentives to continue agricultural production by offering property tax reductions. The Project area also contains land protected under conservation easements held by the Solano Land Trust (“SLT”). (*Id.* at 4.1-4). Loss of these agricultural resources is considered an adverse impacts under CEQA and requires mitigation.

15.7
(Cont.)

The DEIR describes two mitigation measures to address these significant adverse impacts to existing agricultural land (Mitigation Measures 4.1-1 and 4.1-2, collectively “Mitigation Measures”). (DEIR at 4.1-16 – 4.1-18). The DEIR concludes that the loss of these agricultural resources after mitigation is “less than significant.” However, the Mitigation Measures are insufficiently described to support such a conclusion. Specifically, the Mitigation Measures state that, prior to construction, STA shall acquire conservation easements for: (1) 1.0 acres of Prime Farmland within the County for every acre of land considered impacted within the Project site that is designated as Prime Farmland; and (2) 1.25 acres of Prime Farmland within the County for every acre of land considered impacted within the Project site that is under conservation easement.

15.8

The Mitigation Measures are insufficiently described to support a finding that these adverse impacts are “less than significant” because they do not identify the location of the Prime Farmland parcels to be acquired. Will the parcels obtained be located within Suisun Valley? Will the parcels be adjoining or scattered throughout various locations? Such information is vital in determining the extent of the adverse impacts of the Project.

Greenbelt Alliance requests that a revised DEIR include a timeline for the study, purchase, and protection of the Prime Farmland. These Mitigation Measures need to be adequately studied, documented and defined in order to support the DEIR’s conclusion that the loss of prime agricultural land is “less than significant.” Greenbelt Alliance further requests that the parcel be specifically identified before the Project begins and purchased and protected before the Project is complete.

3.2 Removal of the existing Linear Park Violates Federal Law and Is Inconsistent with an Existing Conservation Easement.

15.9

According to the DEIR, the Fairfield Linear Park (“Linear Park”) is “a 94-acre rails-to-trails public use, publicly owned resource located entirely within the City of Fairfield. An 8.5-acre portion of the Linear Park is located within East End section of the Project.” (DEIR at 4.12-4). Linear Park is a “multi-use facility that provides opportunities for both active and passive outdoor recreation” including “jogging, biking, and walking.” (*Id.*)

The North Connector Project calls for an amendment to the Solano County General Plan (“GPA”) to remove a segment of the existing Linear Park. The DEIR states that, as part of the GPA, “the City would no longer maintain and operate the Linear Park between Abernathy Road and Suisun Creek, and this portion of the Linear Park would be removed. The new multi-use path would replace in-kind the existing Linear Park between Abernathy Road and Suisun Creek, and represent a net gain of multi-use pathway.” (DEIR at 3-2).

This aspect of the Project directly conflicts with federal law designed to protect park land. Specifically, section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966 declares that “[i]t is the policy of the United States Government that special effort should be made to preserve the natural beauty of the countryside and public park and recreation lands, wildlife and waterfowl refuges, and historic sites.” 49 USC § 303. Section 4(f) declares that “the Secretary may approve a transportation program or project...requiring the use of publicly owned land of a public park, recreation area, or wildlife and waterfowl refuge of national, State, or local significance, or land of an historic site of national, State, or local significance (as determined by the Federal, State, or local officials having jurisdiction over the park area, refuge, or site) only if: (1) there is no prudent and feasible alternative to using that land; and (2) the program or project includes all possible planning to minimize harm to the park, recreation area, wildlife and waterfowl refuge, or historic site resulting from the use.”

While the DEIR does not address this issue, the Initial Study Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration-Environmental Assessment (November 2006) states that Fairfield Linear Park is located in the Project area, but is not eligible as a 4(f) resource because it is considered to be a transportation corridor and is maintained by the City of Fairfield Public Works Department. This determination is inconsistent with the description of Linear Park in the DEIR as a “multi-use facility that provides opportunities for both active and passive outdoor recreation.” Labeling Linear Park a “transportation corridor” is not sufficient to exclude Linear Park from the requirements of section 4(f). Courts have held that such initial determinations of state or local officials are reviewable and reversible because national policy to preserve such lands would be frustrated by vesting in state or local officials the authority to make final and binding determinations of local significance. *See National Wildlife Federation v. Coleman*, 529 F.2d 359 (5th Cir. 1976).

Further eroding the credibility of the argument that Linear Park is not eligible as a 4(f) resource because it is a “transportation corridor” is the fact that Linear Park is protected by a conservation easement which defines the area as a “park”. The easement, granted by Resolution 92-30 from the Fairfield City Council, restricts use of Linear Park *in perpetuity* to “park, recreation, and open space uses and other such uses as are consistent with them.” Not only does the language of the Resolution support that Linear Park is within the ambit of section 4(f), but it

also strongly supports the position that Linear Park should not be removed to make way for a road project – a use not compatible with the existing recreational use of Linear Park.

As such, Greenbelt Alliance requests the DEIR be revised to include a discussion and analysis of the potential conflicts of the Project with the requirements of section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966.

15.9
(Cont.)

4 Hazards

4.1 The Analysis of Hazards and Hazardous Materials Is Based On An Outdated Report And An Outdated Standard.

15.10

The DEIR section discussing hazards and hazardous materials issues is based on a March 2004 report entitled *Phase I Investigation/Initial Site Assessment Report* (“Phase I ISA”) prepared by BASELINE Environmental Consulting. This report was completed over three years ago. As a result, the data and conditions upon which it is based may be too dated to be reliable.

Moreover, the Phase I ISA was performed in accordance with an outdated standard – the Standard Practice for Environmental Site Assessments: Phase I Environmental Site Assessment Process, established by the American Society for Testing and Materials (“ASTM”) in Method E1527-00. ASTM has since issued a more recent standard – E1527-05.

Due to the fact that conditions (such as the presence of hazardous materials) change over time, it would be prudent for the STA to commission a Phase I ISA update using the new E1527-05 ASTM standard. At the very least, Greenbelt Alliance requests that the STA seek a written professional opinion from BASELINE Environmental Consulting stating that the March 2004 Phase I ISA is still reliable (if it is).

4.2 The Potential Impact Related To Wildland Fires Is Improperly Dismissed.

15.11

Listed as an issue not to be discussed further in the DEIR’s Hazards Impacts Analysis lists is “Be located adjacent to areas subject to wildland fires.” (DEIR at 4.10-14). However, the DEIR cites to the draft wildland fire map in the City General Plan and states that “the West End of the Project is identified as having a high to moderate potential for wildfires...In the event that there were wildland fires in the West End, the proposed Project would provide an additional means of emergency evacuation and improve access for emergency response...[t]herefore, there are no impact [sic] related to wildland fires is [sic] anticipated.” *Id.*

This analysis is flawed because the conclusion reached (that there are no anticipated impacts related to wildland fires) is not supported by the facts presented in the DEIR (that the West End is located in an area with *high to moderate potential for wildfires*). There is a logical disconnect between a finding of high potential for wildfires and a conclusion that there is no impact anticipated. That the construction of a road will provide additional means of emergency

evacuation, does not address the issue that a major road is being proposed for an area surrounded on both sides by agricultural fields with high to moderate potential for wildfires.

This failure to reach conclusions that logically follow from the required analysis undermines the very purpose of CEQA. “The EIR must contain facts and analysis, not just the bare conclusions of a public agency...[T]he public and decision-makers, for whom the EIR is prepared, should also have before them the basis for that opinion so as to enable them to make an independent, reasoned judgment.” *Santiago County Water Dis. v. County of Orange*, 118 Cal.App.3d 818 (1981); *see also Citizens of Goleta Valley v. Board of Supervisors*, 52 Cal.3d 553, 568 (1990). CEQA requires that an EIR demonstrate the “analytic route” that the agency takes in arriving at its conclusion. *See Sierra Club v. California Coastal Comm’n.*, 19 Cal.App.4th 547, 556-557 (1993).

Because the West End is located in an area with high to moderate potential for wildfires, the conclusion that the Project presents no anticipated impacts related to wildfires is unjustified. Accordingly, Greenbelt Alliance requests that the potential impacts to wildfires be discussed and mitigation measures analyzed in a revised DEIR.

15.11
(Cont.)

5 Utilities And Service Systems

The DEIR states that the Project “consists of a new roadway and would not require the ongoing use of water once constructed.” (DEIR 4.13-4). Thus, the DEIR concludes that no impacts related to water demand are anticipated. However, the DEIR states elsewhere that the East End of the Project will include landscaping with low-maintenance trees and bushes and the West End landscaping will include planting grasses and other low-plant materials. (*Id.* at 3-2 – 3-3). The DEIR does not elaborate about the water use requirements of maintaining such landscaping. Greenbelt Alliance requests that the DEIR be revised to reconcile these seemingly contradictory conclusions – that no impacts to water demand are anticipated but that both ends of the Project will be landscaped.

15.12

Greenbelt Alliance requests that a revised DEIR explain why the new landscaping will not create a demand for water, if that is the case. If the proposed landscaping will require water resources, Greenbelt Alliance requests that the DEIR include an analysis of the impacts of such water demands.

6 Traffic and Transportation Analysis

According to the DEIR, a project would have a significant impact if it would cause an increase in traffic which is substantial in relation to the existing traffic load and capacity of the street system. (DEIR at 4.2-9). While section 4.2 of the DEIR contains an analysis of the effects the Proposed Project may have on existing traffic conditions in the Project area, this section does not contain an analysis of the induced demand that may result from the implementation of the

15.13

North Connector Project. Research on induced demand on transportation facilities has linked an increase in road miles constructed with an increase in vehicle miles traveled. Research reported by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (“USEPA”) shows that induced demand can negate any short-term benefits to congestion in a matter of a few years.¹⁴

To comply with relevant CEQA guidelines, Greenbelt Alliance requests that a revised DEIR include an analysis of how induced demand related to reductions in traffic conditions on I-80 could change vehicle volume on the North Connector Project in the long run. The revised DEIR should evaluate whether the Project might reduce public transit use due to induced demand.

15.13
(Cont.)

7 Air Quality

The DEIR improperly concludes that the “Project is a transportation improvement that does not generate any new vehicle trips.” (DEIR at 4.3-1). As discussed above, research reported by the USEPA shows that this is not true. An increase in road miles constructed has been shown to increase vehicle miles traveled. Thus, the DEIR improperly dismissed the issue of potential increases to greenhouse gas emissions.

15.14

Greenbelt Alliance requests that the revised DEIR include a quantitative estimate of increases in vehicle emissions, including PM 10, PM 2.5, and ultra fine particulates in areas adjacent to the Project which will be subject to Project-related increases in vehicle trips. The DEIR should also determine whether these changes in local air emissions might result in any adverse impacts on human health, energy use, and greenhouse gases.

8 Biological Resources

The DEIR’s assessment of biological resources is based on field work and data collected by Monk & Associates between June 2005 and April 2006 and incorporated into a Natural Environmental Study (“NES”). As a result of some of this work taking place over two years ago, the data and regulatory conditions upon which it is based may be too dated to be reliable. Due to the fact that biological conditions (such as the presence of threatened or endangered species) change over time, it would be prudent for the STA to – at the very least – obtain a written professional opinion from Monk & Associates stating that the NES is still reliable, if that is the case.

15.15

Further, the legal status of species of concern changes periodically, and new “critical habitat” for endangered species continues to be designated. Prior to certification of the DEIR, it

¹⁴ Our Built and Natural Environments: A technical review of the interactions between land use, transportation, and environmental quality. USEPA Washington DC 2001. This publication can be found at <http://www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/built.htm>, (last visited 10/23/2007).

should be confirmed that the species of concern identified as present or likely at the Project site have not been ‘downgraded’ to a more precarious status (*e.g.*, from “candidate” to “threatened” or “endangered”). If the STA were to take action here based on inaccurate data or outdated legal status, a violation of the federal Endangered Species Act and/or the California Fish and Game Code could result.

Greenbelt Alliance requests that the STA update the DEIR with current information on the status of plant and wildlife species of concern.

15.15
(Cont.)

9 Alternatives Analysis

An alternatives analysis is at the heart of the purpose of an EIR. *See* Pub. Res. Code § 21102. An EIR must analyze a range of reasonable alternatives to a project that would feasibly attain most basic objectives while avoiding or substantially lessening a project’s significant impacts. *See* 14 Cal. Code Regs. § 15126.6(a). An EIR “must consider a reasonable range of potentially feasible alternatives that will foster informed decisionmaking and public participation...The lead agency is responsible for selecting a range of project alternatives for examination and must publicly disclose its reasoning for selecting those alternatives.” 14 Cal. Code Regs. § 15126.6(a)

15.16

Here, the alternatives analysis does not meet several basic CEQA requirements, including the requirement that an EIR describe a reasonable range of feasible alternatives to the project, *see* 14 Cal. Code Regs. § 15126.6(c), and the requirement that the discussion of alternatives must focus on alternatives that are capable of avoiding or substantially lessening the significant environmental effects of a project, “even if these alternatives would impede to some degree the attainment of the project objectives, or would be more costly.” 14 Cal. Code Regs. § 15126.6(b).

9.1 The Project Objectives Bias the Alternatives Analysis.

An alternative analysis is predicated on a proper definition of project purpose. *See* 14 Cal. Code Regs. § 15124(b). The purpose of the Project, as defined in the DEIR, is “to create additional east-west capacity north of Interstate 80 (I-80) for local traffic which currently must use I-80.” (DEIR at 1-1). The DEIR goes on to state that the “goal of the Project is to provide improved local circulation so that local traffic would not have to use I-80 for local trips thereby improving traffic congestion on I-80 within the Project area.” This description of the Project’s purpose is written in a manner that presdestine’s the approval of the Project proponent’s preferred project alternative (the one analyzed in the EIR). In other words, by setting up the Project’s purpose in a way to make the implementation of the North Connector Project the key Project objective, the DEIR appears designed to allow the STA to adopt a statement of overriding conditions – essentially, to be able to approve the Project as described in the DEIR, regardless of the unmitigatable environmental impacts.

15.17

9.2 The Alternatives in the DEIR Are Not Adequately Analyzed.

15.18

The DEIR presents the following three alternatives to the Proposed Project:

- Alternative A: No Project
- Alternative B: Improvement of Existing Roadways Alternative
- Alternative C: Enhanced Bus Service Alternative

An “EIR shall include sufficient information about each alternative to allow meaningful evaluation, analysis, and comparison with the proposed project.” 14 Cal. Code Regs. § 15126.6(d). Here, the DEIR devotes only two to three pages to each alternative. This limited information is inadequate for the local governmental authorities and the public to be able to make informed decisions. The DEIR must include sufficient information about each alternative to allow meaningful evaluation, analysis, and comparison with the Proposed Project.

The limited alternatives analysis is of particular concern because alternatives will most certainly be a major focus of upcoming public discussions and decisions. Yet, the DEIR fails to provide sufficient information and analysis necessary for informed discussion of key significant environmental impacts and their potential solutions.

9.3 Additional Alternatives Should Be Developed and Analyzed

15.19

The toll of the automobile on human health and the environment make it imperative that increasing vehicle mobility not always be the first choice in addressing traffic congestion. Greenbelt Alliance urges the STA to do a more comprehensive study of transportation demand reduction and alternative transport strategies as an alternative to the construction of yet another road. Feasible alternatives may exist to more effectively meet the Project’s stated goal of “improving traffic congestion on I-80 within the Project area.” (DEIR at 3-1). Greenbelt Alliance requests that a revised DEIR include an analysis of additional feasible alternatives to improve traffic flow, reduce delay, incentives mobility options, and improve environmental quality.

10 Growth-Inducing Impacts

15.20

CEQA requires that an EIR “[d]iscuss the ways in which the proposed project could foster economic or population growth, or the construction of additional housing, either directly or indirectly, in the surrounding environment. Included in this are projects which would remove obstacles to population growth.” 14 Cal. Code Regs. § 15126.2(d). An EIR also must “discuss the characteristic of some projects which may encourage and facilitate *other activities* that could significantly affect the environment, either individually or cumulatively.” *Id.* (*emphasis added*).

The DEIR states that “the Project would result in extension of roadways which could lead to indirect population growth through encouragement of future development.” (DEIR at 4.11-7). However, the DEIR declares that this indirect growth is a “less than significant impact” and does not analyze the impact or discuss potential mitigation measures. *Id.* Such a determination is contrary to the requirements of CEQA and is called in to doubt based on the temporal nature of Solano County’s Growth Initiative.

Specifically, because the Project necessarily facilitates growth by subjecting the surrounding areas to development pressure, the DEIR must fully analyze and mitigate for the Project’s growth-inducing impacts. The Orderly Growth Initiative (“Measure A”), which precludes development of this area, is set to expire in 2010, thus opening up the areas surrounding the Project to possible development. Dismissing the indirect growth-inducing impacts of the Project as “less than significant” is short sighted in light of the limited protection afforded to the surrounding areas.

Because the Project could lead to indirect population growth through encouragement of future development and because permanent protective measures are not in place for adjacent areas, Greenbelt Alliance requests that the DEIR be revised to include an analysis of the growth-inducing impacts of the Project and a discussion of possible mitigation measures.

15.21
(Cont.)

11 Mitigation Monitoring

To ensure that mitigation plans are effective, CEQA requires that all state and local agencies establish a monitoring or reporting program whenever approval of a project relies upon a mitigated negative declaration or an EIR. *See* Pub. Res. Code § 21081.6.

Here, where the DEIR recognizes potential environmental impacts as “significant,” the DEIR requires mitigation measures. However, the DEIR provides no information regarding reporting, monitoring, and enforcement of the Project’s proposed mitigation measures. The DEIR states only that a “mitigation monitoring and reporting program (“MMRP”) incorporating the mitigation measures included in this document will be considered and acted upon for adoption with the findings of this EIR and prior to approval of the Project.” (DEIR at 1-3).

All of the mitigation measures that are incorporated in the Proposed Project or imposed as conditions of approval must be monitored and reported on. *See* Pub. Res. Code § 21081. Further, the mitigation measure must be fully enforceable through permit conditions, agreements, or other measures. *See* Cal. Code Regs. § 15091(d). Because CEQA requires mitigation monitoring and enforceability, Greenbelt Alliance requests that the DEIR include specific information regarding reporting, monitoring, and enforcement of the STA’s implementation of the mitigation measures cited in the DEIR.

Response to Letter 15 – Greenbelt Alliance

Comment 15.1. This comment provides introductory comments that the North Connector Project will have significant negative impacts on the environment and the quality of life of residents living near the Project and other sensitive receptors. These comments are elaborated in the following comments and responses.

Refer to response to Comments 15.2 through 15.20 below.

Comment 15.2. This comment indicates that the Project objectives are inconsistent and contrary to various County and City policies.

Refer to response to Comment 15.3 below, for a discussion of the Project objectives' consistency with County and City policies.

Comment 15.3. This comment states that the Project is inconsistent with the Solano County General Plan and the City of Fairfield General Plan specifically with regard to natural resources, agricultural resources, and traffic and circulation policies. The comment also urges STA to consider other alternatives to the Project.

Although the Project is a road construction project, the EIR provides mitigation to reduce impacts to agricultural resources to a less-than-significant impact. By including measures that would require lands to be placed in conservation easement (Mitigation Measure 4.1-1), the Project would provide for the protection of agricultural lands at ratios equivalent and greater than the amount of land already protected by conservation easements. Construction of a roadway that would provide east-west circulation between SR12 West and SR12 East would provide alternative routes for local traffic, as well as local transit services. Additionally, pages 4.1-12 through 4.1-14 of the Recirculated Draft EIR discusses the Project's consistency with the County and City General Plan policies.

In addition policies and objectives in the City of Fairfield General Plan include those related to preservation of agricultural land in the City and Suisun Valley, preservation of prominent topographical features (ridgelines, slopes, and hillsides, and sensitivity related to preservation of natural features (tree stands, riparian areas). The West End of the North Connector does contain hills and slopes, but portions are developed with roadway uses and agricultural production, and does not contain natural features of aesthetic or cultural significance. The East End of the North Connector is located on predominately flat land adjacent to I-80, and does not include any topographical or natural features of aesthetic or cultural significance.

Per CEQA requirements § 15124, the EIR includes a reasonable range of alternatives, including the following three: the No Project, Improvement of Existing Roadways, and Enhanced Bus Service alternatives. Environmental effects related to exposure of sensitive receptors to hazards, air quality, and noise, were analyzed in the Draft EIR. Because STA is required to consider only a reasonable range of alternatives, it was not required to consider the specific alternatives noted by this comment. Refer to response to Comment 7.1 for a discussion of the considerations of alternatives.

The Project would also be consistent with the Solano County General Plan policies. As discussed on pages 4.1-12 through 4.1-13 of the Recirculated Draft EIR, the Project maintains consistency with the relevant Land Use and Circulation Element goals, objectives, and policies.

The Project alignment, to the extent feasible, has been located in areas where the least amount of natural resources would be affected. Additionally, the Project would decrease the travel time on I-80, when compared to the No Project condition, and would allow local trips to take place on the North Connector roadway instead of I-80. This would allow for a more efficient route between the Suisun Valley/Green Valley area to and from downtown Fairfield. Figure 3-2 of the Recirculated Draft EIR illustrates this enhanced connectivity between the two areas. Furthermore, the Project would provide an improve circulation pattern in the local area, thereby minimizing energy consumption by reducing the congestion on I-80 and providing an additional route for local traffic.

Furthermore, as shown in Letter 12, Comment 12.3 above, Solano County staff concurs that the Project is consistent with the Solano County General Plan.

Comment 15.4. This comment indicates that the Project objectives are inconsistent with the Solano County General Plan Agricultural Land Use Policies and the City of Fairfield's Farmland policies.

Consistency with these goals, objectives and policies of Solano County and the City of Fairfield are discussed in response to Comment 15.3 above and in Letter 12, Comment 12.3, in which Solano County states that the Project is consistent with the Solano County General Plan.

Comment 15.5. This comment indicates that the North Connector Project will reduce the size of several parcels in the East End. This comment states that these small parcels will be un-farmable and will contribute to the abandonment and vacancy of other agricultural properties in the area.

The EIR acknowledges that the construction of the roadway would have indirect impacts to an additional 10.33 acres of Prime Farmland through the creation of non-farmable portions of the existing parcels. These indirect impacts were included in the calculation of impacts of the Project as shown in Table 4.1-5, page 4.1-18 of the EIR. Mitigation Measure 4.1-2 applies to indirect impacts to the affected parcels, as shown in Table 4.1-1 in the EIR. While the Project would create small non-farmable portions of existing parcels in the East End, the portions of existing parcels would be contiguous with other larger parcels that currently are in active agricultural use. To assume that these parcels will contribute to the abandonment and vacancy of other agricultural properties in the area is speculative. Per CEQA § 15124, if a particular impact is too speculative for evaluation, the agency should note its conclusion and terminate discussion of the impact.

Comment 15.6. The comment also suggests that the EIR consider the installation of metering lights, High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes, and the implementation of commuter programs as alternatives to the Project.

Alternatives to the Project were discussed in Chapter 6.0 of the Draft EIR (also see comment response 15.3). Analysis of alternative traffic measures such as metering lights and High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes on I-80 would be appropriate for a highway project and would not result in the creation of east-west capacity for local traffic in the Project vicinity, one of the purposes of the North Connector Project. Because STA is required to consider only a reasonable range of alternatives, it was not required to consider the specific alternatives noted by this comment. Refer to response to Comment 7.1 for a discussion of the considerations of alternatives.

Comment 15.7. This comment indicates that the loss of agricultural resources, such as Prime farmland and land held under Williamson Act contract, constitutes an adverse impact under CEQA, requiring mitigation.

Refer to response to Comment 1.1.

Comment 15.8. The comment states that the mitigation included to reduce impacts to agricultural lands is insufficient because it does not include the “location of the Prime Farmland parcels to be acquired” or include a timeline for the study, purchase, and protection of Prime Farmland.

Mitigation Measures 4.1-1 and 4.1-2 in the Recirculated Draft EIR describe that the conservation easements shall be purchased within Solano County and held in trust by a public agency or other appropriate entity within Solano County. As such, we believe the mitigation measures are explicit and will ensure full mitigation of the impact.

Refer to response to Comments 1.1 and 1.2.

Comment 15.9. The comment contends that removal of a segment of the existing Linear Park and that this aspect of the Project directly conflicts with federal law, specifically Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966.

Section 4(f) applies to actions of agencies within the US Department of Transportation (US DOT) or projects constructed with funds from an agency within the US Department of Transportation. The STA is not an agency with the US DOT, nor would the Project be constructed using funds from an agency within the US DOT. Thus, the Project would not conflict with Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act of 1966.

Comment 15.10. This comment states that the analysis of hazards and hazardous material is based on an outdated report and an outdated standard.

Chapter 4.10, Hazards, was updated in the Recirculated Draft EIR. In response to the comment, the Phase I Investigation/Initial Site Assessment Report prepared in 2004 was updated in December 2007 and the findings of which were reported in the Recirculated Draft EIR. The updated analysis did not identify any new significant hazardous materials impacts. However, appropriate mitigation to reduce potential hazardous materials impacts to less than significant levels has been included in the Recirculated Draft EIR (see page 4.10-3 through 4.10-15).

Comment 15.11. This comment indicates that the potential impacts related to wildland fires is not adequately addressed within the EIR.

In response to the comment, Chief Jay Huyssoon of the Cordelia Fire Protection District was consulted by STA. Although the Project is located in an area identified as having a high to moderate susceptibility to wildland fires, the Project would not result in the construction of facilities susceptible to damage from a wildland fire (e.g. residential or commercial structures). Roadways in and of themselves can often serve as a firebreak, and a roadway would improve access for public services and emergency service personnel that would be responsible for fighting wildland fires. Chief Huyssoon also noted that roadways may introduce the potential for human caused fires (cigarettes, etc.) and increased access for arsonists. However, Chief Huyssoon observed that the potential for this would be somewhat offset by the improved access provided by the new roadway and that the roadway would be designed to accommodate fire fighting equipment and apparatus by having a grade of less than 12% and able to accommodate a 54,000 pound fire engine. Therefore, based on STA's consultation with Chief Huyssoon, impacts related to wildland fires are considered less than significant, and no mitigation is necessary.³

Comment 15.12. The comment suggests that the EIR demonstrate why Project landscaping would not create an additional demand for water.

Water will be needed to establish landscaping in both the West and East End of the Project. This water, during plant establishment, will be provided via water trucks and not permanent irrigation. After plant establishment, landscaping would not require additional water other than natural rainfall to survive.

Comment 15.13. The comment indicates that Chapter 4.2, Traffic and Transportation, of the Draft EIR, dated September 2007, does not contain an analysis of the induced demand that may result from the implementation of the Project.

The Recirculated Draft EIR, on page 4.2-27, was revised to address this comment and clearly explain that the Project would not cause an increase in traffic which is substantial in relation to the existing capacity of the street system.

Comment 15.14. The comment states that the Draft EIR improperly concludes that the Project would not generate any new vehicle trips and dismissed the issue of potential increases to greenhouse gas emissions.

³ Chief Jay Huyssoon, of the Cordelia Fire Protection District, personal phone communication, November 7, 2007.

Refer to response to Comment 15.13 above, as well as the discussion of the Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions in the Recirculated Draft EIR on pages 4.3-10 and 4.3-11. As discussed on page 4.2-27 of the Recirculated Draft EIR by the year 2020 with the Project, nine local intersections would experience reduction in traffic congestion and delay while 15 intersections would continue to have similar levels of delay and only four intersections would experience increased delay. Even the intersections that would experience increased delay would continue to operate at acceptable levels of service. In addition to local intersection, there would be concurrent reductions in delay and congestion on I-80 as some traffic shifts from the freeway to the North Connector roadway. Overall traffic congestion and delay will reduce with the Project when compared to the No Project condition. The Project would not directly result in additional traffic, and when compared to the No Project condition will reduce congestion and traffic delay. As stated on page 4.3-10 of the Recirculated Draft EIR, CO₂ emissions from vehicles vary with speed. Emissions are relatively high at low speed rates and decline rapidly with increasing speed. Since the Project will increase average vehicle speeds in the Project area by reducing congestion and decrease vehicle idling by reducing delay, it would slightly reduce generation of CO₂ during peak traffic periods

Comment 15.15. The comment indicates that STA update the Draft EIR with current information regarding the biological resources found within the Project area, specifically species and plants of special concern.

Chapter 4.5, Biological Resources, of the Recirculated Draft EIR was reviewed and updated where appropriate by Monk & Associates. It was determined that additional surveys were not necessary because the conditions within the Project area have not changed substantially from 2006 when the last surveys were conducted. However, pages 4.5-13 through 4.5-14 and 4.5-30 through 4.5-31 of the Recirculated Draft EIR were updated to reflect Department of Fish and Game records that included sighting on of a Swainson's hawk within the Project area. The Project area was surveyed for the presence of raptors in 2006 and none, including the Swainsons Hawk were found within or near the Project area. However the EIR did not mention this sighting which is within the Project vicinity. A mitigation measure specific to the Swainsons Hawk was added to the EIR (mitigation measure 4.5-9). No other biological resources required updating the Recirculated Draft EIR.

In addition, many of the mitigation measures for biological resources require pre-construction surveys be conducted (Mitigation measures 4.5-1, 4.5-7a, 4.5-7b, 4.5-8, 4.5-9, and 4.5-10). While detailed surveys of biological resources were conducted for the EIR, it is acknowledged that many of the species for which surveys were conducted (e.g. birds, raptors, badgers, etc.) move around and over time could move into the Project area. These mitigation measures require that prior to construction, surveys are conducted to ensure these species are not adversely impacted. As part of conducting these pre-construction surveys, the biologists would check with state and federal resource agencies (California Department of Fish and Game, US Fish and Wildlife Service) to determine if the status (e.g. candidate, threatened, endangered) of species potentially located in the Project area has changed and take this into consideration in conducting the surveys.

Comment 15.16. The comment states that the alternatives analysis does not meet CEQA requirements, including the requirement that an EIR describe a reasonable range of feasible alternative and that the discussion of alternatives must focus on alternatives capable of avoiding or lessening significant environmental impacts.

Refer to responses to Comments 7.1 and 15.3.

Comment 15.17. This comment contends that the Project objectives bias the alternatives analysis.

The purpose of the Project as defined by STA was developed through their planning process as the County's transportation planning organization. The STA developed the Project purpose through a Major Investment Study and included the Project in the County's Regional Transportation Plan.

The stated objectives and purpose of the Project do not bias the alternatives analysis or predestine the preferred alternative. The EIR in Chapter 5 includes discussion and analysis of many alternatives including improvements to existing roadways, enhanced bus service as well as multiple alignments of a local roadway (8 alignments in the West End and 5 alignments in the East End). The Project objectives and purpose allowed the Lead Agency to develop and analyze a reasonable range of alternatives while at the same time aided in the decision and selection of the preferred alternative which is consistent with the intent of CEQA.

Comment 15.18. The comment states that the alternatives in the Draft EIR are not adequately analyzed.

Although the comment states that the alternatives analysis contains limited information, it does not explain in what ways the information is limited other than stating that the analysis is only two or three pages long. CEQA does not prescribe a page length that renders alternative analysis sufficient. For each alternative, the EIR provides a comparative analysis by each topic area covered in the EIR. Under each topic, the alternative being analyzed is compared to the proposed Project along with an explanation of whether the alternative would result in similar, less significant, or more significant impact(s) than the proposed Project. Thus, the analysis of each alternative is sufficient.

Additionally, an EIR need not consider every conceivable alternative to a project. CEQA Guidelines § 15126.6 state that "There is no ironclad rule governing the nature or scope of the alternatives to be discussed other than the rule of reason." As discussed in response to Comment 7.1, STA adequately considered a reasonable range of alternatives to this Project.

For each alternative, the EIR provides a comparative analysis by each topic area covered in the EIR. Under each topic, the alternative being analyzed is compared to the proposed Project along with an explanation of whether the alternative would result in similar, less significant, or more significant impact(s) than the proposed Project.

Comment 15.19. The comment suggests that a more comprehensive transportation demand reduction and alternative transport strategies be included as part of the EIR.

Refer to comment response 15.17. Additionally, the alternatives analysis in Chapter 5.0, Alternatives, includes an analysis of an Enhanced Bus Service alternative (see pages 5-10 through 5-12 in the Recirculated Draft EIR).

Comment 15.20. This comment indicates that the EIR does not adequately address the indirect growth effects, including population growth, as a result of the Project.

The EIR discusses growth inducing effects in Chapter 6.0, CEQA Required Conclusions, and discusses both the direct and indirect effects of the Project on population growth.

With regard to the Orderly Growth Initiative, which currently limits some population growth, this initiative will expire in 2010, and as conceded by the comment, subjects the North Connector Area to “possible development.” An EIR is not obligated to consider potential future impacts. Thus, to consider the effects of population growth based on expiration of this initiative, future zoning or other events is speculative, and STA is not obligated to analyze this issue.

Comment 15.21. The comment indicates that a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program be incorporated as part of the Project.

A Mitigation Monitoring Reporting Plan (MMRP) is included in this document as Chapter 4.0 of this Final EIR.

October 25, 2007

Janet Adams
Solano Transportation Authority
c/o Janet Adams
One Harbor Center, Suite 130
Suisun City, CA 94585

THE NORTH CONNECTOR PROJECT

Dear Ms. Adams,

I have reviewed the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the North Connector (NC) Project, and am submitting the following comments on the DEIR from the Green Valley Landowners Association (GVLA).

The Solano Transit Authority (STA) states in the DEIR that the goal of the project is to provide improved local circulation so that local traffic would not have to use I-80 for local trips, thereby improving traffic congestion on I-80 within the project area. The GVLA feels that this goal is completely insincere because connecting the west end of the NC to SR12 would allow ANY traffic to exit off of SR12 and drive on the surface streets in lower Green Valley, or traverse these streets and on to SR12 on their way to Napa. It seems fairly obvious that this stream of traffic would not be exclusively local.

16.1

Further, the DEIR states that "The Project would not cause an increase in traffic which is substantial in relation to the existing traffic load and capacity of the street system", then concludes "Therefore, any impacts arising from increase in traffic in relation to existing traffic load and roadway capacity would be less than significant." The GVLA finds it absurd to say that a significant vehicle load can be channeled off of the SR12/I-80 interchange, and routed onto local surface streets, while "decreasing congestion in I-80"...without significantly impacting traffic and congestion in Green Valley. Even if the surface streets are widened, existing landscaping removed, intersections signalized, etc, the point is that vehicle trips through lower Green Valley will increase substantially, and will significantly impact quality of life, as well as traffic congestion, in a negative way.

16.2

If the STA was truly sincere about improving local traffic between the Green Valley area and downtown Fairfield/Suisun, connecting the western portion to SR12 would not be included in the project. Completing the project with the western connection to SR12 clearly shows that the primary goal of this project is to reduce traffic in the I-80/I-680 interchange, with the result of dumping that reduction onto the surface streets of lower Green Valley.

16.3

The GVLA strongly disagrees with the contention that traffic increases will be less than significant, and believes that the western portion of the NC project should be dropped from the project.

16.4

Sincerely,

Mike Wray
Board Member
Green Valley Landowners Association
cc: Linda Seifert, GVLA

Response to Letter 16 – Solano County Orderly Growth Initiative

Comment 16.1. The comment disagrees that the goal of the Project is to provide an additional roadway for local traffic, because other non-local traffic could use and would be encouraged to use Green Valley surface streets.

The Project will allow access between SR12 West and Green Valley and would allow traffic to use Green Valley surface streets. However, these trips would be considered local because these trips would either end or begin in the Green Valley area. The connection to SR12 West would provide a more convenient and efficient way for Green Valley residents to access SR12 West and parts west, such as Napa, than the current condition which requires local traffic to merge onto I-80 before entering SR12 West.

Comment 16.2. The comment states that vehicles trips through Green Valley will increase substantially as a result of the Project.

Refer to response to Comment 6.1. Although the Project may result in increased vehicle trips in the Green Valley area, the traffic analysis in the EIR indicates that under future conditions with the Project, all local intersections (with the exception of the I-80 eastbound and Suisun Valley Road intersection) will operate at acceptable levels of service and the I-80 eastbound and Suisun Road intersection will be addressed by Mitigation 4.2-2. Refer to Chapter 4.2, Traffic and Transportation for further discussion.

Comment 16.3. The comment indicates that the North Connector Project should not connect with SR12, as traffic congestion within Green Valley would increase.

Refer to response to Comment 6.1 above.

Comment 16.4. The commenter indicates disagreement with the traffic conclusions of the Draft EIR and supports dropping the West End of the North Connector Project.

Mitigation Measures 4.2-1 and 4.2-2 of the Recirculated Draft EIR mitigate for the potentially significant impacts associated with traffic and transportation as a result of the Project.

Solano County Orderly Growth Committee

4160 Suisun Valley Road, Suite E710
Fairfield, CA 94534-4018

October 25, 2007

Solano Transportation Authority,
North Connector DEIR
c/o Janet Adams
One Harbor Center, Suite 130
Suisun City, CA 94585

RE: North Connector Project Draft Environmental Impact Report

Submitted via email to jadams@sta-snci.com

Dear Ms. Adams:

This letter is in response to the request for comments on the North Connector Project (Project) Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR). These comments are submitted on behalf of the Solano Orderly Growth Committee. These comments are not meant to nor should be interpreted as support for the project itself.

17.1

The purpose of this letter is to inform the Solano Transportation Authority that the North Connector DEIR fails to address a number of important impacts and does not support that all potential impacts will be mitigated to less-than-significant.

17.2

The DIER reflects a compartmentalized and fragmented approach to planning that will not result in effective and efficient use of public funds to meet comprehensive transportation needs that include alternative transportation such as transit and non-motorized travel.

Chapter 3, Project Description

Purpose and Need

The purpose and need for the North Connector as presented in the DEIR is insufficient and not supported. The DEIR is fatally flawed since it does not provide any total volume traffic forecasts for the North Connector, nor for traffic volume relief on Interstate 80. Therefore, there is no basic data to support the need for the Project nor means to analyze impacts, particularly transportation and traffic. The Project appears to be a solution looking for a problem.

17.3

The DEIR obfuscates claims that the Project is needed due to existing and future traffic congestion on Interstate 80 (I-80) and local streets and to “close gaps in the local circulation system.” (DEIR, p. 3-1) The DEIR does not define the “local circulation system,” “local trips,” nor the gaps. Therefore, there is no evidence of “gaps in the local circulation system.” The DEIR attempts to justify that the Project will resolve existing and future traffic congestion on I-80. It does not provide any data relative to the amount of traffic that would presumably use the North Connector rather than I-80.

The DEIR states correctly that the Suisun Valley and Green Valley areas of Fairfield are several miles west of downtown Fairfield. (Ibid.) However, there is no evidence of the current and forecast number of trips from Suisun Valley and Green Valley areas of Fairfield and downtown Fairfield. Further, since the North Connector Project abruptly ends at Abernathy Rd it does not resolve the lack of link to downtown Fairfield since travelers would need to use I-80, Rockville Road, Auto Mall Parkway, or other circuitous routes from the eastern terminus of the North Connector at Abernathy Road to travel to downtown Fairfield. This would create congestion at the Abernathy/I-80 interchange.

17.3
(Cont.)

The Purpose and Need section omits any analysis and justification of the need for the West End section of the North Connector.

17.4

Page 3-2: Says the project has been designed to accommodate future relocation and expansion of the westbound I-80 truck-scale facility. This is important, since in the impact sections there is no discussion about the impact (direct or indirect) of the truck-scale facility.

17.5

Page 3-3: There is discussion of the new multi-use path along the north side of the roadway. There is no discussion of the timing of this portion of the project. It should be confirmed that the new path will be constructed at the same time as the roadway.

17.6

On page 4.1-14 it is stated that a County General Plan Amendment is proposed to clarify the interpretation of Policy 2 of the Agricultural Element. Since this is a part of the proposed project it should be included in the project description.

17.7

The project description should include a discussion of right-of-way acquisition. Will eminent domain be required to obtain the rights-of-way currently protected by a conservation easement? What about lands that are currently in Williamson Act?

17.8

Table 3-1 says it provides information about permits and approvals needed. There is however, no discussion of the General Plan Amendments (City and County), Williamson Act Contract cancellation, property acquisition, etc.

17.9

Summarily, the DEIR fails to provide evidence to support the conclusion that the North Connector Project is necessary.

17.10

East End

The project description states that it “would include the construction of suitable replacement access roads (for property-owner vehicles and agricultural equipment) for affected agricultural parcels in the area.” (Ibid., p 3-2) However, the DEIR fails to disclose the location and extent of the additional construction required to accommodate the access.

17.11

The DEIR is internally inconsistent. Figure 3-2 of the DEIR indicates that a cul-de-sac would be constructed at the end of Russell Road. However, the project description of the East End in the text of the DEIR fails to describe this aspect of the project. It also fails to disclose the existence

of current access from the end of Russell Road to a gravel driveway to dwellings west of Russell Road.

17.11
(Cont.)

West End

The DEIR is internally inconsistent. The DEIR states, “[t]he existing bicycle path in this area would be relocated along the north side of the roadway.” (Ibid., p 3-3) Figure 3-5 does not depict a bicycle path on the side of the roadway, North Connector. Figure 3-6 reflects that the bicycle path continues along SR 12 at its present location. However, the DEIR is fatally flawed as it does not account for the removal of the bicycle path along SR 12 as a result of the construction of the westbound SR 12 truck climbing lanes.

17.12

Chapter 4, Existing Conditions, Project Impacts, and Mitigation Measures

4.1 LAND USE AND AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

17.13

Agricultural Resources

Protection of farm and ranch land is of critical concern for Solano County, the state of California, and the United States. Protection of farm and ranch land is an environmental, economic, and security issue. Once farmland is paved over, it can never be recovered. Farm and ranch land provide open space, clean water, healthy food, wetland and watershed protection, wildlife habitat. In addition, it is important to maintain agriculture production in the United States in order to maintain a stable food production market.

The Project violates Solano County’s General Plan agricultural objective (Chapter III) to “preserve the County’s high quality soils and protect and maintain essential agricultural lands.” General Plan policies prohibit piecemeal conversion of agricultural lands to non-agriculture. Both the East End and West End sections of the Project propose to construct roadway on agricultural lands.

The Project violates the City of Fairfield General Plan Policy LU 2.1, which is to “encourage the preservation of agricultural land surrounding the City and permanently preserve agriculture in Suisun Valley.” The East End section of the Project will construct 1.6 miles of a divided four-lane road on prime agricultural land in the Suisun Valley.

The Project violates the City of Fairfield General Plan Policy AG 1.4, which calls for permanently preserving agricultural lands within Suisun Valley. The East End section proposes to build a divided, four-lane roadway on agricultural lands in Suisun Valley.

The DEIR fails to report that the Project violates the City of Fairfield Policy OS 1.4, which seeks to “[p]ermanently preserve productive agricultural lands within the Suisun Valley by continuing to direct urban development away from Suisun Valley.”

The DEIR also fails to report that the Project violates the City of Fairfield General Plan Policy CI 2.7 states that “[a]ny roadway development shall be consistent with Land Use Element Policy LU 2.1, which protects Suisun Valley agricultural lands.” The North Connector clearly violates

this policy since the East End section proposes to construct 1.6 miles of a divided four-lane roadway on Suisun Valley agricultural land.

17.13
(Cont.)

The DEIR fails to state how much public funding have been spent on the conservation easements affected by the Project. The public has the expectation that conservation easements protect the land from development. This project violates that public trust.

17.14

The DEIR states that the total acreage affected by the Project on the East End is 29.8 acres. (Ibid., p 4.1-16). However, this fails to account for the prime farmland affected by the need for replacement access. (Ibid.)

17.15

In addition to not mitigating sufficient affected prime farmland, Mitigation Measure 4.1-1 fails to mitigate for parcelization and conflicting land uses. The remaining agricultural parcels on the East End will be bordered by roads; i.e., I-80, Abernathy Road, Rockville Road, and the North Connector. This mitigation measure should seek to first obtain conservation easements in the Suisun Valley in order to support land use policies of Solano County and the City of Fairfield. The Orderly Growth Committee also strongly suggests that mitigation should be on a 1.25 to 1 ratio.

17.16

How will land owners get from north side of their parcels to the south side when the North Connector severs them? Specifically, re: Figure 4.1-3 Parcels 0027-271-060, 027-251-330, and 0027-510-070 are severed and table 4.1-4 does not account for this.

17.17

Land Use

The DEIR omits Solano County General Plan, Land Use and Circulation Element, Chapter IX, Policy 1 regarding streets and roads states, “[p]lan and design a street and road system to serve areas where growth is desired and anticipated as shown on the general plan while minimizing growth inducing impacts to agricultural and open space areas.” The North Connector Project is violates this policy since there is no desired and planned growth depicted in the General Plan in the areas. Further, the Project is growth inducing in the Suisun Valley.

17.18

The DEIR states that although the Linear Park would be removed the open space easement would remain and therefore no impacts related to conflict with an existing open space conservation easement (Ibid., p. 4.1-9)! This is simply absurd! What does the city of Fairfield propose to do with this property? Will the City maintain this area? There is not much point to having an open space conservation easement over a vacant, abandoned piece of property. Clearly there is a conflict here. An easement removed is a significant act and should be fully mitigated, including maintaining complete public access to a replacement linear park with a replacement easement.

17.19

Page 4.1-10 -- The discussion of the Williamson Act contracts is confusing at best. In the second to last paragraph it says “for the reasons stated above ..” but it is not clear what reasons are being referred to. The last paragraph regarding conversion of prime farmlands is also confusing -- what is the point here? Clearly the cancellation of the Williamson Act contracts will lead directly to a physical impact (the loss of farmland) so the impact is significant.

17.20

Page 4.1-13 -- This starts the discussion of consistency with the Solano County General Plan. Clearly the project is inconsistent with Policy 2 of the Ag Element so the proposed fix is to be a General Plan Amendment to exclude the North Connector Project! This is absurd. The problem of course is that this sets a dangerous precedent. Have a consistency problem with the General Plan, no problem, lets do a General Plan amendment. There needs to be a discussion of the precedent that this will set.

17.21

The DEIR states that the Project is consistent with Solano County General Plan's Land Use Goal 1 in that it "provides regional transportation routes" and "would provide improved transit movement, promoting orderly growth." (Ibid., p. 4.1-13) The DEIR fails to note that Solano County General Plan, Chapter IX, states, "It is the County's role to provide circulation and transportation facilities and services for inter-county and inter-city travel and to support agricultural activities and rural development within the county." It is clearly evident that the East End section of the Project is not consistent with the County's role in transportation since its intent is to provide an intra-city transportation facility. There is no evidence that this segment serves any of the stated functions. It is difficult to extrapolate that the West End of the Project serves any of the functions.

17.22

Page 4.1-15 -- Says that project is consistent with City of Fairfield General Plan Agricultural Resources policies. On page 4.1-7 it is stated that City Program 1.4A requires "preservation of an equal amount of the same class of farmland within the area". Mitigation Measure 4.1-1 says the county shall acquire conservation easements "within the County". "(W)ithin the County" is not consistent with "within the area". The project is inconsistent with the City of Fairfield policies.

17.23

Page 4.1-15 -- There is discussion that the project would not lead to the conversion of farmland to non-agricultural uses. It is interesting that the authors point to existing zoning and agricultural protection policies in the city and County general plans that limit the potential for conversion of agricultural lands. Yet, clearly the North Connector project results in the loss of agricultural lands despite those policies. And the County proposes a General Plan Amendment due to the potential conflict. Clearly the policies do not prevent the conversion of farmland to non-agricultural uses.

17.24

With Russell Road now ending in a cul-de-sac this is an improvement over the previous design. However, without knowing what kind of access, or lack of access, will be provided to other lands in the area it is difficult to know the potential for conversion. It appears quite possible that all of the land between Interstate 80 and the North Connector will be taken out of agricultural and converted to non-agricultural use. This is especially true for the relocated truck scales for which the project has been designed to accommodate. This should be analyzed.

17.25

The DEIR claims that the North Connector "is to relieve traffic congestion on local streets and I-80, provide a link from the Green Valley and Suisun Valley Road areas to the central section of Fairfield." (Ibid., p. 4.1-14) While this statement may be true, it is flagrantly deceptive. Residents in Green Valley and Suisun Valley currently have Rockville Road to travel to Fairfield.

17.26

The DEIR claims that the Project will reduce “the fragmented nature of current development.” (Ibid.) It is a mockery to suggest that the North Connector reduces the fragmented nature of Fairfield’s development in Suisun Valley and Green Valley. Adding a road on a cherry-stem development does not defragment Fairfield’s development in lower Suisun Valley and lower Green Valley.

17.27

Page 4.1-16 Impact 4.1-1 discusses conversion of Prime Farmland to non-agricultural uses. As stated above, it appears there will be additional conversion of ag land to non-ag use. There is no evidence that those remainder parcels shown on Figure 4.1-3 that are not “indirectly” impacted will remain in agricultural use. And again there is the issue of the truck scales.

17.28

Mitigation Measures says that the county needs to acquire conservation easements “within the County”. This is inadequate. Need to acquire easements in close proximity to the project -- say Suisun Valley. Furthermore, there really is no way to mitigate for the loss of prime farmland. While the conservation easement is good the fact is there will be permanent loss of prime farmland and this is a significant unavoidable impact.

17.29

Note: there is reference to Table 4.1-5; appears that it should be Table 4.1-4.

17.30

Page 4.1-17 Impact 4.1-2 is wholly inadequate. Again, the authors provide no evident (just wishful thinking) that there will be no indirect impacts. Need further discussion of the county’s “farmable unit” concept and how this project meets that. Also, there needs to be further discussion about the implications of using land that is protected by a conservation easement. There is no indication that the EIR authors talked to anyone at the California Department of Conservation about the general issue of using lands protected by a State funded easement for such “public purposes” or the specifics of this easement. What specific steps will Solano County need to go through to acquire the necessary right-of-way that is currently protected?

17.31

The DEIR fails to report that the Project violates the City of Fairfield General Plan Policy CI 2.7 states that “[a]ny roadway development shall be consistent with Land Use Element Policy LU 2.1, which protects Suisun Valley agricultural lands.” The North Connector clearly violates this policy since the East End section proposes to construct 1.6 miles of a divided four-lane roadway on Suisun Valley agricultural land.

17.32

4.2 TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORTATION

17.33

The DEIR reflects several significant changes regarding traffic and transportation data in comparison to the North Connector Project Initial Study with Proposed Mitigated Negative Declaration / Environmental Assessment (MND) issued in 2006. None of this changed data is explained in the DEIR. The Orderly Growth Committee requests that these changes be fully explained.

Further, the DEIR claims that the Project “would decrease the travel time on I-80” and that this would minimize energy consumption. (Ibid.) The DEIR offers no evidence that travel time on I-80 will decrease as a result of the Project. This claim is disputable since the North Connector will have a number of stop signs and stop lights, and travel time would more likely be faster on

17.34

the freeway during other than freeway congestion times. The DEIR makes an illogical connection in consistency between the alleged decrease in travel time and Solano County's Development Strategy Objective 2 to minimize energy consumption. There is no significant decrease in energy consumption in traveling by car on a roadway rather than the freeway.

17.34
(Cont.)

The MND conceded that, with the Project, level of service would continue to remain an "F" at several intersections:

SR 12 and Red Top Road (AM and PM)

I-80 EB and Suisun Valley (PM)

SR 12 EB and Chadbourne (PM)

Rockville and Oliver (AM and PM)

17.35

The DEIR does not reflect any intersections remaining at LOS "F."

The MND reported that the LOS is forecast to worsen with the Project for the following key areas:

Intersection	Peak Hour	No Project	With Project
Business Center Dr and Green Valley	AM	C 20.3	D 44.1
Mangels Blvd and Suisun Valley	AM	B 19.0	F 86.4
Mangels Blvd and Suisun Valley	PM	C 26.8	D 42.9
Rockville Rd and Abernathy Rd	AM	E 35.6	F 76.7
I-80 EB Ramp and Abernathy Rd	PM	A 2.3	F 75.1
I-80 WB Ramp and Abernathy Rd	AM	D 26.7	F 248.4
I-80 WB Ramp and Abernathy Rd	PM	B 14.7	F 282.0
SR 12 WB and Chadbourne	AM	C 25.8	E 61.6
SR 12 WB and Chadbourne	PM	B 18.2	C 21.3

The DEIR indicates that only four intersections will suffer with degraded LOS with the Project, I-80 EB and Red Top Road, Business Center Drive and Green Valley Road, Mangels Boulevard and Suisun Valley Road, I-80 WB and Abernathy Road.

It is obvious that the Project will not improve many levels of service and degrade others. It is clear that the Project will degrade the level of service at the key intersections along the North Connector, leading into the vicious cycle of alleged transportation "improvements" upon transportation "improvements." This begs the obvious question of why the North Connector is proposed.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Network

17.36

The DEIR fails to adequately analyze the full scope of impact on pedestrian and bicycle transportation in the study area.

The United States Department of Transportation (USDOT), California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), and Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) have policies for the accommodation of pedestrians and cyclists. The USDOT issued a Policy Statement Integrating Bicycling and Walking into Transportation Infrastructure. Deputy Directive 64 (DD64), issued CalTrans policy for the full consideration of non-motorized travelers. Assembly Concurrent Resolution 211, encourages all cities and counties to implement the policy in DD64

and the USDOT design guidance to integrate bicycling and walking in building transportation infrastructure. MTC passed Resolution 3765 to establish policy for the accommodation of bicycle and pedestrian facilities during transportation planning, design, funding, and construction. The MTC resolution states that it “recognizes that coordinated development of pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure offers cost savings in the long term and opportunities to create safe and convenient bicycle and pedestrian travel.”

17.36
(Cont.)

The DEIR fails to include Solano County General Plan Transportation Objective 3, which is to “[e]stablish a system of trails, bikeways, and walkways as an alternate mode of travel which would provide convenient and safe movement of non-motorized traffic.” The Project fails to meet this County Objective since it does not include bicycle and pedestrian access on the East End and West End sections of the North Connector.

17.37

The DEIR fails to state that the City of Fairfield General Plan Transportation Goal calls for a “coordinated multi-modal circulation system.” The project description omits any description of pedestrian and bicycle access in the Central Section and West End section of the North Connector. There is no evidence that the Project complies with Fairfield’s transportation goal.

17.38

The DEIR fails to include the City of Fairfield General Plan Policy CI 9.1, which calls to “[e]xpand the City’s north-south and east-west bikeway network through the use of Class I, II and III bikeways.” The compartmentalized and fragmented planning and design of the Project does not address a bikeway network from the intersection of Oliver Rd and Rockville Rd to through Fairfield’s development in Suisun Valley, Green Valley, and Cordelia Villages.

17.39

The Project blatantly fails to provide accommodation for cyclists and pedestrians on the West End. The DEIR states that “the Project is designed to ensure that the existing bike path that parallels the north side of SR12 east of Red Top Road is realigned as part of the Red Top Road/North Connector/SR12 West intersection improvements to provide a 12-foot wide path and safe access to the new signalized intersection.” (Ibid., p. 4.2-27) However, the bike path on the north side of SR 12 will be removed with the truck climbing lane project.

17.40

The DEIR also states that the Project “would provide improved access and safety for pedestrians and bicyclists traveling the regional bike route that follows Red Top Road to McGary Road south of I-80.” (Ibid.) However, there is no Class I path on Red Top Road that would provide transportation facilities for pedestrians.

17.41

The DEIR fails to adequately analyze the full scope of impact on pedestrian and bicycle transportation in the study area.

The DEIR blatantly overlooks the impact on pedestrian access across Business Center Dr between Green Valley Road and its current western terminus. This section of Business Center Dr provides shopping, commercial, and community facilities to the residential development to the north. These facilities are within walking distance of these residences. Due to heavy traffic and road width, this section of Business Center Dr is already pedestrian unfriendly.

17.42

The Project proposal exacerbates the problem of pedestrian access and intensifies the pedestrian barrier because of an increase in traffic volume. In addition, at the public hearing on December 14, we were advised that the Green Valley Road and Business Center Dr intersection would be enlarged. However, this Project feature is not described in the IS/EA.

17.42
(Cont.)

The Project provides a multi-purpose path on the north side of the East End. The DEIR states that it “would tie into the existing Fairfield Linear Park at both ends.” However, the DEIR fails to describe how the new path would connect over Abernathy Road and tie into Fairfield’s Linear Park that is on the “south” side on the east side of Abernathy Road.

17.43

In addition, the DEIR fails to describe how the western terminus of the multi-purpose path would connect into pedestrian and bicycle facilities at Suisun Creek.

On page 4.1-2 it is stated that the Linear park is discussed in detail in section 4.12 Public Services and Recreation. A review of section 4.12 shows that there is no “detail” discussion of the Linear Park but rather a rambling justification of what Solano County proposes. Again, there is inadequate discussion of the conflict with the SLT easement over the existing Linear Park, what happens when the existing Linear Park is abandoned, the need to protect the new Linear Park alignment with a conservation easement, etc.

17.44

4.3 AIR QUALITY

17.45

The DEIR does not analyze the significant impacts of the Project on public health. The DEIR fails to disclose that Solano County has the highest asthma symptom prevalence in the state of California (California Health Interview Survey, UCLA Center for Health Policy Research).

Vehicular exhaust is a significant source of air pollutants. The *Journal of the American Medical Association* provided a report of a study of the impact of changes in transportation on air quality and childhood asthma during the 1996 Summer Olympic Games in Atlanta (Michael S. Friedman, et. al, “Impact of Changes in Transportation and Commuting Behaviors During the 1996 Summer Olympic Games in Atlanta on Air Quality and Childhood Asthma,” Journal of the American Medical Association, Vol. 285, No. 7, February 21, 2001). This study found a reduction in ozone air pollution and childhood asthma events directly attributable to the Atlanta’s efforts to reduce driving during the Olympic Games.

This Project will significantly increase traffic volume adjoining Nelda Mundy Elementary School and Solano Community College as well as the residential areas surrounding these educational facilities. Not only will traffic volume increase, so will idling time as depicted by the LOS analysis. There will be a significant adverse impact to the air quality affecting our children and young adults resulting in increased asthma symptoms as well as other health related complications.

The DEIR fails to disclose this significant impact on residents and does not provide any avoidance, minimization, or mitigation measure.

Thereby, since the North Connector Project will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, according to California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, California Code of Regulations, title 14, § 15065(a)(4), the STA must require an Environmental Impact Report. Due to the adverse effects on public health, this Project must also be submitted to a Health Impact Assessment.

17.45
(Cont.)

4.11 POPULATION AND HOUSING

17.46

The DEIR states that the Project is consistent with Solano County General Plan's Land Use Goal 1 in that it "provides regional transportation routes" and "would provide improved transit movement, promoting orderly growth." (Ibid., p. 4.11-13) Yet, the DEIR omits Solano County General Plan, Land Use and Circulation Element, Chapter IX, Policy 1 regarding streets and roads states, "[p]lan and design a street and road system to serve areas where growth is desired and anticipated as shown on the general plan while minimizing growth inducing impacts to agricultural and open space areas." The North Connector Project violates this policy since the Project is growth inducing, particularly in the Suisun Valley.

The DEIR states that the Project "could lead to indirect population growth through the encouragement of future development." (Ibid., p 4.11-7) The DEIR claims that Solano County's Orderly Growth Initiative prevents development outside of municipal areas. However, the Solano County General Plan is currently being updated and recommendations to date reflect a significantly different plan. In addition, with the expiration of the Orderly Growth Initiative in 2010 and the stated objective of the Solano County Board of Supervisors to hold an election in 2008 to adopt a new County General Plan, the OGI protection from the growth inducements of the North Connector are likely to be eliminated.

The DEIR fails to include any avoidance, minimization, or mitigation measures for the growth inducing aspects of the North Connector Project.

4.12 PUBLIC SERVICES AND RECREATION

17.47

Parks and Recreation Facilities

The DEIR fails to include the Solano County General Plan Land Use and Circulation Element, Chapter IV, Policy 7: "The County will plan and, if feasible, jointly undertake with other jurisdictions programs to secure inter-regional parks, other recreational opportunities, and Federal assistance for their development." Solano County General Plan Park and Recreation Element Objective 7 states, "[p]rovide for the regional recreation needs of the County" and Policy 7 B calls for the County to "encourage development of linkages (such as riding, hiking and biking trails) between population centers and regional recreational facilities."

The DEIR fails to include the City of Fairfield General Plan Open Space Policy OS 11.4 A to "[a]ctively promote ridgetop and hillside trails along major north-south ridges connecting Benicia and eastern Vallejo and between Benicia and Green Valley to become major links to the Bay Area Ridge Trails System." In addition, Fairfield Open Space Policy OS 11.5 states, "Where a project involves potential open space, natural resource reserves, or recreational lands of interest to more than one entity, the City shall work cooperatively with the other involved agencies."

The DEIR also omits City of Fairfield OS Policy 12.7, which seeks to “[p]reserve and develop the entire Linear Park system, from Solano Community College into the Peabody Walters Master Plan areas.”

17.47
(Cont.)

If the purpose of the East End multi-purpose path is to replace the Fairfield Linear Park, the DEIR fails to describe where and how the future path will connect to the existing Fairfield Linear Park in order to provide uninterrupted, non-motorized access currently provided by the Park from Solano Community College to its eastern terminus. Otherwise it appears that that the proposed multipurpose path abruptly ends at Abernathy Road in conjunction with the divided four-lane roadway and at Suisun Creek.

17.48

The DEIR briefly mentions the Bay Area Ridge Trail. The Project provides the opportunity to fulfill County and Fairfield policies and inter-jurisdictional cooperation to address non-motorized transportation as well as recreational needs and opportunities. A multi-use path along the West End of the North Connector would serve the future connection of pedestrian and bicycle access between the north and south sides of I-80 as well as the Bay Area Ridge Trail.

17.49

Comments on Issues Pertaining to the West End

17.50

The West End section of the North Connector Project proposes to build 1.04 miles of two-lane roadway from the western end of Business Center Dr to State Route 12. The MND indicated a forecast of 400 to 600 cars in the AM peak hour and 250 to 350 cars in the PM peak hour. However, the DEIR has provided no data to indicate the predicted volume of traffic on the West End.

The DEIR describes numerous significant impacts on the biological environment on the West End. Some of these are:

17.51

- 4.5-1 The habitat of the Pallid Bat
- 4.5-2 The California Red Legged Frog and its habitat
- 4.5-3 The habitat of the Pacific Pont Turtle
- 4.5-6 Federally protected waters
- 4.5-7 Nesting raptor species
- 4.5-8 Passerine and Special-Status nesting birds
- 4.5-9 Native California trees and Heritage trees

The DEIR states that the West End crosses above the Green Valley fault as well as near the Cordelia fault zone. (Ibid., p. 4.8-2) The DEIR also states, “[l]arge-scale landslides have been mapped in the general vicinity of the West End. There is a large, ancient landslide mass immediately west of the Project site. The ridgeline is classified as being marginally susceptible to the occurrence of debris flow with the highest areas being those underlain by Markley Sandstone. The slopes in the area of the ridgeline should be considered naturally unstable.” (Ibid., p. 4.8-3)

The DEIR describes numerous significant geology, soils, and seismic impacts. Some of these are:

17.52

- 4.8-1 Substantial adverse effects due to rupture of a known earthquake fault
- 4.8-2 Substantial adverse effects due to strong seismic ground shaking
- 4.8-3 Substantial adverse effects due to seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction
- 4.8-4 Substantial adverse effects due to landslides
- 4.8-5 Substantial soil erosion or loss of topsoil due to use of on-site soils for fill
- 4.8-6 Substantial soil erosion or loss of topsoil due to presence of high groundwater
- 4.8-7 Soil subsidence due to unstable soils
- 4.8-8 Substantial adverse effects due to seismic related ground failure, including liquefaction
- 4.8-9 Substantial risk to life or property due to expansive soil

The DEIR provides tentative mitigation measures. Many of the mitigation measures are based on additional investigation. In addition, some mitigation measures continue for the life of the North Connector, such as 4.8-9: "... maintenance, repair, and/or occasional replacement of the slopes and/or improvements shall be provided for on an as-needed basis for the lifetime of the Project. Other engineering solutions may also be required to reduce the potential for creep." (Ibid., p 4.8-9)

17.52
(Cont.)

As mitigation, the DEIR relies on tentative measures based on future studies after Project approval. This approach is anathema to CEQA. The current mitigation measures prevent the public from understanding the full scope and potential costs of the Project.

The West End section of the North Connector Project produces massive impacts to biology, geology, soils, and other important resources and results in limited benefit. The construction and mitigation measures will require significant financial expenditures. Consequently, the massive impacts to the environment and expenditures of public funds which result in limited benefit raise an enormously significant question about the viability of the West End section of the North Connector.

17.53

Cumulative Effects

In the list of transportation projects considered in the cumulative analysis on page 6-3 there is no mention of the relocated truck scales. This is a major flaw in the EIR analysis. A very brief mention is made of the County General Plan update process, not including recommendations for increased development in both Suisun and Green Valleys that is currently proposed by the Citizens Advisory Committee. Clearly, the North Connector puts significant growth pressure on both valleys. Overall the discussion of cumulative effects is weak and inadequate.

17.54

Conclusion

The DEIR does not disclose all pertinent information. It contains numerous erroneous statements and inconsistencies. More importantly, the DEIR fails to disclose all impacts of the proposed North Connector Project. Nor does it support the conclusion that all of the potential impacts resulting from the Project will be mitigated. The DEIR improperly concludes that some impacts are mitigated based on vague and tentative mitigation measures as to method and extent.

17.55

It is even questionable whether some mitigation measure would even be implemented. The failure to disclose all Project attributes and impacts, and to provide adequate avoidance, minimization and mitigation are fatal shortcomings and violate CEQA.

17.55
(Cont.)

Sincerely,

Les Barclay
Chair, Solano County Orderly Growth Committee
707-429-4118

Response to Letter 17 – Solano County Orderly Growth Committee

Comment 17.1. The comments in this letter are submitted on behalf of the Solano Orderly Growth Committee.

The comment is noted.

Comment 17.2. The purpose of the letter is to identify impacts and issues related to topics including transit and transportation.

The comment is noted.

Comment 17.3. The comment indicates that the Purpose and Need for the Project is not adequately addressed.

The Project Description in the Recirculated Draft EIR was revised to address this comment on page 3-1. The purpose and need explains in more detail the current and future congestion on I-80 which the Project is intended to address.

Figure 3-2 in the Recirculated Draft EIR was also added to better explain the gaps in the local circulation network and improved congestion between Suisun Valley/Green Valley and Downtown Fairfield.

Comment 17.4. The comment states that the Purpose and Need section omits an analysis and justification of the need for the West End of the North Connector.

Refer to response to Comment 16.1.

Comment 17.5. The comment states that a discussion of the truck scales relocation should be included in Chapter 3.0, Project Description.

Refer to response to Comment 1.2.

Comment 17.6. The comment indicates that a discussion of the timing of the construction of the new multi-use path be included in the EIR.

Construction of the multi-use path would be concurrent with construction of the East End of the Project, as discussed on page 4.12-7 of the Recirculated Draft EIR.

Comment 17.7. The comment states that the Solano County General Plan Amendment be discussed in Chapter 3.0, Project Description, of the EIR.

The Recirculated Draft EIR was revised to address this comment. The Solano County General Plan Amendment was added to Chapter 3.0, Project Description, on page 3-4 of the Recirculated Draft EIR.

Comment 17.8. The comment states that the project Description should include a discussion of the right-of-way acquisition as part of the Project.

The need to acquire private property for the Project is discussed in Chapter 4.1, Land Use and Agricultural Resources, on pages 4.1-10 through 4.1-12. The EIR indicates that privately owned parcels would be acquired in accordance with the process governed by the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisitions Policies Act of 1970 as amended.

Comment 17.9. The comment states that Table 3-1 of the EIR should provide a discussion of the General Plan Amendments, Williamson Act contract cancellations, and property acquisition.

Refer to response to Comment 17.7 above. The Recirculated Draft EIR was also revised to include a discussion of the City of Fairfield General Plan Amendment on page 3-4.

Comment 17.10. The comment states that the EIR fails to provide support for the conclusion that the North Connector Project is necessary.

Comment noted. Refer to response to Comment 16.1 and 17.3 above.

Comment 17.11. The comment indicates that the EIR does not adequately disclose the location of the access roads and extent of the additional construction required for providing such access.

The Recirculated Draft EIR was revised to address this comment. The Project Description, on page 3-2, and Figure 3.3 were revised to clearly indicate that Russell Road would be a cul-de-sac and that the Project would replace severed access routes by providing driveway access (right in/right out) via the North Connector.

Refer to response to Comment 7.3.

Comment 17.12. The comment states that the EIR does not account for the removal of the bicycle path along SR12 as a result of the construction of the SR12 truck climbing lanes.

The Recirculated Draft EIR on page 3-3 was revised in response to this comment. Also, see response to Comment 8.1.

Comment 17.13. The comment indicates that the Project is inconsistent with the Solano County and City of Fairfield General Plan policies.

Refer to response to Comment 15.3.

Comment 17.14. The comment suggests that the Project would not benefit the public by protecting the land under conservation easement from development.

Only the 9.97-acre portion of the conservation easement directly affected by the Project will be converted to roadway, multi-use path, and associated right-of-way. STA will mitigate these impacts to this land. Mitigation Measure 4.1-2 requires the purchase of 1.25 acres of conservation easement over Prime Farmland in Solano County for every 1 acre of land under conservation easement impacted by the Project. The mitigation measure will result in more land under conservation easement than there is currently, resulting in an overall benefit to the public.

Comment 17.15. The comment states that the Prime Farmland affected by the need for replacement access is not adequately addressed.

The Recirculated Draft EIR was updated based on this comment. The total amount of Prime Farmland affected by the Project in the East End is 29.77 acres. This amount includes impacts associated with replacement driveways for access that is severed by the Project.

Comment 17.16. The comment indicates that Mitigation Measure 4.1-1 of the EIR fails to mitigation for parcelization and conflicting land uses.

Refer to responses to Comment Letter 1.

Comment 17.17. The comment questions how access to parcels north of the Project would be accessed.

Refer to comment response 17.11 above.

Comment 17.18. The comment states that the North Connector Project violates Solano County General Plan, Land Use and Circulation Element, Chapter IX, Policy 1 by promoting growth in an area not specified by the General Plan and inducing growth in Suisun Valley.

A discussion of growth inducement is included on page 6-1 of the EIR. As stated, the North Connector Project is designed with limited connections to adjacent properties (i.e. direct access would only be allowed to replace access that would be severed by the new roadway or provide access to allow continued farming). Refer to page 6-2 of the Recirculated Draft EIR for discussion. As discussed on page 6-2 of the Recirculated Draft EIR, the North Connector would be designed to be compatible with existing land use and zoning designations. No direct or indirect growth inducement is anticipated as a result of the Project. Refer to response to Comment 15.3.

Comment 17.19. This comment indicates that the removal of the Linear Park conflicts with the existing open space conservation easement.

As discussed on page 4.12-7 and 4.12-8 of the Recirculated Draft EIR, the Project would not be in conflict with the open space conservation easement over this property. However, the City of Fairfield and the Solano Land Trust have entered discussions to transfer the existing open space easement over this portion of the Linear Park to a new segment of the Linear Trail planned in the northeast portion of the City. Once the open space easement is transferred and the new multi-use path and greenway are constructed as part of the Project, the City will abandon the existing trail segment and close it off to public access (refer to Appendix B).

Comment 17.20. This comment indicates that the cancellation of the Williamson Act contracts will lead directly to a physical impact of the loss of farmland, resulting in a significant impact.

The discussion of lands held in Williamson Act contract was revised in the Recirculated Draft EIR on page 4.1-14 and 4.1-15. The discussion clarifies that only the portion of the land within each contract that would be needed for roadway construction and operation would be removed from the Williamson Act contract. The Williamson Act contract over the remainder of the land within the contract would remain unaffected.

Refer to response to Comments 1.1 and 1.3.

Comment 17.21. This comment indicates that Project is inconsistent with the Solano County General Plan.

The discussion of the Agricultural Land Use Policies of Solano County, particularly Policy 2, was revised in the Recirculated Draft EIR. The Solano County General Plan Amendment does not change the policy but rather clarifies that the policy was not intended to prevent public agencies from acquiring right of way for public purposes.

Comment 17.22. The comment states that while the East End of the Project remains consistent with County's role to provide transportation and circulation facilities, the West End of the Project appears unnecessary.

The Recirculated Draft EIR was revised to address this comment. Consistency with the policies cited in the comment is discussed on page 4.1-12 of the Recirculated Draft EIR, which supports the conclusions that the Project is consistent with those policies. This is further supported by Comment Letter 12, Comment 12.3.

Comment 17.23. The comment indicates that the Project is inconsistent with the City of Fairfield General Plan policies regarding agricultural operations.

It should be noted that the majority of the North Connector Project is located within the boundaries of Solano County. Furthermore, the majority of the area within the City of Fairfield is already occupied with developed uses and not used for agricultural purposes. Pages 4.1-13 through 4.1-14 of the Recirculated Draft EIR include a discussion of the Project's consistency with the City of Fairfield General Plan policies. Also see responses to Comments 1.1 and 1.3.

Comment 17.24. This comment again states that the Project is inconsistent with the policies and objectives of the Solano County and City of Fairfield General Plans, specifically in regards to the loss of agricultural resources.

The Recirculated Draft EIR was revised to address this comment on pages 4.1-12 through 4.1-14 and 4.1-17. The Project would lead to the conversion of farmland in areas where it would cause a direct (where the new roadway would be located) and an indirect (where non-farmable portions of existing parcels would be created). Refer to page 4.1-17 of the Recirculated Draft EIR for discussion. Mitigation Measure 4.1-1 mitigates for the loss of Prime Farmland as a result of the Project, as it requires a 1:1 replacement ratio. Also refer to response to Comments 1.1 and 1.3.

Comment 17.25. This comment indicates that a discussion of the land acquired for the access roads and land between I-80 and the proposed North Connector be discussed in regards to the amount of agricultural land being converted to non-agricultural uses.

Refer to response to Comment 1.2 . The EIR did consider potential impacts to lands between Interstate 80 and the North Connector. In fact the EIR indicates in Table 4.1-5, Figure 4.1-3 and discussed on page 4.1-17 that the Project would result in indirect impacts on 10.33 acres of farmland through the creation of non-farmable portions of existing parcels. All of these non-farmable portions of existing parcels are located between I-80 and the North Connector. However, with regard to the area referred to in the comment where the future westbound truck scales are planned to be located, this impact is discussed in the EIR in Chapter 6 – Cumulative Impacts. This area was not considered indirectly impacted by the Project because the area between I-80 and the North Connector would be large enough for continued farming (approximately 26 acres) and the removal of this area for the westbound Truck Scales facility is being studied as a separate project as discussed in response to comment 1.2

Comment 17.26. This comment states that while the North Connector Project may reduce traffic congestion on local streets and I-80, it is not needed to provide a link between Green Valley and Suisun Valley and Fairfield.

Refer to response to Comments 16.1 and 17.3 above.

Comment 17.27. The comment states that North Connector Project will contribute to the fragmented nature of current development in the Project area.

Construction of the North Connector Project would provide additional options for local motorists in the Green Valley and Suisun Valley area, as well as provide additional access for local traffic traveling to either SR12 West or SR12 East. Currently motorists in lower (southerly) Suisun Valley and Green Valley (in areas along Mangels Boulevard, Business Center Drive, and Neitzel Road) are forced to travel north on Suisun Valley Road to Rockville Road. Development of North Connector would provide a more direct route to areas east, as seen in Figure 3-2 of the Recirculated Draft EIR.

Comment 17.28. This comment indicates that the discussion of the potential conversion of the remainder parcels and the impacts as a result of the truck scales are inadequate.

Refer to response to Comments 1.1, 1.2 and 1.3.

Comment 17.29. The comment indicates that the discussion of the County's need to acquire conservation easements, as in Mitigation Measures 4.1-1 and 4.1-2, is not adequate and that the easements should be acquired within Suisun Valley.

Refer to responses to Comment Letter 1.

Comment 17.30. This comment indicates that Table 4.1-5 of the EIR should read as Table 4.1-4.

Table 4.1-5 has been revised to read as "Table 4.1-4" in the Recirculated Draft EIR.

Comment 17.31. This comment states that the discussion of impacts to agricultural conservation easements is not adequate.

Impact and Mitigation Measure 4.1-1 of the Recirculated Draft EIR was revised to address this comment. On page 4.1-17, the Recirculated Draft EIR identifies that the Project would indirectly impact an additional 10.33 acres of agricultural land through the creation of non-farmable portions of existing parcels. However, the STA shall acquire conservation easements for Prime Farmland at a 1:1 replacement ratio for land considered impacted within the Project area.

Comment 17.32. This comment indicates that the EIR fails to state that the Project violates the City of Fairfield General Plan Policy CI.2.7 regarding development within Suisun Valley.

The Recirculated Draft EIR was revised to address this comment. Page 4.1-13 of the EIR was revised to more clearly state how the Project, as designed, is consistent with this policy.

Comment 17.33. The commenter indicates that the Draft EIR does not adequately address the local circulation system or provide data relative to the amount of traffic that would presumably use North Connector.

Chapter 4.2, Traffic and Transportation, of the Recirculated Draft EIR discusses traffic conditions. According to the traffic analysis, which uses output from the Napa Solano County Travel Demand Model, by the year 2020, I-80 is projected to carry approximately 19,000 vehicles during the AM peak hour and 18,000 vehicles during the PM peak hour in the vicinity of the North Connector Project. With the implementation of the North Connector Project, these volumes would be reduced by approximately 5.4 percent (1,028 vehicles) during the AM peak hour, and by 7.2 percent (1,306 vehicles) during the PM peak hour. These re-routed trips, along with other local trips which would have otherwise used the freeway to reach their destinations.

Comment 17.34. This comment states that the North Connector Project would not result in a significant decrease in energy consumption as a result of the potential decrease in travel time on I-80.

Consumption of energy would be reduced by the construction of the North Connector Project in two ways. Construction of the roadway would result in a more direct route for motorists in lower (southern) Green Valley and Suisun Valley to travel east. This is true during periods of high and low congestion on I-80. It would also reduce consumption of energy that occurs during periods of high congestion on I-80 by providing local traffic with alternative routes, where traffic would not be as congested.

Comment 17.35. This comment indicates that the EIR does not report the same traffic level of service conditions as in the Mitigated Negative Declaration, issued in November 2006.

The Recirculated Draft EIR was revised to respond to this comment. As described in Chapter 4.2, Traffic and Transportation, of the Recirculated Draft EIR, the future condition with the Project would only result in one intersection operating at an unacceptable level of service (LOS). This intersection is identified as Intersection #15, I-80 Eastbound and Suisun Valley Road, within the EIR. All other intersections in the study area will operate at LOS D or better under future with Project conditions. Mitigation Measure 4.2-2 of the Recirculated Draft EIR reduces this impact to a less than significant level as well.

Comment 17.36. The commenter indicates that integrated bicycling and walking infrastructure should be incorporated in building transportation infrastructure, such as the Project. The comment also states that the EIR fails to analyze impacts on bicycle and pedestrian transportation.

As discussed on pages 4.12-7 and 4.12-8 of the Recirculated Draft EIR, the Project within the East End involves construction of a new 1.56-mile long, 10-foot wide multi-use path and greenway along the north side of the new roadway between Abernathy Road and Suisun Creek. Implementation of the multi-use path demonstrates the coordination of pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure in the North Connector Project.

Additionally, as discussed on page 4.2-28 of the Recirculated Draft EIR, the implementation of the signalized intersection at SR12/Red Top Road/North Connector would provide improved access and safety for bicyclists and pedestrians using the multi-use path. Construction of the new multi-use path in the East End in combination with the intersection improvements in the West End demonstrate improved conditions for pedestrians and bicyclists.

Comment 17.37. This comment indicates that the Solano County General Plan Transportation Objective 3 was not included in the EIR and that the Project fails to meet this objective as it does not include bicycle and pedestrian access as part of the Project.

The Recirculated Draft EIR has been revised to include the Solano County General Plan Transportation Objective 3 on page 4.2-9. With the implementation of Mitigation Measure 4.2-2, the Project would not result in LOS D or worse at any of the study intersections and would therefore maintain consistency with this General Plan objective. Also refer to response to Comment 17.36 above.

Comment 17.38. This comment indicates that the EIR does not include the City of Fairfield General Plan Transportation Goals and that the Project Description of the EIR does not address a description of the bicycle and pedestrian access in the Central and West End of the North Connector.

The Project does not include a “Central Section.” As described above under response to Comment 17.36, the Project includes pedestrian and bicycle amenities within the Project limits. As such, the Project maintains consistency with the City’s transportation goal.

Comment 17.39. This comment indicates that the EIR does not include a discussion of the City of Fairfield General Plan Policy CI 9.1.

Page 4.2-9 of the Recirculated Draft EIR was revised to reflect this comment. The City of Fairfield General Plan Policy CI 9.1 was added to page 4.2-9 of the Recirculated Draft EIR. Also refer to responses to Comment 17.36 and 17.38 above.

Comment 17.40. This comment states that the Project does not provide accommodation for bicyclists and pedestrians in the West End of the Project.

Refer to response to Comment 17.36.

Comment 17.41. This comment indicates that the Project does not include a Class I path on Red Top Road, which would provide transportation facilities for pedestrians.

This comment is addressed on page 4.12-7 of the Recirculated Draft EIR. Within the East End, the Project includes the construction of a new multi-use path and greenway along the north side of the new roadway between Abernathy Road and Suisun Creek. This new multi-use path would connect with the Linear Park at Suisun Creek.

Comment 17.42. This comment indicates that the impact to pedestrian access across Business Center Drive between Green Valley Road and its western terminus is not adequately discussed and that the Project would exacerbate problems to pedestrian access in the area.

The Project does not propose to route pedestrians and bicyclists along existing Business Center Drive to get to the West End of the North Connector. Pedestrian and bicyclists would be able to continue to use the bike and pedestrian facilities on Business Center Drive to access the commercial and retail uses along the roadway. Pedestrians and bicycle travel further west may utilize the existing Class I path between Green Valley Road and the SR12/Red Top Road area that runs along the north side of I-80.

Comment 17.43. This comment states that the EIR should further explain the connectivity of the new multi-use path created by the Project and the existing Linear Park within the City of Fairfield and the pedestrian and bicycle facilities at Suisun Creek.

The multi-use path would tie directly to the existing Linear Park on the east side of Abernathy Road.

Comment 17.44. This comment indicates that the discussion of the Linear Park and the open space conservation easement is inadequate. The comment also indicates that the reference to the Linear Park in Chapter 4.12, Public Services and Recreation, is incorrect.

The Recirculated Draft EIR was revised to address this comment. Chapter 4.12, Public Services and Recreation, includes a discussion of the multi-use path.

Comment 17.45. This comment states that the EIR does not analyze the impacts of the Project on public health, specifically in regards to air quality.

Chapter 4.3, Air Quality, of the Recirculated Draft EIR includes a full analysis of the potential air quality impacts of the Project using standard methodology for air quality impacts by Caltrans, other local agencies, and CEQA. In addition, a more detailed evaluation of the two intersections in the study area that have the highest traffic levels was conducted to determine if carbon monoxide (CO) levels, which is the pollutant of most concern when it comes to human health, would exceed state standards. This evaluation concluded that potential CO levels would be well below state ambient air quality standards. Refer to pages 4.3-11 through 4.3-12 of the Recirculated Draft EIR.

Comment 17.46. This comment states that the Project would induce growth within Suisun Valley and that the EIR does not adequately address impacts and mitigation for growth inducement.

As cited in the comment the issue of growth inducement is discussed in on page 4.11-7 of the Recirculated Draft EIR. While this section does say that the Project could lead to indirect population growth it goes on to explain that such growth is limited by the existing agricultural zoning designation of the land within the Project area and the County's Orderly Growth Initiative (Measure A). While the County's Orderly Growth Initiative expires in 2010 and the County is currently in the process of updating its General Plan, the current General Plan and Growth Initiative are in effect and it would be speculative to evaluate growth within the Project area in the absence of the Orderly Growth Initiative or alternative land use designation as suggested in the comment.

Comment 17.47. This comment indicates that the EIR does not include the Solano County General Plan Land Use and Circulation Element, Chapter IV, Policy 7, nor does it address the City of Fairfield General Plan Open Space Policy OS 11.4A and OS 12.7.

Refer to response to Comment Letter 4, which includes a discussion of the Linear Park.

Comment 17.48. This comment indicates that the EIR does not fully describe where and how the future multi-use path will connect to the existing Linear Park.

Refer to response to Comment 17.43.

Comment 17.49. This comment states that the multi-use path along the West End of the Project would serve future connection of pedestrian and bicycle access across I-80 and the Bay Area Ridge Trail.

Refer to responses to Comments 14.2, 14.3, and 14.4.

Comment 17.50. This comment states that the EIR does not provide data regarding the predicted volume of traffic on the West End of the Project.

The traffic analysis in the Recirculated Draft EIR addresses intersection level of service, which is the standard methodology for traffic impact analysis in CEQA documents. However, as part of this analysis, traffic volumes in the West End were calculated and are shown in the intersection volume diagrams in the Recirculated Draft EIR. Refer to Figures 4.2-6 and 4.2-7 of the Recirculated Draft EIR, specifically Intersection #1, SR12/Red Top Road/North Connector.

Comment 17.51. The commenter discusses the biological resources and cultural resources described in the West End.

The comment is noted.

Comment 17.52. This comment states that the mitigation measures provided in Chapter 4.8, Geology and Soils, are tentative measures and would require additional investigation.

The mitigation measures contained in Chapter 4.8, Geology and Soils, of the Recirculated Draft EIR are based on site specific information and present either specific measures to be implemented prior to, during, and post construction to address the soils and geologic conditions of the area. These measures are typical for similar projects in similar geologic conditions and at an appropriate level of detail to ensure the measures will be successful and implemented.

Comment 17.53. The commenter states that the North Connector Project would require significant financial expenditures.

The comment is noted.

Comment 17.54. The comment indicates that a discussion of the truck scales is needed in the Cumulative Impact section of the EIR.

On page 6-3 of the Recirculated Draft EIR, the relocated truck scales are identified as part of the I-80/I-680/SR12 Interchange Project. The current Solano County General Plan update process is mentioned in the Recirculated Draft EIR on page 6-5 as well. However, since this process is underway and no formal update has been approved it would be speculative for the EIR to include an evaluation of a future land use scenario that might emerge from this update process.

Comment 17.55. The commenter summarizes comments regarding the completeness, conclusions, and mitigation of the Draft EIR.

These items are discussed in greater depth in the previous comment responses.



LETTER 18

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October 26, 2007

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Solano Transportation Authority
One Harbor Center, Suite 130
Suisun, CA 94585

Subject: Comments on North Connector Project, Draft Environmental Impact Report, Prepared by the Solano Transportation Authority, September 2007

Solano Land Trust (SLT) holds a conservation easement in perpetuity on property along the route of the proposed North Connector, known as the Valine easement, APNs: 27-251-33; 27-271-06 (Williamson Act); and 27-251-34; 27-251-40; 27-251-42; 27-251-44 (panhandle area). Solano Land Trust also holds a conservation easement over Fairfield's Linear Park which extends from Solano Community College eastward to Fairfield's northeast quadrant.

Staff has been authorized by the Board of Directors to submit these comments by minute action at the October 23, 2007 regularly-scheduled meeting.

The following paragraphs are intended to provide context to STA as to the importance and significance of conservation easements.

Significance of Conservation Easements

Solano Land Trust is a 501(c)3 not-for profit corporation whose mission is to protect farmlands and open space in Solano County. As such, we are a member of the Land Trust Alliance (LTA). LTA requires, as a condition of membership, that members adopt LTA Land Trust Standards and Practices (See excerpt, Attachment 1). SLT, by Resolution 2005-19, adopted these standards at the September 28, 2005 meeting (See resolution, Attachment 2). Standard 11: Conservation Easement Stewardship addresses, among other things, the rights and obligations land trusts have when easements are subject to condemnation (See Standard 11, Attachment 3).

Conservation easements are the means by which land trusts across the nation protect our important farmlands in perpetuity. In so doing, land trusts are carrying out both national policy and, in the case of California, California policy.

Solano Land Trust has an Agricultural Conservation Easement Plan adopted in August, 2002 after several years of study by the Board, staff, consultants and an Ag Easement Advisory Group composed of a wide range of stakeholders representing County and local government, business and the local agricultural interests (see Acknowledgements page, Attachment 4).

According to the Executive Summary, page ES-2, "The Ag Easement Advisory Group identified four specific areas as having high agricultural preservation priority...." Suisun Valley was one of the four. The report continues "These areas all have highly productive Class I soils capable of growing almost any crop. Soils of this quality comprise less than 2% of the Earth's surface and are irreplaceable if lost. These areas also have reliable water sources and face a significant degree of threat. The SLT will focus its efforts on acquiring conservation easements in these areas over the next 20 years."

The following two sections describe the easements affected by the North Connector and their significance.

Valine Easement

In the case of the Valine easement, SLT has committed to "...undertaking to honor the intentions of Grantor stated herein and to preserve and protect in perpetuity the Conservation Values of the Property for the benefit of this and future generations." (See page 3, paragraph N of Easement – see full Easement, Attachment 5).

This easement was recorded July 6, 2000. Paragraph K (page 2) states that "The conservation purposes of this Conservation Easement are recognized by, and the grant of this Conservation Easement will serve, the following clearly delineated governmental conservation policies...." Cited are:

- Resolution 2000-50 of the Board of Supervisors which expressed support for the easement and declared it consistent with the General Plan.
- Various sections of California code and Constitution, which support conservation easements.

The easement was funded by the Department of Conservation as "a substantial investment by the people of the State of California in the long-term conservation of valuable agricultural land, and the retention of agricultural land in perpetuity." (Page 3, paragraph M.)

The easement covers 82.35 acres, which includes a 2.49-acre driveway. Paragraph 5 (d) prohibits any subdivision or de facto subdivision, except as permitted under Article 6 (b).

Paragraph 13.1 (a) on page 12 covers condemnation. Subparagraph (1), (2), and (3) cover allocation of proceeds from any eminent domain action.

Linear Park Easement

The Grant of Conservation Easement with Covenants covering the linear park was recorded January 28, 1992 (Attachment 6) with the Solano Farmlands and Open Space Foundation, since renamed Solano Land Trust. Paragraph 3, page 1, notes that the City Council adopted resolution 90-311 on Nov. 13, 1990 “(a) to delete all references to the use of the Linear Park as an arterial roadway; and (b) to add the Linear Park to the System of Urban Recreation and Open Space ... to provide linkages among recreation, park, school, shopping, industrial, residential and other activity centers of the community as an important alternative to automotive transportation.”

The Grant further stated (paragraph 5, page 1), “The purposes of this grant of easement and its acceptance ... is to keep the Linear Park in its natural, scenic, and open-space condition all for the enjoyment and use of the public.”

Page 2, paragraphs 4 and 5, provide for enforcement. Specifically, paragraph 5 provides, “The Foundation shall be entitled to recover money damages for any injury to this conservation easement or to the interest being protected thereby or for the violation of the terms of this easement.”

Page 3, paragraph 8, prohibits amendment or abandonment without the consent of SLT. Paragraph 8 states, “This easement shall not be rescinded, altered, amended or abandoned in whole or in part as to the property or any portion thereof or as to any term, condition, restriction or covenant without the prior written consent of Foundation.”

The above narrative is intended to provide context for our specific comments on the Draft EIR which now commences.

The Draft EIR is deficient in several areas and needs to be revised. Our comments regarding information in the Draft EIR and some of the area where the Draft EIR is deficient are described below:

3.0 Project Description

On page 3-2, the Draft EIR notes (paragraph 2) that a cul de sac would be constructed at Russell Road. A footnote states there would be no vehicular access connection between Russell Road and the Project. We support this separation as consistent with City of Fairfield Land Use Policies (2.1A).

18.1

Paragraph 2 further notes that the project alignment has been designed to accommodate the proposed future relocation and expansion of the westbound I-80 truck scale facility. This alignment directly impacts the Valine easement by splitting it in two. This split violates the spirit, if not the law, of the conservation easement and the Draft EIR must be revised to address this issue. Since the alignment is occurring at this phase of the Project, the impact of the I-80 westbound truck scales needs to be identified and mitigated for in this Draft EIR.

18.2

Page 3-2, Paragraph 4 states the project would include the construction of suitable replacement access roads (for property-owner vehicles and agricultural equipment) for affected agricultural parcels in the area. This may be appropriate; however, the Draft EIR does not identify their location or anything else about them which would be necessary in order to evaluate their impact, particularly as it affects the Valine easement. The Draft EIR needs to be revised to include a discussion of the access roads.

18.3

Paragraph 5 describes facilities designed to meet stormwater treatment requirements. It is not clear if these are to affect the Valine property. The project description needs to be revised to include these facilities and the Draft EIR needs to discuss impacts and any required mitigation identified.

18.4

Paragraph 6 proposes a new 10-foot wide multi-use path along the north side of the new roadway within an approximately 13-foot wide landscaped area. The Project Description does not adequately describe the multi-use path. For example, does this mean that the project will include 6.5 feet of landscaping on either side of a 10-foot wide path or something else? It is also stated that the City of Fairfield will "pursue" a General Plan Amendment to remove the existing Linear Park. Is this a part of the proposed project? If yes, the Project Description needs to be revised to include this action and the specific General Plan Amendment language needs to be included.

18.5

We also noted that the project description does not indicate that there is a conservation easement on the linear park. The loss of the conservation easement needs to be described in the Draft EIR and impacts and mitigation identified.

18.6

On page 4.1-14 it is stated that a County General Plan Amendment is proposed to clarify the interpretation of Policy 2 of the Agricultural Element. Since this is a part of the proposed project it should be included in the project description.

18.7

The project description should include a discussion of right-of-way acquisition. Will eminent domain be required to obtain the rights-of-way currently protected by a conservation easement? What about lands which are currently in Williamson Act?

18.8

Table 3-1 says it provides information about permits and approvals needed. There is however, no discussion of the General Plan Amendments (City and County), Williamson Act Contract cancellation, property acquisition, etc.

18.9

Section 4.1 Land Use and Agricultural Resources

The Linear Park is described on page 4.1-1 (last paragraph) as a 40 to 100-foot wide landscaped right of way within which is an 8 to 10-foot wide paved multi-use path. On page 4.1-4, paragraph 3, the SLT easement on the linear park is mentioned for the first time. The proposed project significantly reduces the open space width from, as best can be told from the project description, to 23 feet maximum width.

18.10

Solano County's Land Use Element, Policy 2 (discussed on page 4.1-6) discusses retaining parcels of sufficient size as to be a farmable unit. It also says, "Where parcel sizes are smaller than the defined farmable unit, these parcels should not be broken up further." The proposed project would result in the splitting of the Valine easement into a parcel that would be smaller than the farmable unit.

18.11

Per Figure 4.1-3, 26.7 acres (reserved for the truck scales) would be sandwiched between the North Connector and the remaining agricultural lands in the Suisun Valley. It is unclear how the landowner would reasonably traverse lands to conduct normal farming operations once split given that the North Connector will be a major arterial and speeds will not be conducive to farming equipment. The purported route between the two parcels from the northern side is likely to be to traverse Russell Rd. heading north to Rockville Rd. then Rockville Rd. east to Abernathy then Abernathy west to the North Connector then the North Connector west to the Cordelia area then a u-turn and east on the North Connector to exit on the southern parcel. Furthermore, this figure is insufficient in that it does not show the Linear Park easement or how it will be connected at Abernathy Rd. and Suisun Creek locations to re-connect to the proposed new multi-use path. The Draft EIR needs to be revised to respond to these concerns.

18.12

The Land Use and Agricultural Resources Impacts Analysis (pages 4.1-8 and 9) states that the Project would have a significant impact both in terms of land use and agricultural resources if there was a conflict with an existing conservation easement.

18.13

Yet in the final paragraph on page 4.1-9 and the first sentence on page 4.1-10, the Draft EIR concludes that there is no further discussion of the conflict with an existing open space conservation easement. The Draft EIR states, "Although the Project would result in the removal of the paved path and associated footbridge, the open space conservation easement would remain. Therefore, there are no impacts related to conflict with an existing open space conservation easement." This statement defies logic. The asset protected by the easement IS the linear park and the ability of people to traverse the park and enjoy the scenic vistas into farmland as described above.

Just as the purpose of an agricultural conservation easement is to preserve the underlying farmland for farming, so the purpose of the linear park easement is to preserve the ability of the public to use the linear park. If you were to "remove the farmland", the conservation easement would be violated. In like manner, "removing the linear park" violates the conservation easement. The Draft EIR needs to be revised to reflect the fact that the Project would result in a conflict with an existing conservation easement (for the linear park), that this is a significant impact, and that mitigation would be required.

With the Project, the easement would be sandwiched between I-80 and the North Connector and would no longer be an amenity available to the walking or bicycle-riding public. The fact that a new multi-use path is being proposed for the western edge of the North Connector is desirable and, in fact, could mitigate for the loss of the Linear Park by being an equivalent replacement. However, the Draft EIR has inadequately addressed the need to compensate for the loss of the conservation easement protecting the linear park asset.

A conservation easement on the new multi-use path could serve to deter future urban development in the Suisun Valley and thus also be considered an appropriate mitigation to avoid growth-inducing impacts on the prime agricultural soils in the Suisun Valley.

Another concern that we have is that the Draft EIR states (paragraph 1 on page 4.1-14) that it is proposed that the Solano County General Plan be amended to allow parcels smaller than a definable farmable unit to break down further into smaller parcels for other uses such as residential home sites ONLY in the area affected by the North Connector project. This is patently inconsistent with the intent of the County General Plan to protect agricultural soils, particularly the high quality soils found in the Suisun Valley. The Draft EIR needs to explain why such a General Plan amendment is not

18.14

contrary to the spirit and intent of the County General Plan and why such an amendment would not serve as a precedent for similar General Plan amendments.

18.14
(Cont.)

In discussing City of Fairfield General Plan policies (page 4.1-15, paragraph 1), the Draft EIR says the project would affect prime farmland which would be inconsistent with the City's policies. It then says the roadway has been designed to reduce the impacts in the east end by constructing the roadway as close to the north side of I-80 as possible. This is incorrect and the Draft EIR needs to be revised to correct this. If the linear park conservation easement were moved as appropriate mitigation by placing it on the area designated for the new multi-use trail, the proposed North Connector could be 40 to 100 feet closer to I-80, thus preserving 40 to 100 feet more of farmland along its length. In addition, in the vicinity of the Valine Ranch, the roadway curves substantially further west to allow for the future planned expansion of the truck scales, yet the impact of the truck scales is neither described nor impacts and appropriate mitigation identified. It is incorrect to state that the truck scales is not a part of this project when, in fact, the North Connector is designed to accommodate the truck scales.

18.15

Significant and Potentially Significant Impacts and Mitigation Measures

Mitigation Measure 4.1-2 is directed at the Valine easement. We appreciate the increase from 1 to 1:25 for mitigation for the conservation easement and prime ag land that the Draft EIR proposes. However, we still do not think this is a high enough ratio to avoid undervaluing the loss of this easement. We would encourage STA to consider a higher ratio *or other mitigation measures* to permanently protect farmland to reduce the impacts of fragmentation would be more appropriate.

18.16

We also disagree strenuously with the omission of the requirement that prime farmland be replaced with prime farmland and with the proposal to mitigate within the limits of Solano County. Mitigation measure 4.1-2 needs to be revised to clearly state that the loss of prime farmland must be mitigated with the protection of prime farmland and that such protection shall be in the Suisun Valley in order to as closely as possible protect in perpetuity the land that is being permanently removed from farming.

18.17

We also note that on page 4.1-7 it is stated that City Program 1.4A requires "preservation of an equal amount of the same class of farmland within the area". Mitigation Measure 4.1-1 says the county shall acquire conservation easements "within the County". It is our belief that "within the County" is not consistent with "within the area". With the mitigation as proposed the Project would be inconsistent with the City of Fairfield policies.

18.18

SLT has not preserved agricultural lands with conservation easements that are below the size considered to be farmable parcels. In the Suisun Valley, this is currently 40 acres. Table 4.1-4 on page 4.1-18 suggests that a total of 42.2 acres is impacted (either directly or indirectly). SLT would strongly recommend that adequate mitigation would require that parcels of farmable size be protected by new conservation easements. The table should also be revised to show the total land to be protected by conservation easements after mitigation.

18.18
(Cont.)

There is no mitigation proposed for the damage done to the conservation easement protecting the linear park. Please see earlier comments in this letter. We conclude that an appropriate mitigation would be to place a similarly restrictive easement on the new multi-use path and to ensure that the path is wide enough to create a sense of separation similar to that achieved by the 40-100 foot right-away that is the existing linear park.

18.19

In addition, there is no discussion of timing for construction of the new multi-use path. As part of mitigation, this path should be constructed and landscaped at the same time as the North Connector and the conservation easement placed on it as a condition for finaling the roadway for use.

18.20

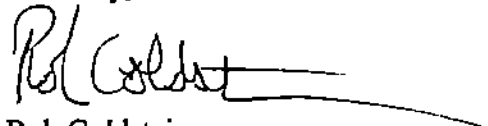
6.0 CEQA Required Conclusions

18.21

This section (page 6-3) describes the projects considered in the cumulative analysis. The truck scales project is not included nor described despite the fact that the North Connector is contoured to set aside land for the truck scales. This project needs to be described and its impacts considered in the cumulative analysis at the very least.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide these comments. To summarize, we make these comments with the intent of living up to our obligations as a land trust. We are ready to work with STA on the specifics.

Sincerely,



Rob Goldstein
Land Transaction Specialist

Response to Letter 18 – Solano County Land Trust

The Solano Land Trust submitted Comment Letter 4 (dated March 3, 2008) on the Recirculated Draft EIR which had as an attachment the Solano Land Trust comment letter dated October 26, 2007 to the Draft EIR. As a result, all of the comments contained in this letter are superseded and are responded to under Comment letter 4.

Comment 18.1. Refer to response to Comment 4.5.

Comment 18.2. Refer to response to Comment 4.6.

Comment 18.3. Refer to response to Comment 4.7.

Comment 18.4. Refer to response to Comment 4.8.

Comment 18.5. Refer to response to Comment 4.9.

Comment 18.6. Refer to response to Comment 4.10.

Comment 18.7. Refer to response to Comment 4.11.

Comment 18.8. Refer to response to Comment 4.12.

Comment 18.9. Refer to response to Comment 4.13.

Comment 18.10. Refer to response to Comment 4.14.

Comment 18.11. Refer to response to Comment 4.15.

Comment 18.12. Refer to response to Comment 4.16.

Comment 18.13. Refer to response to Comment 4.17.

Comment 18.14. Refer to response to Comment 4.18.

Comment 18.15. Refer to response to Comment 4.19.

Comment 18.16. Refer to response to Comment 4.20.

Comment 18.17. Refer to response to Comment 4.21.

Comment 18.18. Refer to response to Comment 4.22.

Comment 18.19. Refer to response to Comment 4.23.

Comment 18.20. Refer to response to Comment 4.24.

Comment 18.21. Refer to response to Comment 4.25.

LETTER 19

108 Brae Court
Fairfield, CA 94534
October 25, 2007

SENT VIA FAX

Solano Transportation Authority,
North Connector DEIR
c/o Janet Adams
One Harbor Center, Suite 130
Suisun City, CA 94585

RE: North Connector Project Draft Environmental Impact Report

Dear Ms. Adams:

This letter is intended to provide the Solano Transportation Agency with comments of the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the North Connector Project (Project).

19.1

This is one of the more incomplete environmental impact report I've had the pleasure of reviewing.

A. Chapter 3.0 Project Description

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires a full, complete and accurate description of the proposed project (and alternatives). The document does not provide this.

19.2

For example, the purpose and need for the North Connector is poorly described and not supported by facts. There is no forecast of future traffic volumes provided. Without that basic needs data, there is no way to determine if the project is really needed, nor to assess the impacts.

The proposed Project is to build approximately 1.6 miles of a divided four-lane highway from Abernathy Road to Suisun Valley Road and extend the western end of Business Center Drive for 1.04 miles to State Route (SR) 12.

19.3

The DEIR claims that the Project is needed due to existing and future traffic congestion on Interstate 80 (I-80) and local streets and to close gaps in the local circulation system. However, the DEIR fails to accurately describe the local circulation system, define local trips, nor the gaps therein. The document does not provide any data regarding the volume of traffic that would presumably use the North Connector rather than I-80.

19.4

Furthermore, the DEIR provides no documentation of the current and forecast number of trips from Suisun Valley and Green Valley areas of Fairfield and downtown Fairfield. Terminating the west end of the Project at Abernathy Rd it does not address the lack of link to downtown Fairfield. Vehicles would still need to use I-80, Rockville Road, Auto

19.5

Mall Parkway, or other to travel from Abernathy Road to downtown Fairfield. It would appear that we have just moved the problem from one spot to another. | 19.5 (Cont.)

The project description should include a discussion of the proposed right-of-way acquisition. Some of the lands to be acquired are under conservation easements, and how the implications of taking these lands should be discussed. | 19.6

The DEIR states that the Project has been designed to accommodate future relocation of the west bound truck scales. However, no there is no discussion of the impacts (direct and indirect) of this relocation. | 19.7

B. Chapter 4, Existing Conditions, Project Impacts, and Mitigation Measures

4.1 LAND USE AND AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

Agricultural Resources

Protection of agricultural land is of critical concern for the residents of Solano County. Once agricultural land is paved over, it can never be recovered. Nobody ever tears down houses to build farmland. Agricultural lands provide open space, clean water, healthy food, wetland and watershed protection, wildlife habitat. | 19.8

The Project violates Solano County's General Plan agricultural objective to "preserve the County's high quality soils and protect and maintain essential agricultural lands." General Plan policies prohibit piecemeal conversion of agricultural lands to non-agriculture. Both the East End and West End sections of the Project propose to construct roadway on agricultural lands. Even worse, the document doesn't even acknowledge the violation. | 19.9

The Project also violates the City of Fairfield General Plan Policy LU 2.1, to encourage the preservation of agricultural land surrounding the City and permanently preserve agriculture in Suisun Valley. The East End section of the Project will construct a divided four-lane road on prime agricultural land in the Suisun Valley. | 19.10

The Project violates the City of Fairfield General Plan Policy AG 1.4, which calls for permanently preserving agricultural lands within Suisun Valley. The East End section proposes to build a divided, four-lane roadway on agricultural lands in Suisun Valley.

The DEIR fails to report that the Project violates the City of Fairfield Policy OS 1.4, which seeks to permanently preserve product agricultural lands within the Suisun Valley by continuing to direct urban development away from Suisun Valley. Do you honestly think construction of the Project will not generate proposals to convert the adjacent lands away from agricultural activities.

The DEIR also fails to disclose that the Project violates the City of Fairfield General Plan Policy CI 2.7 states that any roadway development shall be consistent with Land Use

Element Policy LU 2.1, which protects Suisun Valley agricultural lands. The North Connector clearly violates this policy since the East End section proposes to construct a divided four-lane roadway on Suisun Valley agricultural land.

19.10 (con

Land Use

The DEIR omits Solano County General Plan, Land Use and Circulation Element, Chapter IX, Policy 1 regarding streets and roads which states "plan and design a street and road system to serve areas where growth is desired and anticipated as shown on the general plan while minimizing growth inducing impacts to agricultural and open space areas." The North Connector Project is violates this policy since there is no desired and planned growth depicted in the General Plan in the Suisun Valley.

19.11

The DEIR claims that the Project "would decrease the travel time on I-80" and that this would minimize energy consumption. However, no evidence to substantiate this claim is provided.

19.12

The DEIR claims that the North Connector "is to relieve traffic congestion on local streets and I-80, provide a link from the Green Valley and Suisun Valley Road areas to the central section of Fairfield." While the later portion of this statement is true, it is also blatantly deceptive. I live in Green Valley and use Rockville Road to travel to Fairfield.

19.13

The DEIR claims that the Project will reduce the fragmented nature of current development. You're joking, right? You must be joking to suggest that the North Connector reduces the fragmented nature of Fairfield's development in Suisun Valley and Green Valley.

19.14

The DEIR again fails to disclose that the Project violates the City of Fairfield General Plan Policy CI 2.7 states that any roadway development shall be consistent with Land Use Element Policy LU 2.1, which protects Suisun Valley agricultural lands. The North Connector clearly violates this policy since the East End section proposes to construct a divided four-lane roadway on Suisun Valley agricultural land.

19.15

Conclusion

The DEIR fails to provide any information which might cause an informed person to question the validity of the Project. It only provides that information which supports the Project. It contains numerous erroneous statements and inconsistencies. The DEIR does it support the conclusion that all of the potential impacts resulting from the Project will be mitigated. The DEIR improperly concludes that some impacts are mitigated based on vague and tentative mitigation measures as to method and extent. It is even questionable whether some mitigation measure would even be implemented. The failure to disclose all Project attributes and impacts, and to provide adequate avoidance, minimization and mitigation violate CEQA, and must be corrected.

19.16

Response to Letter 19 – Grant Kreinberg

Comment 19.1. The comment indicates that the North Connector EIR is incomplete.

The comment is noted. No further discussion is required.

Comment 19.2. The comment states that the Purpose and Need of the North Connector Project is not adequately addressed, specifically in regards to the forecast of future traffic volumes.

The Recirculated Draft EIR was revised to address this comment. The Project Description in Chapter 3.0 was revised to include forecast traffic volumes on I-80 as well as the traffic demand that would utilize the proposed Project to further clarify the need for the Project. Refer to page 3-1 of the Recirculated Draft EIR for more discussion.

Chapter 4.2, Traffic and Transportation, discusses traffic conditions. According to the Recirculated Draft EIR analysis, which uses output from the Napa Solano County Travel Demand Model, by the year 2020, I-80 is projected to carry approximately 19,000 vehicles during the AM peak hour and 18,000 vehicles during the PM peak hour in the vicinity of the North Connector Project. With the implementation of the North Connector Project, these volumes would be reduced by approximately 5.4 percent (1,028 vehicles) during the AM peak hour, and by 7.2 percent (1,306 vehicles) during the PM peak hour. These re-routed trips, along with other local trips which would have otherwise used the freeway to reach their destinations.

Comment 19.3. The comment reiterates information from the Draft EIR.

The comment is noted. No further discussion is required.

Comment 19.4. The commenter indicates that the Draft EIR does not accurately describe the local circulation system nor does it provide data regarding the volume of traffic that would use North Connector as opposed to I-80.

Refer to response to Comments 17.3 and 19.2 above and Chapter 3.0, Project Description, of the Recirculated Draft EIR.

Comment 19.5. This comment suggests that the EIR does not discuss the current and forecast number of trips from Suisun Valley and Green Valley areas of Fairfield and Downtown Fairfield. This comment states that the North Connector Project would not improve local traffic congestion.

Refer to response to Comments 19.2 and 19.4 above.

Through the buildout of the North Connector and the implementation of proposed improvements, Green Valley intersections and other intersections connecting the Suisun Valley and Green Valley areas to central Fairfield would experience acceptable levels of service (LOS) during the AM and PM peak hour, satisfying the City of Fairfield's LOS policy. The Rockville Road/Abernathy Road intersection (#18) would operate at LOS A under the 2020 with Project Conditions. The Rockville Road/Oliver Road intersection (#26) would operate at LOS C under the 2020 with Project Conditions. The West Texas Street/I-80 Eastbound Off-Ramp intersection (#28) would operate at LOS B under the 2020 with Project Conditions. Thus, vehicles traveling between the Suisun Valley and Green Valley areas to central Fairfield would not experience unacceptable levels of delay, therefore, helping to alleviate congestion.

It should also be noted that both with and without the implementation of the North Connector, vehicles would still be able to reach downtown Fairfield via SR12, bypassing I-80 altogether.

Comment 19.6. This comment indicates that the Project Description of the EIR should include a discussion of the proposed right-of-way acquisition.

Refer to responses to Comment Letter 1. Pages 4.1-10 through 4.1-12 within Chapter 4.1, Land Use and Agricultural Resources, of the Recirculated Draft EIR includes a discussion of the right-of-way impacts of the Project.

Comment 19.7. This comment indicates that the EIR does not include a discussion of the impacts associated with the truck scales relocation.

Refer to responses to Comment Letter 1.

Comment 19.8. This comment indicates the importance of preserving agricultural land in Solano County.

This comment is noted.

Comment 19.9. This comment states that the Project violates the agricultural objectives of the Solano County General Plan.

Refer to response to Comments 1.1 and 1.3.

Comment 19.10. The comment indicates that the Project is inconsistent with the City of Fairfield General Plan policies relating to agricultural resources and open space.

Refer to response to Comment 4.19.

Comment 19.11. The comment indicates that the EIR does not include a discussion of the Solano County General Plan, Land Use and Circulation Element, Chapter IX, Policy 1.

The Recirculated Draft EIR discusses consistency with this policy on page 4.1-13. The Project has been designed to reduce, to the extent feasible, impacts to essential agricultural lands by locating the roadway as close as possible to I-80 in the East End. The West End has been designed to allow for existing grazing activities to continue as well.

Comment 19.12. The comment indicates that the EIR does not include an adequate discussion of how the North Connector Project would reduce the travel time on I-80 and minimize energy consumption.

Refer to response to Comment 17.34.

Comment 19.13. The comment states that the North Connector Project would reduce traffic congestion on local streets and I-80.

The comment is noted.

Comment 19.14. This comment indicates that the North Connector Project would contribute to the fragmented nature of the current development in Suisun Valley and Green Valley.

Pages 4.1-13 and 4.1-14 of the Recirculated Draft EIR were revised to provide a discussion of the Project's consistency with the City of Fairfield land use policies and, thus, address this comment.

Comment 19.15. This comment indicates that the Project violates the City of Fairfield General Plan policies relating to land use and circulation.

Consistency with this policy is discussed on page 4.1-13 of the Recirculated Draft EIR.

Comment 19.16. This comment states that the EIR does not provide adequate information.

The comment is noted.

COMMENT SHEET

Public Hearing
Wednesday, October 3, 2007
Solano County Administration Center
6:30 – 8:30 PM

Name: Bernard Moore Affiliation: Moore Tractor Co.
Address: 4088 Russell Road Phone: 707-425-9545
City/State/Zip: Fairfield, CA 94534 Email: mooretractor2@inreach.com

I would like to submit the following comments on the North Connector Project draft environmental document:

1. Make small isolated south-east portion of 0027-510-080, Jose DeGonzalez to Moore/parcel 0027-510-070. See enclosed plot 20.1
2. Make small isolated south-east portion of 0027-510-04 Raymond Conner to Moore parcel 0027-510-070. See enclosed plot. 20.2
3. Be assured of exit and entrance from my property to new roadway. 20.3
4. Exit and entrance to new roadway from Russell Rd. See plot 20.4
5. Install conduit under new roadway that can be used to take electric portable water, phone service from my property on northside of new roadway to my property on south side of new roadway. 20.5

(Please use reverse side if additional space is needed.)


Bernard Moore

Comments may be submitted tonight or mailed, faxed or emailed to:

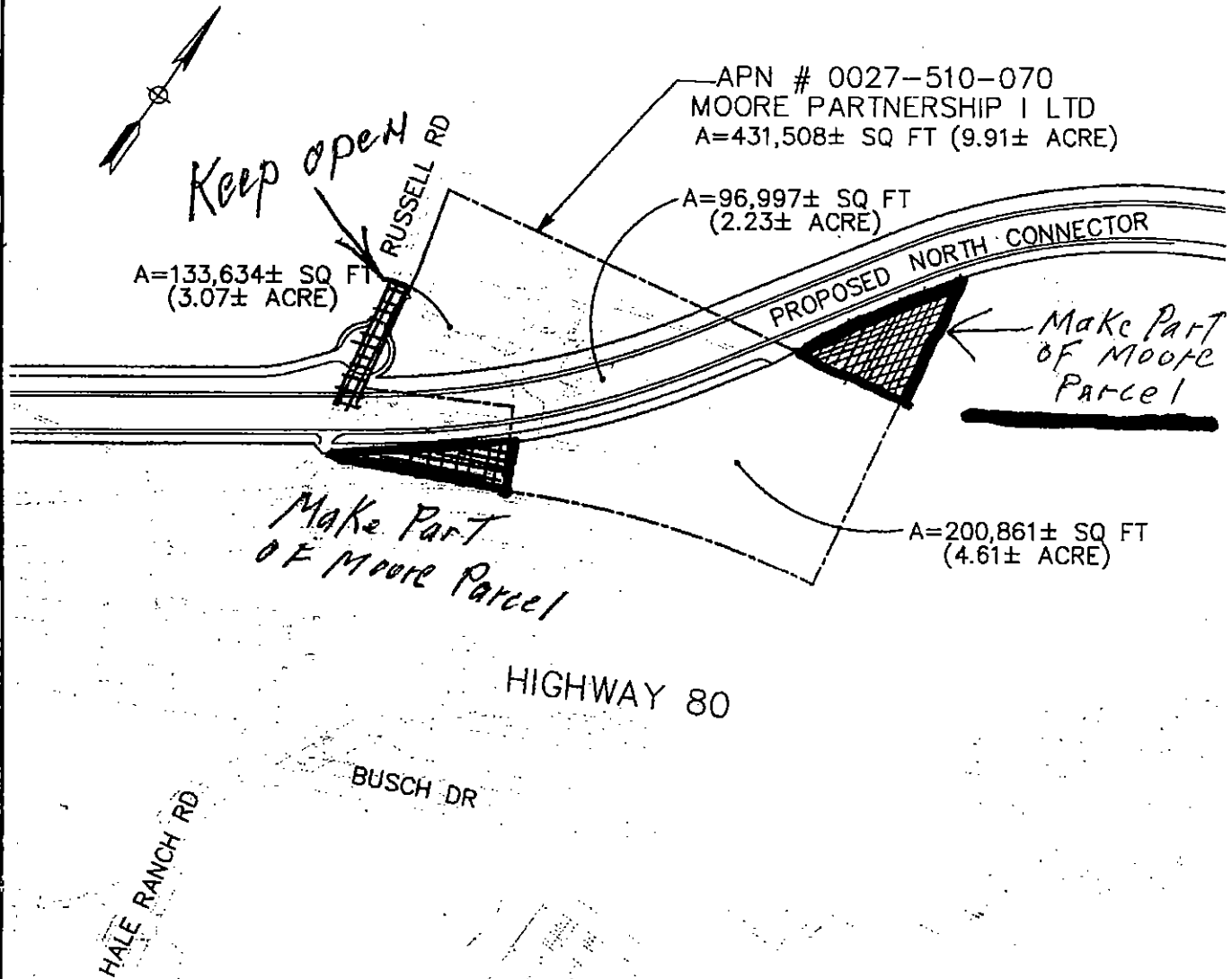
Solano Transportation Authority
One Harbor Center, Suite 130
Suisun City, CA 94585
Fax: 707-424-6074
Email: jadams@sta-snci.com

Please note: Comments on the draft environmental document must be received by 5:00 PM, October 26, 2007

Thank you for participating in tonight's public hearing.

DEC 27 2006

 PROPOSED RIGHT OF WAY
 EXISTING PARCEL LINE
 RIGHT-OF-WAY ACQUISITION



MAY, 2006



4780 CHABOT DRIVE
SUITE 104
PLEASANTON, CA 94588
925/398-7700
925/398-7799 (FAX)

NO SCALE

**NORTH CONNECTOR IMPROVEMENT PROJECT
RIGHT OF WAY REQUIREMENT MAP
APN # 0027-510-070**

\\cogsw6708en\pub\secv\map\dcmv Map-Document Map-0027-510-0784dng 11 May 2009 03:42:08n eshu

DECONVANTZ JOSE RAMON CORNING CORP
0027-510-510-12

MOUSE PARTNERSHIP, L.L.C.
0027-510-510-13

LOVELL CLOUTIER
0027-510-510-150

WATSON D.C.

0027-510-510-160

0027-510-510-160

0027-510-510-160

0027-510-510-160

SOLANO COUNTY

CITY OF FAIRFIELD

MISSISSIPPI ROAD

LIMIT OF PROJECT

Response to Letter 20 – Bernard Moore

Comment 20.1. This comment requests the adjustment of the parcel lines shown in the environmental document so that a south-east portion of a parcel shown as Assessor's Parcel Number (APN 0027-0510-080) is shown as the Moore parcel (APN 0027-510-070).

Refer to response to Comment 5.1.

Comment 20.2. This comment requests the adjustment of the parcel lines shown in the environmental document so that a south-east portion of a parcel shown as Assessor's Parcel Number (APN 0027-0510-04) is shown as the Moore parcel (APN 0027-510-070).

Refer to response to Comment 5.2.

Comment 20.3. This comment requests that the Project provide an entrance and exit from the Moore property (APN 0027-510-070) to the North Connector Project roadway.

Refer to response to Comment 5.3

Comment 20.4. This comment requests an exit and entrance from Russell Road onto the North Connector Project.

Refer to response to Comment 5.4.

Comment 20.5. This comment requests a conduit be installed under the new roadway to take electricity, potable water, and phone service from the north side of the Moore property to the south side of the Moore property.

Refer to response to Comment 5.5.

Response to Comments Received at Public Hearing on February 19, 2008

A copy of the entire transcript of the Public Hearing on the Recirculated Draft EIR is available at the Solano Transportation Authority (One Harbor Center, Suite 130, Suisun City, CA 94585).

Comment 1. This comment questions whether the EIR will need to be re-done prior to construction of the Project, as it may become outdated and expired.

Revisions to the EIR would only be required if a change in the environment has occurred. If there have been substantial changes in the Project area from when it was previously analyzed, it may need to be studied again. However, if there have been no substantial changes, the Project area would not be required to be studied again.

Comment 2. This comment questions the design and location of the replacement access to the Mangels property.

Refer to response to Comment 7.3.

Comment 3. This comment indicates the need for conduits to be placed near the existing large stock ponds to channel runoff from the upland area under the roadbed into the ponds. This comment opposes Mitigation Measure 4.5-2 because it goes beyond what is required by federal guidelines by setting aside 35.4-acres of private property for conservation easement or deed restriction to reduce impacts to the California red-legged frog.

Refer to response to Comment 7.4 and 7.6

Comment 4. The commenter was concerned about the location of new multi-use path and impact on bicyclists because of the multi-use path's proximity to the Project roadway.

As discussed on page 4.12-7 of the Recirculated Draft EIR, and as shown in Figure 3-4, the multi-use path within the East End of the North Connector would include a 10-foot wide paved path in between a vegetated swale (15-22 foot wide) and a landscaped area (7-foot wide). With these design elements, the multi-use path would be conducive to bike riding, as the multi-use path would not be directly adjacent to the roadway, as the vegetated swales and landscaping would provide a buffer for the recreational users on the path. It would also be more conducive to bicyclists and pedestrians than the current path, which is adjacent to I-80, a multi-lane freeway.

Comment 5. The commenter asked if the intersection of Rockville Road and Abernathy Road would be modified as part of the Project to reduce traffic impacts.

As demonstrated in Table 4.2-4 of the Recirculated Draft EIR, under both the 2020 No Project and 2020 with Project conditions, the roundabout intersection at Rockville Road and Abernathy Road would experience Level of Service (LOS) A at both AM and PM peak periods. Thus, no modifications to the intersection are necessary.

Comment 6. This comment states that the bicycle path located on Business Center Drive should be continued to the stoplight at the intersection of Red Top Road and SR12.

Refer to response to Comment 8.1.

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3.0 ERRATA/CHANGES TO THE RECIRCULATED DRAFT EIR

This Chapter notes the revisions and changes to the text of the Recirculated Draft EIR to respond to comments and to correct typographical errors. New text is shown in **bold underline**, while deleted text is shown in ~~strikeout~~.

Chapter 1.0 Executive Summary

No changes have been made to Chapter 1.0, Executive Summary, of the Recirculated Draft EIR.

Chapter 2.0 Introduction

No changes have been made to Chapter 2.0, Introduction, or the Recirculated Draft EIR.

Chapter 3.0 Project Description

Page 3-3, paragraph 1 has been revised as follows:

The Project also includes a multi-use path and greenway along the north side of the new roadway between Abernathy Road and Suisun Creek. The multi-use path and greenway would consist of a 10-foot wide paved path within an approximately 13-foot wide landscaped area and connect with the existing Fairfield Linear Park (Linear Park) at Suisun Creek and Abernathy Road. **The City of Fairfield granted to the Solano Land Trust (SLT) a conservation easement “on, upon, over, across and under” the Linear Park. This easement includes the portion of the Linear Park within the East End of the North Connector between Abernathy Road and Suisun Creek and restricts the use of this property to open space uses in perpetuity.**

Page 3-4, the paragraph under “City of Fairfield General Plan Amendment” has been revised as follows:

Because the Project includes construction of a new multi-use path and greenway between Abernathy Road and Suisun Creek (see discussion of Project Components – East End, page 3-2), the City of Fairfield has initiated a General Plan Amendment (GPA) to revise Policy OS 12.7 to remove the existing Linear Park between Abernathy Road and **the new bridge over** Suisun Creek, as well as remove this portion of the Linear Park from the General Plan Land Use Diagram **Recreation and Open Space and Circulation Elements of the City General Plan.** ~~and show the North Connector Project as a Public Facility located within the County’s jurisdiction. The Project would include the removal of the paved trail within the Linear Park between Abernathy and Suisun Creek., however, the existing bridge across Suisun Creek would remain and public access would still be allowed. **The portion** Portions of the Linear Park **located** to the **north and** west from **of the new bridge over** Suisun Creek to Solano County **Community** College east of Abernathy Road would remain.~~

Chapter 4.0 Existing Conditions, Project Impacts, and Mitigation Measures

Page 4.1-3, bulleted list under East End has been revised as follows:

East End

- Contract 739 is located east of Suisun Creek and consists of a 58.84-acre parcel (APN 0027-251-330) and a 17.29-acre parcel (APN 0027-271-060).
- Contract 480 is located east of Russell Road and west of Abernathy Road and consists of a total of 12.25 acres (APN 0027-510-150 and APN 0027-510-160)
- Contract number 437 is located south of Rockville Road and consists of a 14.89-acre parcel (APN 0027-510-120).
- Contract 1198 is located west of Abernathy Road and consists of a 13.87-acre parcel (APN 0027-510-130).
- Contract 401 is located south of Rockville Road and consists of a 10.5-acre parcel (APN 0150-270-030) and **two parcels totaling 9.47-acres** ~~a 5.09-acre parcel (APN 0027-510-180~~ **and 0027-510-170)**.
- Contract 2 is located immediately north and northwest of the Abernathy Road off-ramp and consists of a 7.85-acre parcel (APN 0150-270-050).

Page 4.1-9, the last paragraph under the heading “Conflict with an existing open space conservation easement,” has been revised as follows:

Construction of the East End would include a new multi-use path along the north side of the new roadway. The multi-use path would connect to the existing Linear Park at both Abernathy Road and Suisun Creek. Because the Project includes construction of a new multi-use path between Abernathy Road and Suisun Creek, the City has initiated a General Plan Amendment to revise Policy OS 12.7 to remove the existing Linear Park between Abernathy Road and Suisun Creek, as well as remove this portion of the Linear Park from the General Plan Land Use Diagram **Recreation and Open Space and Circulation Elements of the City’s General Plan.** ~~and show the North Connector Project as a Public Facility located within the County’s jurisdiction. The Project would include the removal of the paved trail within the Linear Park between Abernathy and Suisun Creek., however, the existing bridge across Suisun Creek would remain and public access would still be allowed. The open space conservation easement located on the~~ **existing** ~~portion~~ **segment** ~~of the Linear Park would stay in place,~~ **however, and** ~~therefore, there are~~ **would be** ~~no impacts related to conflict with an existing open space conservation easement. Although the Project would not conflict with or have any physical impacts on the existing open space conservation easement, the City of Fairfield and the Solano Land Trust have entered discussions to transfer this open space easement over the existing segment of the Linear Park to a new segment of the Linear Trail planned in the northeast portion of the City. Once the open space easement is transferred and the new multi-use path and greenway are constructed as part of the Project, the City will abandon the existing segment of the Linear Park and close it off to public access.~~

Page 4.1-10, the second paragraph under the heading “West End,” has been revised as follows:

For the portion of the new roadway between Business Center Drive and State Route 12 West there are two design options being considered with regard to cut and fill slopes; construction of 2:1 slopes would result in a direct impact to 11.3 acres and 4:1 slopes would result in a direct impact to 17.7 acres. In addition, construction of the SR12 West/Red Top Road intersection would result in the direct impact of an additional 2.3 acres of land. The total direct impact to

acreage in the West End ranges between 13.6 and 20.1 acres. This acreage would be acquired by STA, the lead agency, from the private property owners. Acquisition of these parcels would be governed by the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Property Acquisitions Policies Act of 1970, as amended (49 CFR 24). Under this Act, displaced individuals and businesses must receive fair and humane treatment and shall not suffer unnecessarily as a result of Project designed for the benefit of the public. Property owners must be compensated at fair market value for the land and structure. Any affected property owners would be entitled to full-market land and structure value as a result of the proposed take. Construction of the West End would not result in the need to acquire any whole parcels or demolition of structures. The West End consists of rural lands, and there would be no demolition of structures or displacement of residences or businesses.

Page 4.1-13, text under “Agricultural Land Use Policies (Policies 1, 2, and 12)” has been revised as follows:

Agricultural Land Use Policies (Policies 1, 2 and 12)

In regards to Policy 1, the Project has been designed to reduce to the extent feasible, impacts to essential agricultural lands by locating the roadway as close as possible to I-80 in the East End. In the West End the roadway has been designed to include access under the new roadway so that existing grazing activities can continue. **Thus, the Project maintains consistency with this policy of the County’s General Plan.**

In regard to Policy 2 and the description of “farmable unit”, existing parcels bisected by the new roadway would not be considered subdivided pursuant to the Subdivision Map Act as a result of the Project. Remnant lands, resulting from construction of the roadway, would remain legally part of the original parcel and must be treated as such with regard to issuance of permits and other entitlements within Solano County.

Solano County has initiated a General Plan Amendment (GPA) designed to clarify that Policy 2 of Chapter III Land Use and Circulation Element, Agriculture and Open Space Land Use of the County General Plan is intended to impose limitations on the subdivision process rather than prevent public agencies from acquiring portions of small parcels for public purposes. The text of the General Plan should be amended as follows: 1

"In areas designated for agricultural production where parcel sizes are smaller than the definable farmable unit, these parcels should not be allowed to be subdivided into smaller parcels for other uses such as residential home sites. Farmable units include smaller parcels which when combined with other parcels would be considered farmable." (Chapter III Agricultural and Open Space Element, Preservation of Essential Agricultural Lands, Farmable Unit, Page 34, Paragraph 3)

The Project would be consistent with the Solano County General Plan’s Policy 12 in that ~~In regards to Policy 12, the new multi-use path to be constructed in the East End would be a public recreation facility that would be compatible with surrounding agricultural operations.~~ **The multi-use path** ~~because it would~~ **represent an in-kind replacement of** ~~replace~~ the existing Linear Park that has been located in this area for many years.

Page 4.5-22, Mitigation Measure 4.5-1 has been revised as follows:

1 Walsh, Matthew. Principal Planner, Solano County. Personal Communication. December 18, 2007.

Mitigation Measure 4.5-1: Preconstruction surveys shall be conducted before trees or potential roost structures are impacted or removed within the entire study area. A qualified biologist shall conduct this survey. If no bats are found during the survey, tree removal and structure demolition work shall be conducted within one month of the survey. If a maternity colony is observed during the surveys, no eviction/exclusion ~~should~~ **shall** be allowed during the maternity season (typically between April 15 and July 30). If a non-reproductive group of bats are found within a building or roost tree, they ~~should~~ **shall** be evicted by a qualified biologist and excluded from the roost site prior to work activities during the suitable time frame for bat eviction/exclusion (i.e., February 20th to April 14th and July 30th to October 15th).

Page 4.9-2, paragraph 3 has been revised as follows:

The Project area lies within three hydrologic sub-areas (HSA's). HSA 207.21 includes LedgeWood Creek and Suisun Slough; and HSA's 207.22 and 207.23 include Suisun Creek. Downstream (south) of the Project area these watersheds drain into Cordelia Sough, Suisun Slough, (HSA. 207.23) and ultimately to Suisun Bay (HSA 207.21). ~~Suisun Slough and Suisun Bay are~~ **is** listed by the EPA as impaired water bodies under Section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act.

Page 4.12-7 – 4.12-8, paragraph 5 has been revised as follows:

Because the new multi-use path and greenway would replace an be an enhancement compared to the existing Fairfield Linear Park between Abernathy Road and Suisun Creek in this area, and represent a net gain of 0.5 acres of multi-use trail, the City of Fairfield has initiated a General Plan Amendment (GPA) to revise Policy OS 12.7 to remove the existing Linear Park between Abernathy Road and Suisun Creek, as well as remove this portion of the Linear Park from the General Plan Land Use Diagram **Recreation and Open Space and Circulation Elements of the City's General Plan.** and show the North Connector Project as a Public Facility located within the County's jurisdiction. The project would include the removal of the paved path within the Linear Park between Abernathy Road and Suisun Creek but the existing bridge across Suisun Creek would remain and public access would still be allowed. The open space conservation easement located **on the** ~~over this portion of the existing~~ **segment of the** Linear Park would remain. **Although the Project would not conflict with or have any physical impacts on the existing open space conservation easement, the City of Fairfield and the Solano Land Trust have entered discussions to transfer this open space easement over the existing segment of the Linear Park to a new segment of the Linear Trail planned in the northeast portion of the City. Once the open space easement is transferred and the new multi-use path and greenway are constructed as part of the Project, the City will abandon the existing segment of the Linear Park and close it off to public access.**

Chapter 5.0 Alternatives

No revisions have been made to Chapter 5.0, Alternatives, of the Recirculated Draft EIR.

Chapter 6.0 CEQA Required Conclusions

Pages 6-3 and 6-4, paragraph two under the heading of “I-80/I-680/SR12 Interchange Project” has been revised as follows:

I-80/I-680/SR12 Interchange Project - This project would increase the capacity of the I-80/I-680/SR12 Interchange complex. One component of this project is relocating the Cordelia Truck Scales. The Cordelia Truck Scales have been identified as a significant contributor to the traffic problems in the I-80/I-680/SR12 Interchange because they are located in one of the most congested segments of I-80. Trucks entering and exiting I-80 in this area cause significant traffic congestion in this area. No overlap of construction activity between the Project and the Interchange project is anticipated. The **I-80/I-680/SR12 Interchange Project (which includes relocating the** Cordelia Truck Scales) **project** is a separate project that for CEQA purposes is being administered by a different lead agency, the California Department of Transportation. Although the Project would physically accommodate the proposed truck scales relocation site, the Project is independent of the Cordelia Truck Scales relocation and it not in any way contingent upon that **the Interchange** project. Furthermore, no overlap of construction activity between the Project and the Interchange project is anticipated. ~~For each of these reasons, the Cordelia Truck Scales project is appropriately not considered in the cumulative impacts analysis.~~

Chapter 7.0 List of Preparers

No revisions have been made to Chapter 7.0, List of Preparers, of the Recirculated Draft EIR.

Chapter 8.0 Distribution List

No revisions have been made to Chapter 8.0, Distribution List, of the Recirculated Draft EIR.

Chapter 9.0 Distribution List

No revisions have been made to Chapter 9.0, References, of the Recirculated Draft EIR.

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4.0 MITIGATION MONITORING REPORTING PROGRAM

Impact #	Impact Statement	Mitigation Measures	Responsible Agency	Timing	Initials
Land Use and Agricultural Resources					
4.1-1	The Project would convert Prime Farmland to non-agricultural uses (East End only). This is considered a significant adverse impact.	Mitigation Measure 4.1-1: Prior to construction of the East End of the North Connector Project, the STA shall acquire conservation easement(s) for 1.0 acres of Prime Farmland within the County for every acre of land considered impacted within the Project site that is designated as Prime Farmland. These easements would be held in trust by a public agency or other appropriate entity and be located within the limits of Solano County. Implementation of this measure would ensure permanent preservation of prime agricultural land at a 1:1 ratio, and would have a beneficial impact on the preservation of agricultural lands in Solano County. Table 4.1-5 provides a summary of the mitigation requirements for impacts to Prime Farmlands. Implementation of this measure would reduce impacts to lands designated as Prime Farmland to a less-than-significant level.	Solano Transportation Authority (STA)	Prior to construction of the East End	
4.1-2	The Project would convert lands subject to agricultural conservation easements to non-agricultural uses. This is considered a significant adverse impact.	Mitigation Measure 4.1-2: Prior to construction of the East End of the North Connector Project, the STA shall acquire conservation easement(s) for 1.25 acres of Prime Farmland within the County for every acre of land considered impacted within the Project site that is under conservation easement. These easements would be held in trust by a public agency or other appropriate entity and be located within the limits of Solano County. Because conservation easements provide permanent preservation of agricultural land, implementation of this measure would ensure permanent preservation of prime agricultural land at a 1.25:1 acre ratio, and would have a beneficial impact on the preservation of agricultural lands in Solano County. Table 4.1-5 provides a summary of the mitigation requirements for impacts to lands held under conservation easements. Implementation of this measure would reduce impacts to lands held in conservation easement to a less-than-significant level.	STA	Prior to construction of the East End	

Impact #	Impact Statement	Mitigation Measures	Responsible Agency	Timing	Initials
Traffic and Transportation					
4.2-1	During construction, the Project could result in inadequate emergency access. This is considered a potentially significant adverse impact.	Mitigation Measure 4.2-1: STA shall prepare a Transportation Management Plan (TMP) prior to beginning construction. The TMP shall be incorporated into the detailed design and implemented during construction. The TMP could include, but not be limited to, Motorists Information, Incident Management, Construction Strategies and Public Awareness Strategies. Detailed traffic handling plans shall also be developed that include restriping and staging elements to ensure safe free flow of traffic is maintained in the project area.	STA in coordination with City/County Planning, Engineering, and emergency service providers	On-going throughout construction	
4.2-2	The Project would exceed, either individually or cumulatively, a level of service standard established by Solano County or the City of Fairfield for designated roads or highways.	Mitigation Measure 4.2-2: Prior to completion of the East End of the North Connector, STA shall construct a double left turn lane from Suisun Valley Road onto I-80 Eastbound. The double left turn lane shall meet Caltrans design requirements and would reduce the LOS from E to D at this intersection.	STA in coordination with Caltrans design requirements	During construction of the East End	
Air Quality					
4.3-1	The Project could potentially result in temporary increases in construction-related PM10 emissions during grading and construction activities. This is considered a potentially significant adverse impact.	Mitigation 4.3-1: The contractor shall be required to minimize or eliminate dust through the application of water or dust palliatives during construction and must use Caltrans Special Provisions and Standard Specifications, which include requirements to minimize or eliminate dust through the application of water or dust palliatives during Project construction. Implementation of this measure would reduce the potential exposure of sensitive receptors to dust (PM10) to a less-than-significant level.	STA and Contractor	On-going throughout construction	
Noise					
4.4-1	The Project could potentially result in the exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels associated with construction activities. This is considered a potentially significant adverse impact.	Mitigation Measure 4.4-1: Groundborne vibration and noise-generating construction activities, including use of heavy-duty trucks, shall be limited to daytime hours of 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, and 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Saturdays. Construction activities shall not occur on Sundays or holidays except in circumstances where STA deems it necessary.	STA and Contractor	On-going throughout construction	

Impact #	Impact Statement	Mitigation Measures	Responsible Agency	Timing	Initials
4.4-2	Construction of the Project could potentially cause a substantial temporary increase in ambient noise levels in the Project vicinity above levels existing without the Project due to construction activities. This is considered a potentially significant adverse impact.	<p>Mitigation Measure 4.4-2a: Noise-generating activities at the construction site or in areas adjacent to the construction site associated with the Project shall be restricted to daytime hours of 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, and 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Saturdays. Construction activities shall not occur on Sundays or holidays except in circumstances where STA deems it necessary.</p> <p>Mitigation Measure 4.4-2b: All internal combustion engine driven equipment shall be equipped with intake and exhaust mufflers which are in good condition and appropriate for the equipment.</p> <p>Mitigation Measure 4.4-2c: Unnecessary idling of internal combustion engines within 100 feet of residences shall be strictly prohibited.</p> <p>Mitigation Measure 4.4-2d: All construction equipment shall be staged at least 200 feet from residences and all stationary noise-generating construction equipment, such as air compressors and portable power generators, shall be located as far as practical from noise sensitive residences.</p>	a-d) STA and Contractor	a-d) On-going throughout construction	
Biological Resources					
4.5-1	The Project could potentially impact the habitat of the Pallid Bat, Western Red Bat, and Hoary Bat, state species of special concern. This is considered a potentially significant adverse impact.	Mitigation Measure 4.5-1: Preconstruction surveys shall be conducted before trees or potential roost structures are impacted or removed within the entire study area. A qualified biologist shall conduct this survey. If no bats are found during the survey, tree removal and structure demolition work shall be conducted within one month of the survey. If a maternity colony is observed during the surveys, no eviction/exclusion shall be allowed during the maternity season (typically between April 15 and July 30). If a non-reproductive group of bats are found within a building or roost tree, they shall be evicted by a qualified biologist and excluded from the roost site prior to work activities during the suitable time frame for bat eviction/exclusion (i.e., February 20th to April 14th and July 30th to October 15th).	STA in coordination with a qualified biologist	Prior to construction and removal of trees or potential root structures	
4.5-2	The Project would have a substantial adverse effect to the California Red Legged Frog	Mitigation Measure 4.5-2: In accordance with guidance received from USFWS, the Project shall mitigate for impacts to California red-legged frog habitat by creating a breeding	STA in coordination with a qualified biologist	Prior to construction of the West End	

Impact #	Impact Statement	Mitigation Measures	Responsible Agency	Timing	Initials
	and its habitat. The California Red Legged Frog is a federally listed threatened species and a California species of concern. This is considered a significant adverse impact.	pond for this species that would provide a greater than 2:1 ratio (replacement: impacted) of mitigation acreage (see Figure 3-4 for the approximate location of the red-legged frog breeding pond). The proposed location of the new breeding site is to the north and east of the new roadway alignment. In addition, a total of 35.4 acres of upland around this breeding pond shall also be preserved by a conservation easement or a deed restriction. This provides for 2:1 mitigation (preserved to impacted) for impacts to upland migration/dispersal habitat. The conservation easement shall usurp all development rights. The mitigation property would be owned in fee by the existing land owner, Solano County, or a qualified conservation organization. Allowable uses within this open space preserve shall be limited to maintenance of the pond. No further development, establishment of utilities, or any construction of any kind shall be allowed within the dedicated open space preserve. It is anticipated that final mitigation requirements, including the size of the breeding pond and the amount of upland dispersal habitat to be preserved will be determined in consultation with the USFWS.			
4.5-3	The Project may impact the habitat of the Pacific Pond Turtle, a state species of special concern. This is considered a potentially significant adverse impact.	Mitigation Measure 4.5-3: Mitigation Measure 4.5-2 includes preservation of 35.4 acres of upland habitat. Preservation of this habitat would be considered adequate mitigation for potential impacts to the Pacific Pond Turtle, and would reduce any impacts to a less-than-significant level.	STA	Prior to construction of the West End	
4.5-4	The Project would have an adverse effect to the habitat of the Valley Elderberry Longhorn Beetle, a federally listed threatened species. This is considered a significant adverse impact.	Mitigation Measure 4.5-4a: Suitable habitat shall be avoided and preserved to the extent feasible. Complete avoidance, resulting in no adverse effects, shall be assumed outside the 100-foot buffer that shall be established from the edge of the proposed bridge alignment over Suisun Creek and the preserved elderberry plants. Protection measures detailed in the USFWS' Conservation Guidelines for Valley Elderberry Longhorn Beetle (USFWS 1999) shall be implemented. All preserved plants shall be fenced off and these areas shall be designated as avoidance areas that shall be protected from disturbance during construction of the bridge. In addition, restoration and maintenance measures detailed in the USFWS' Conservation Guidelines for Valley Elderberry Longhorn Beetle (USFWS 1999) shall be implemented to	a) STA and Contractor in coordination with a qualified biologist b) STA	a) Prior to, during and 10 years after construction of the East End b) Prior to construction of the East End	

Impact #	Impact Statement	Mitigation Measures	Responsible Agency	Timing	Initials
		<p>restore any damage done to the 100-foot buffer area during construction. These areas shall be re-vegetated and appropriate erosion control measures shall be installed.</p> <p>All elderberry plants with one or more stems measuring 1.0 inch or more in diameter that would be removed by the Project shall be transplanted. Based on field surveys, it is anticipated that a total of 12 elderberry plants would be affected by the Project and would be transplanted and an additional 55 elderberry seedlings and/or cuttings shall be planted to mitigate for the number of stems (and their associated size classes) that would be impacted by the bridge construction. Prior to construction the area should be surveyed to determine the actual final number of plants that will be affected and transplanted, including calculation of the number of seedlings required. The elderberry plants and cuttings shall be transplanted to a conservation area along Suisun Creek. A biological monitor shall be present during all transplanting activities. Transplanting shall occur when plants are dormant (November through mid-February). Cuttings shall be taken when shoots are just beginning to newly sprout. The conservation area along Suisun Creek where the elderberry plants would be relocated, would receive protected status within the County. Dedication of the conservation area shall occur prior to any ground disturbing activities, including grading.</p> <p>Monitoring of the conservation area shall be conducted for ten consecutive years. A minimum survival rate of 60 percent of the elderberry plants/cuttings and 60 percent of the native riparian plantings is required throughout the monitoring period. If survival rates fall below 60 percent, replacement plants shall be installed within one year of discovery to bring the number of plants back to the original number of plantings. The USFWS may evaluate the site if there is severe damage to the plants due to circumstances beyond the applicant's control, such as flooding, fire, or vandalism. Monitoring of the site shall conform to USFWS and CDFG requirements and be submitted to those agencies by December 31 of each year.</p> <p>or</p>			

Impact #	Impact Statement	Mitigation Measures	Responsible Agency	Timing	Initials
		Mitigation Measure 4.5-4b: Alternately, the STA may purchase credits in a USFWS-approved mitigation bank that provides habitat for the Valley Elderberry Longhorn Beetle. Final compensation requirements and mitigation ratios would be determined through consultation with USFWS. Purchase of mitigation credits shall occur prior to any ground disturbing activities, including grading. Two mitigation banks in the County that provide Valley Elderberry Longhorn Beetle habitat include the French Camp Conservation Bank (Sacramento, CA) and the River Ranch Conservation Bank (Rocklin, CA).			
4.5-5	The bridge proposed by the Project could potentially affect Steelhead trout habitat. This is considered a potentially significant adverse impact.	<p>Mitigation Measure 4.5-5: To minimize potential impacts to steelhead, riparian tree removal and bridge construction shall be conducted between June 15th and October 15th, when steelhead are not expected to be in this reach of Suisun Creek.</p> <p>During a pre-Project meeting with NMFS on March 18, 2004, various mitigation options were discussed to compensate for this potential impact to steelhead and its habitat. Riparian trees removed for this Project shall be replaced at a ratio of 3:1 (three trees of the same species will be replanted for every tree removed). Riparian planting shall be conducted along Suisun Creek. A creek re-vegetation and enhancement plan has been prepared for this Project to address impacts to riparian trees. Mitigation for impacts to native trees is discussed later in this section.</p> <p>In addition, Best Management Practices (BMPs) shall be employed during construction to minimize and/or prevent water quality impacts to Suisun Creek.</p>	STA and Contractor in coordination with a qualified biologist	<p>Riparian tree replacement to occur prior to beginning construction of the East End Bridge</p> <p>Bridge construction to occur between June 15 and October 15</p> <p>BMP's to be implemented during construction</p>	
4.5-6	The Project would have an adverse effect on Waters of the United States and State, or federally protected waters. This is considered a significant adverse impact.	Mitigation Measure 4.5-6: Various mitigation strategies will be employed to compensate for impacts to seasonal wetlands and other waters. Impacts to 0.57-acre of seasonal wetland habitat that will be impacted at the West End will be mitigated at a greater than 2:1 ratio by creating a 1.5-acre breeding pond for California red-legged frog that will provide seasonal wetland habitat. Additional impacts to waters of the U.S./State will be mitigated through creek enhancement and preservation of existing wetlands and creek corridors in the project vicinity. A proposed riparian mitigation area has been identified along Suisun Valley Creek (see Figure 3-2).	STA in coordination with a qualified biologist	Prior to construction of the West End	

Impact #	Impact Statement	Mitigation Measures	Responsible Agency	Timing	Initials
		The riparian mitigation area will be confirmed prior to the beginning of construction.			
4.5-7	The Project could potentially result in impacts to nesting raptor species. This is considered a potentially significant adverse impact.	<p>Mitigation Measure 4.5-7a: In order to avoid impacts to nesting raptors, a nesting survey shall be conducted 15 days prior to commencing with construction work including any tree pruning, tree removal, staging, ground disturbing or construction activities, if this work would commence between March 1 and September 1. Surveys should be conducted a minimum of three (3) separate days during the 15 days prior to the commencement of work activities. The raptor nesting surveys shall include examination of all trees within 1,000 feet of the entire proposed construction corridor, not just trees slated for removal.</p> <p>If nesting raptors are identified during the surveys, the dripline of the nest tree or shrub must be fenced with orange construction fencing and a 500-foot radius around the nest tree must be staked with bright orange lath or other suitable staking. If the nest site is on an adjacent property, the portion of the buffer that occurs on the Project site shall be fenced with orange construction fencing. This 500-foot buffer may be reduced in size if a qualified raptor biologist determines through monitoring that the nesting raptors are acclimated to people and disturbance, and otherwise would not be adversely affected by construction activities. At a minimum, however, the non-disturbance buffer shall be a radius of 200 feet around the nest tree or shrub. When construction buffers are reduced from the 500-foot radius, a qualified raptor biologist shall monitor distress levels of the nesting birds for one week after Project disturbance occurs. If at any time the nesting raptors show levels of distress that could cause nest failure or abandonment, the raptor biologist shall have the right to re-implement the full 500-foot buffer. Instances when the buffer could be reduced in size would be if the raptors were well acclimated to disturbance and/or if there were physical barriers between the nest site and the construction Project that would reduce disturbance to the nesting raptors.</p> <p>No construction or earth-moving activity should occur within the non-disturbance buffer until it is determined by a qualified raptor biologist that the young have fledged (that is, left the nest) and have attained sufficient flight skills to avoid</p>	<p>a) STA in coordination with a qualified biologist</p> <p>b) STA and a qualified biologist in compliance with CDFG</p>	<p>Fifteen days prior to beginning construction - if construction is to commence between March 1 and September 1</p> <p>b) Prior to beginning construction if ground nesting raptors are detected</p>	

Impact #	Impact Statement	Mitigation Measures	Responsible Agency	Timing	Initials
		<p>Project construction zones. This typically occurs by August 1st. This date may be earlier than August 1st, or later, and would have to be determined by a qualified raptor biologist. Once the raptors have completed the nesting cycle, that is the young have reached independence of the nest, no further regard for the nest site shall be required. No other compensatory mitigation is required.</p> <p>Mitigation Measure 4.5-7b:</p> <p><u>Ground Nesting Raptors</u></p> <p>A nesting survey shall be conducted for ground nesting raptors, such as western burrowing owl, short-eared owl and northern harrier. The ground nesting raptor survey should be conducted in accordance with the survey requirements detailed in the California Department of Fish and Game's (CDFG) October 17, 1995 Staff Report on Burrowing Owl Mitigation. Surveys shall be conducted in both breeding season (April 15-July 15) and non-breeding season (December-January) to assess use of the Project area by this species.</p> <p>If northern harriers or short-eared owls are identified nesting within the Project area, mitigation measures detailed above for nesting raptors should be implemented. If burrowing owls are found within the Project area during the non-breeding season (September 1 through January 31), impacts to burrowing owls will be avoided by establishing a fenced 160-foot buffer between the nest site(s) (i.e., the active burrow(s)) and any earth-moving activity or other disturbance within the Project area. If occupied burrows are found within 160 feet of the proposed Project area during the non-breeding season, and may be impacted, passive relocation measures will be implemented according to the Burrowing Owl Consortium Guidelines. If western burrowing owls must be passively relocated from the roadway alignment to remove them from harms way, these activities shall be approved by CDFG in advance. Passive relocation shall not commence before September 30th and shall be completed prior to February 1st.</p> <p>If burrowing owls are detected on the site during the breeding season (peak of the breeding season is April 15</p>			

Impact #	Impact Statement	Mitigation Measures	Responsible Agency	Timing	Initials
		<p>through July 15), and appear to be engaged in nesting behavior, a fenced 250-foot buffer would be required between the nest site(s) (i.e. the active burrows(s)) and any earth-moving activity or other disturbance within the Project area. This 250-foot buffer could be removed once it is determined by a qualified raptor biologist that that young have fledged (that is, left the nest). Typically, the young fledge by August 31st. This date may be earlier than August 31st, or later, and would have to be determined by a qualified raptor biologist.</p> <p>Finally, if burrowing owls were found occupying burrows in the Project area, a qualified raptor biologist shall delineate the extent of burrowing owl habitat on the site. To mitigate impacts to burrowing owls, STA shall implement mitigation measures required by the CDFG which provide that six and a half acres (6.5 acres) of replacement habitat be set-aside (i.e., protected in perpetuity) for every occupied burrow, pair of burrowing owls, or unpaired resident bird. Such a set-aside will off-set permanent impacts to burrowing owl habitat. For example, if two pairs of burrowing owls are found occupying burrows on the study area, 13 acres of mitigation land must be acquired. Additionally, if one pair and one resident bird are identified, 13 acres of mitigation land must be acquired. The protected lands shall be adjacent to occupied burrowing owl habitat and at a location acceptable to CDFG. Land identified to off-set impacts to burrowing owls must be protected in perpetuity either by a conservation easement or via fee title acquisition. CDFG will likely require that a detailed mitigation and monitoring plan be developed for the burrowing owl mitigation area. This plan shall be prepared by the Project biologist and will be subject to CDFG approval. Mitigation lands will be protected in perpetuity and the applicant will provide an endowment fund for the long-term management of the burrowing owl mitigation lands.</p> <p>In lieu of this mitigation measure, with approval from CDFG, credit commensurate with the mitigation acreage requirements set forth above shall be purchased from a qualified burrowing owl mitigation bank in Solano County.</p>			
4.5-8	The Project could result in	Mitigation Measure 4.5-8: In order to avoid impacts to	STA in coordination	Fifteen days prior	

Impact #	Impact Statement	Mitigation Measures	Responsible Agency	Timing	Initials
	impacts to Passerine (common) and Special-Status Nesting Birds. This is considered a potentially significant adverse impact.	<p>common nesting birds and special-status birds, a nesting survey shall be conducted 15 days prior to commencing with construction work if this work would commence between March 1st and September 1st. Nesting surveys shall be conducted throughout the entire construction corridor 15 days prior to construction of the Project.</p> <p>If special-status birds are identified nesting within the Project area, a 100-foot non-disturbance radius around the nest must be fenced. Only the portion of the buffer that occurs on the Project site shall be fenced. No construction or earth-moving activity shall occur within this 100-foot staked buffer until it is determined by a qualified ornithologist that the young have fledged (that is, left the nest) and have attained sufficient flight skills to avoid Project construction zones. This typically occurs by July 1st. This date may be earlier or later, and would have to be determined by a qualified ornithologist. Similarly, the qualified ornithologist could modify the size of the buffer based upon site conditions and the bird's apparent acclimation to human activities.</p> <p>If common passerine birds such as American robins, scrub jays, and northern mockingbird are identified nesting in any tree or shrub proposed for removal, tree removal shall be postponed until it is determined by a qualified ornithologist that the young have fledged and have attained sufficient flight skills to leave the Project site. Typically, most passerine birds can be expected to complete nesting by July 1st, with young attaining sufficient flight skills by this date that are sufficient for young to avoid Project construction zones. Unless otherwise prescribed for special-status bird species, upon completion of nesting no further protection or mitigation measures would be warranted for nesting birds.</p>	with a qualified biologist	to construction, if construction is to commence between March 1 and September 1	
4.5-9	The Project could result in impacts to Swainson's hawk. This is considered a potentially significant adverse impact.	Mitigation Measure 4.5-9: CDFG has prepared guidelines for conducting surveys for Swainson's hawk entitled: Recommended Timing and Methodology for Swainson's Hawk Nesting Surveys in California's Central Valley (CDFG 2000). The following mitigation measure provides a summary of these survey requests. The survey recommendations were developed by the Swainson's Hawk Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) to maximize the	STA and a qualified biologist in compliance with CDFG	Prior to construction	

Impact #	Impact Statement	Mitigation Measures	Responsible Agency	Timing	Initials
		<p>potential for locating nesting Swainson's hawks, and thus reduce the potential for nest failures as a result of Project activities and/or disturbances. To meet the CDFG's recommendations for mitigation and protection of Swainson's hawks in this guideline, surveys shall be conducted for a half-mile radius around all Project activities and shall be completed for at least the two survey periods immediately prior to a Project's initiation, in accordance with CDFG's guidelines, which provide specific recommendations regarding the number of surveys based on the Project is scheduled to begin and the time of year the surveys are conducted.</p> <p>If Swainson's hawks are found to be nesting on or in the immediate vicinity of the Project area in the future when the proposed Project is implemented, consultation with CDFG and mitigation compensation shall be required. At that time, the necessity of acquiring a Fish and Game Section 2081 management authorization should be determined. CDFG has prepared a Staff Report Regarding Mitigation for Impacts to Swainson's Hawks in the Central Valley of California (CDFG 1994) (hereinafter the Mitigation Guidelines) that prescribes avoidance and mitigation guidelines for impacts to Swainson's hawk nesting and foraging habitats. The Mitigation Guidelines require applicants to replace any impacted Swainson's hawk nesting and/or foraging habitat with other suitable Swainson's hawk nesting/foraging habitat. If Swainson's hawks are found to be nesting on or within the area of influence of the Project (within 1,000 feet of the Project), impacts to nesting Swainson's hawks would be regarded as significant and adverse, and mitigation compensation would be required. If Swainson's hawk are found to be nesting on or in the immediate vicinity of the Project area, STA shall set aside land as mitigation in a 1:1 ratio for all disturbed habitat within the Project area.</p> <p>If Swainson's hawks are not found to be nesting in the immediate vicinity of the Project site immediately prior to a Project's initiation, STA shall mitigate for impacts to foraging habitat within 5 miles of a known Swainson's hawk nest. Since the Project site is within 5 miles of at least one active nest tree (in 2007), STA will set aside 0.75 acre of habitat in</p>			

Impact #	Impact Statement	Mitigation Measures	Responsible Agency	Timing	Initials
		<p>perpetuity for every acre of foraging habitat impacted by the Project. If an active Swainson's hawk nest is found within 5 to 10 miles of the Project, STA shall set aside .5 acre in perpetuity for every acre of foraging habitat impacted by the Project.</p> <p>The CDFG Mitigation Guidelines states that acceptable mitigation to offset impacts to Swainson's hawk foraging habitat can be met by Fee Title acquisition of Swainson's hawk habitat, or by acquisition of the right to record a conservation easement over lands that can be managed for this hawk species (hereinafter Habitat Management Lands). If STA acquires land through Fee Title, the land would have to be donated to a suitable conservation organization for management. In addition to providing Habitat Management Lands, STA would be assessed a management fee for the long-term management of the Habitat Management Lands by a suitable conservation organization. In lieu of these mitigation measures, with approval from CDFG, STA may purchase mitigation credits commensurate with the acreage of impacts to foraging and/or nesting habitat at a CDFG approved Swainson's hawk mitigation bank.</p>			
4.5-10	The Project could result in impacts to American Badger, a California species of special concern. This is considered a potentially significant adverse impact.	<p>Mitigation Measure 4.5-9: A preconstruction survey shall be conducted for the American badger within the sphere of influence of the proposed Project, within 7 days prior to grading of the Project. Surveys shall be conducted by a wildlife biologist with experience identifying badger burrows. Survey methods would include conducting parallel transects through the grassland community looking for badger burrows. Any badger burrow identified should be staked in the field and mapped on Project site maps.</p> <p>If active badger burrows are identified within the sphere of influence of the proposed Project, they should be avoided. If avoidance is not feasible, a biologist should determine if the burrow is being used for breeding. If young are determined to be present, the burrow should be avoided until young vacate the burrow. If the burrow is simply being used as refugia by the badger, as approved by CDFG, a one way eviction door will be installed to remove the badger from its burrow. If it digs back into the burrow, as approved by CDFG, live traps should be established at the burrow</p>	STA in coordination with a qualified biologist	Seven days prior to construction	

Impact #	Impact Statement	Mitigation Measures	Responsible Agency	Timing	Initials
		entrances to trap and remove badgers from the area of impact.			
4.5-11	The Project could potentially conflict with local policies and ordinances pertaining to tree preservation. This is considered a potentially significant adverse impact.	Mitigation Measure 4.5-11: A formal tree survey shall be conducted once Project design has been finalized to determine the final number of heritage trees and California native trees (with a DBH greater than 6 inches) that would be removed or modified by the Project within City limits and within riparian habitats. Each species of tree impacted by the Project shall be replaced at a ratio of 3:1 (i.e., 3 trees of the same species will be replaced for every tree impacted). Replanting of native trees shall occur within the study area in areas where native trees would naturally occur, and in areas that can support more trees. Trees shall be provided with water on a bi-monthly basis (during the summer) through means of a water truck for a period of at least three years, or as needed. Monitoring of tree survival shall be conducted for five consecutive years. Annual monitoring reports shall be submitted to STA.	STA in coordination with a certified arborist	Prior to construction of the East End Prior to construction of the West End	
Aesthetics					
4.6-1	The Project could potentially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings in the West End. This is considered a potentially significant adverse impact.	Mitigation Measure 4.6-1a: In areas of rolling grasslands in the West End, contour grading shall be utilized to minimize alteration of the natural terrain. Slope rounding shall also be employed in conjunction with contour grading as to provide a smoother and more natural appearing finished grade and smoother transition between grade slopes and natural topography. Mitigation Measure 4.6-1b: In the West End, landscaping and native species should be used to reflect the rural character of the surrounding areas. Trees (if planted) shall be of species consistent with the existing natural landscape and spaced to allow for view corridors. Graded slopes should be re-seeded with native grasses.	a-b) STA and Contractor	a) Grading techniques implemented during construction of the West End b) Landscaping implemented at the completion of construction of the West End	
Cultural Resources					
4.7-1	The Project could potentially result in a substantial adverse change in the significance of an historical or archeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5. This is considered a	Mitigation Measure 4.7-1: Should any previously undiscovered cultural (historic, archeological) and/or paleontologic resources be found during construction, work shall stop, in accordance with CEQA §15064.5(f) and consistent with local requirements, until such time that the resource can be evaluated by a qualified archaeologist/paleontologist and appropriate mitigative	STA and Solano County	During construction as necessary	

Impact #	Impact Statement	Mitigation Measures	Responsible Agency	Timing	Initials
	potentially significant adverse impact.	<p>action taken as determined necessary. Project personnel shall not collect or move any cultural or paleontologic resources found on the Project site.</p> <p>Implementation of this mitigation measure would reduce impacts associated with cultural and/or paleontologic resources to a less-than-significant level.</p>			
4.7-2	The Project could potentially result in the direct or indirect destruction of a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature.	Mitigation Measure 4.7-2: Implementation of Mitigation Measure 4.7-1 described above would reduce impacts related to paleontological resources or unique geologic features to a less-than-significant level.	STA	During construction as necessary	
4.7-3	The Project could potentially result in disturbance to human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries.	Mitigation Measure 4.7-3: If human remains are found during construction, STA shall stop construction work and immediately contact the Solano County Coroner. Both state and local law requires that the Solano County Coroner, upon recognizing the remains as being of Native American origin, take responsibility for contacting the Native American Heritage Commission within 24 hours. The Commission has various powers and duties to provide for the ultimate disposition of any Native American remains, as does the assigned Most Likely Descendant. Sections 5097.98 and 5097.99 of the Public Resources Code also call for "protection to Native American human burials and skeletal remains from vandalism and inadvertent destruction." STA shall provide a preconstruction worker training to achieve compliance with this requirement for protection of human remains. Worker training shall instruct workers as to the potential for discovery of cultural or human remains, the need for proper and timely reporting of such finds, and the consequences of failure thereof. Additionally, a qualified archaeologist shall intermittently monitor the construction site to ensure compliance with Public Resources Code sections 5097.98 and 5097.99.	STA in coordination with a qualified cultural resource specialist	<p>Worker training prior to beginning construction</p> <p>Monitoring during construction as necessary</p>	
Geology and Soils					
4.8-1	The Project is located in an area that could expose people or structures to substantial adverse effects due to rupture of a known earthquake fault, as	Mitigation Measure 4.8-1: To minimize potential damage from ground shaking, development associated with this Project must meet Solano County seismic safety standards, as established by the Health and Safety Element of the Solano County General Plan. All Project structures	STA in coordination with a qualified geotechnical engineer	Detailed Design Phase	

Impact #	Impact Statement	Mitigation Measures	Responsible Agency	Timing	Initials
	delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map. This is considered a potentially significant adverse impact.	(including roadways) would be designed to the Maximum Credible Earthquake (MCE) in accordance with current design standards under the Solano County Road Improvement Standards and Land Development and Subdivision Requirements.			
4.8-2	The Project is located in an area that has the potential to expose people or structures to substantial adverse effects due to strong seismic ground shaking caused by a moderate or major earthquake within the local vicinity.	Mitigation Measure 4.8-2: To minimize potential structural distress, the Project shall be designed and constructed according to the most current earthquake resistance standards for Seismic Zone 4, as outlined in the current California Building Code.	STA in coordination with a qualified geotechnical engineer	Detailed Design Phase	
4.8-3	The Project is located in an area that has the potential to expose people or structures to substantial adverse effects due to seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction. This is considered a potentially significant adverse impact.	Mitigation Measure 4.8-3: Any new bridges/overcrossing structures shall be supported upon a deep foundation system, which extends through the potentially liquefiable zones and bears upon the underlying dense gravelly layers. The most suitable method(s) would be selected based on site-specific subsurface investigations conducted during the detailed design phase. Furthermore, to minimize potential liquefaction impacts, sub-excavation, dynamic compaction, or dewatering methods would be implemented during construction. The most suitable method(s) would be selected based on site-specific subsurface investigations conducted during the final design phase of the Project.	STA in coordination with a qualified geotechnical engineer	Detailed Design Phase	
4.8-4	The Project is located in an area that has the potential to expose people or structures to substantial adverse effects due to landslides. This is considered a potentially significant adverse impact.	Mitigation Measure 4.8-4: Soil investigations, including geologic mapping and soil/rock borings, shall be conducted and used in the design of the proposed grading of the Project to address issues of weak soil, existing landslides, colluvial movement and the composition of bedrock material. The investigations shall be conducted during the final design phase of the Project. In the event that potential for landslide is identified, stabilization measures, including physical reinforcement of the hillside, shall be evaluated for installation, as required by the Project Geotechnical Engineer or Engineering Geologist.	STA in coordination with a qualified geotechnical engineer	Detailed Design Phase	
4.8-5	The use of on-site soils for fill material during Project construction could result in substantial soil erosion or the	Mitigation Measure 4.8-5a: Fill materials (within 5 vertical feet of proposed improvements) shall generally contain rock fragments no larger than 6 inches in maximum diameter. Placement of larger rock fragments or oversized material is	a-d) STA in coordination with a qualified geotechnical	a) Prior to and during construction	

Impact #	Impact Statement	Mitigation Measures	Responsible Agency	Timing	Initials
	loss of topsoil. This is considered a potentially significant adverse impact.	<p>possible at the discretion of the Project Geotechnical Engineer or Engineering Geologist in deeper fills, provided that the large fragments are not nested and proper compaction can be achieved. Select fill shall have a Plasticity Index of less than 15, a Liquid Limit of less than 40, maximum aggregate size of 4 inches and have 15 percent to 60 percent of the material passing the No. 200 sieve. Select fill shall be generated from portions of the basalt, sandstone, and some select tuff layers found within the Project area.</p> <p>Mitigation Measure 4.8-5b: Due to the moderate to highly expansive nature of some materials that will be generated as fill, exposed within cut slopes, or present within the subgrade of the proposed alignment, for planning purposes new cut and fill slopes shall be planned for gradients no steeper than 2:1. If steeper slopes are required to be constructed, STA shall conduct further investigation, testing, and analysis in order to develop adequate slope design criteria and possible engineered solutions for steeper slopes. Such solutions may include: fill slope construction with select fill; engineered slopes with geotextile reinforcements; soil improvement additives such as lime; the use of retaining walls; or, a combination thereof.</p> <p>Mitigation Measure 4.8-5c: Fill and cut slopes shall be constructed in accordance with the requirements of local jurisdictions.</p> <p>Mitigation Measure 4.8-5d: Any undocumented fills encountered within the proposed alignment shall be removed for their full depth and replaced with compacted engineered fill, under the direction of the geotechnical engineer of record. Earthen fill materials that do not contain more than 3 percent organics can be re-used as general fill. Organic-rich fill shall not be used in areas of proposed roadway or other improvements.</p>	engineer	<p>b) Prior to and during construction</p> <p>c) On-going throughout construction</p> <p>d) On-going throughout construction</p>	
4.8-6	The presence of high groundwater in the Project area (West End only) may result in substantial soil erosion or the	Mitigation Measure 4.8-6a: Special dewatering procedures shall be implemented for deep excavations below the groundwater level, depending on the time of year of construction. Special considerations to collect and control	a-c) STA in coordination with a qualified geotechnical	a) Prior to and during construction	

Impact #	Impact Statement	Mitigation Measures	Responsible Agency	Timing	Initials
	loss of topsoil. This is considered a potentially significant adverse impact.	seepage, especially at material contacts/faults shall be required. Mitigation Measure 4.8-6b: Each proposed cut area shall be evaluated for material stability and excavability, including providing recommended stable slope inclinations. STA will select the most suitable method(s) based on site-specific subsurface investigations. The investigations will be conducted during the final design phase of the Project. Mitigation Measure 4.8-6c: Specific recommendations shall be provided for construction and monitoring fill construction including staged construction. STA will select the most suitable method(s) based on site-specific subsurface investigations. The investigations will be conducted during the final design phase of the Project.	engineer	b) Detailed Design Phase c) Detailed Design Phase	
4.8-7	Portions of the Project would be located on soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the Project, and potentially result in soil subsidence. This is considered a significant adverse impact.	Mitigation Measure 4.8-7: Special consideration shall be given to fill placement techniques in order to minimize the settlement potential of the deep fills. Such techniques may include: increasing relative compaction to a minimum of 95 percent (versus the standard 90 percent); surcharging the fills with additional load and later removal; dynamic compaction; use of geotextiles; or a combination thereof. STA will select the most suitable method(s) based on site-specific subsurface investigation. The investigations will be conducted during the final design phase of the Project.	STA in coordination with a qualified geotechnical engineer	Detailed Design Phase	
4.8-8	The West End of the Project site is located in an area that has expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property. This is considered a potentially significant adverse impact.	Mitigation Measure 4.8-8: In the West End, maintenance, repair, and/or occasional replacement of the slopes and/or improvements shall be provided for on an as-needed basis for the lifetime of the Project. Other engineering solutions may also be required to reduce the potential for creep.	Solano County	As needed post construction	
Hydrology and Water Quality					
4.9-1	The Project could potentially violate water quality standards or waste discharge requirements. This is	Mitigation Measure 4.9-1a: The Project would be required to adhere to the conditions of the NPDES Permit, including the C.3 requirements for stormwater discharge treatment measures and appropriate source control and site design	a) Contractor b) STA c) Contractor	a) On-going throughout construction	

Impact #	Impact Statement	Mitigation Measures	Responsible Agency	Timing	Initials
	considered a potentially significant adverse impact.	<p>measures for the alignment.</p> <p>Mitigation Measure 4.9-1b: To avoid potential long-term impacts to water quality, the Project shall be designed to include bioswales to retain and treat stormwater runoff from the roadway before entering the City or County's stormwater drainage systems.</p> <p>Mitigation Measure 4.9-1c: To comply with temporary water quality impact resulting from construction activities, a SWPPP shall be prepared prior to grading activities. The SWPPP must list BMPs that shall be followed to minimize contaminants entering storm drains as a result of storm runoff.</p> <p>Typical treatment BMPs that have been approved for use by the SWRCB include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biofiltration strips and swales • Infiltration basins • Detention devices • Dry weather flow diversions • Gross solid removal devices • Media Filters • Multi-chamber Treatment Trains • Wet Basins <p>The Project shall implement one or a combination of the above-mentioned treatment BMPs into Project design. At the current level of design, it is not possible to identify design-specific BMPs for the Project. Design-specific BMPs shall be identified in the SWPPP prepared by the contractors prior to construction.</p>		<p>b) Detailed Design Phase</p> <p>c) SWPPP prepared prior to beginning construction and implemented during contraction</p>	
4.9-2	The Project could substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner which would result in substantial erosion, siltation, or flooding, on- or off-site. This is considered a potentially	<p>Mitigation Measure 4.9-2a: In order to maintain bank stability in the area of the new bridge across Suisun Creek, riparian trees to be removed shall be cut above-grade and the tree stumps shall be left in place, except as needed to accommodate bridge construction.</p> <p>Mitigation Measure 4.9-2b: During the design phase of the Project, the Project engineer shall integrate design-specific BMPs to address potential water quality impacts arising from</p>	a-b) STA and Contractor	<p>a) During construction of the East End</p> <p>b) Detailed Design Phase</p>	

Impact #	Impact Statement	Mitigation Measures	Responsible Agency	Timing	Initials
	significant adverse impact.	<p>the Project. BMPs shall include, but not be limited to, the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preservation of existing vegetation is the identification and protection of desirable grasses, plants and trees to retain their erosion and sediment control benefits. The contractor would preserve existing vegetation at areas on the site where no construction activity is planned. Vegetation to be preserved should be delineated on the plans, included in the contractor's file and included in the SWPPP. • The Project shall utilize concentrated flow conveyance systems in planning and construction. Concentrated flow conveyance systems consist of permanent design features that are used alone or in combination to intercept and divert surface flows and to convey discharge concentrated flows with a minimum of soil erosion, both within the Project limits and downstream. These include ditches, berms, dikes and swales; overside drains; flared culvert end sections; outlet protection/velocity dissipation devices. • Surface protection consists of a system of permanent design measures that are used alone or in a combination to minimize erosion from completed disturbed surfaces. Vegetated surfaces shall be incorporated into the Project to address stabilization of completed slope and surface areas to prevent erosion from storm water and non-storm water runoff. Permanent erosion control will be applied in any specific area where work in that area is determined to be substantially complete. Hard surfaces consist of concrete, rock, or rock mortar placed to achieve slope protection. 			
4.9-3	Project construction activities could potentially create or	Mitigation Measure 4.9-3: Existing vegetation shall be preserved as much as practical. Areas of existing vegetation	STA and Contractor	SWPPP prepared prior to	

Impact #	Impact Statement	Mitigation Measures	Responsible Agency	Timing	Initials
	contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff. This is considered a potentially significant adverse impact.	to be preserved shall be identified and delineated on Project plan sheets in the SWPPP. All disturbed areas shall be stabilized with vegetation or hard surface treatments upon completion of construction in any specific area. All inactive disturbed soil areas shall be stabilized with both sediment and temporary erosion control 14 days prior to the onset of the rainy season (October 15th to April 15th). During the Rainy season, Project construction shall minimize soil disturbances and temporary or permanent erosion control measures shall be undertaken to reduce soil erosion impacts to receiving water quality.		beginning construction and implemented during contraction	
4.9-4	The Project could substantially degrade water quality. This is considered a potentially significant adverse impact.	<p>Mitigation Measure 4.9-4a: To reduce or eliminate the potential for stormwater or pollutant stormwater discharge to occur, during the final design phase permanent Project-specific pollution prevention BMPs, treatment BMPs, and critical temporary construction site BMPs shall be identified and incorporated into the Project plans, specifications, and estimates.</p> <p>Mitigation Measure 4.9-4b: To reduce or eliminate the potential for a non-storm water or pollutant storm water discharge to occur as a result of construction activities, the Project contractor in accordance with both the requirements under the Statewide Stormwater NPDES and General Construction Permits will implement a site specific SWPPP to control water pollution during all construction activities. The SWPPP will be approved and implemented prior to the commencement of any ground-disturbing activities. The SWPPP will identify BMPs that will be implemented to reduce or eliminate the potential for short-term impacts to water quality as a result of construction.</p> <p>The types of BMPs that will be utilized to control erosion and sedimentation of drainage channels in disturbed areas are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Erosion control barriers such as silt fences, hay bales, and • Drain inlet protection such as gravel bags, etc. 	<p>a) STA</p> <p>b) STA and Contractor</p>	<p>a) Detailed Design Phase</p> <p>b) On-going throughout construction</p>	
Hazards					
4.10-1	The Project has the potential to expose the public to significant	Mitigation Measure 4.10-1a: Lead and asbestos shall either be abated if found during construction, or STA shall	a-f) STA and a qualified	a) Prior to demolition of any	

Impact #	Impact Statement	Mitigation Measures	Responsible Agency	Timing	Initials
	hazards through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials or through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment. This is considered a potentially significant adverse impact.	<p>provide special construction worker health and safety procedures during demolition activities.</p> <p>An asbestos and lead-based paint survey shall be performed for all structures constructed prior to 1980 that will be demolished during Project construction activities. If asbestos-containing materials are determine to be present, the materials shall be abated by a certified asbestos abatement contractor in accordance with BAAQMD Regulation 11, Rule 2 and DTSC hazardous materials laws and regulations. All work shall be conducted in accordance with applicable construction worker health and safety requirements, including CalOSHA Construction Safety Orders for lead (Title 8 CCR Section 1532.1) and asbestos (Title 8 CCR Section 1529). These requirements may include air monitoring during construction, worker training, and preparation of a Lead Compliance Plan prior to construction.</p> <p>Mitigation Measure 4.10-1b: Soils within the existing right-of-way of SR12 or I-80 that would be disturbed during construction shall be tested prior to construction for total and/or soluble lead to properly classify the soils and ensure that all necessary soil management and disposal procedures are followed.</p> <p>Mitigation Measure 4.10-1c: Prior to commencement of construction, a minimum of four soil samples from soils immediately beneath railroad tracks located in the West End shall be taken. These samples shall be analyzed for Title 22 metals, total petroleum hydrocarbons (TPH), semi-volatile organic compounds (SVOCs), and polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs).</p> <p>Concentrations of contaminants in the soils shall be compared to construction worker health and safety and hazardous waste thresholds, as defined by RWQCB Environmental Screening Levels (ESLs) for construction/trench worker direct contact. If the concentrations of contaminants exceed construction worker health and safety standards, additional site safety measures, such as use of personal protective equipment and/or dust</p>	environmental professional	<p>structure</p> <p>b) Prior to ground disturbing activities in SR12 or I-80 rights of way</p> <p>c) Prior to construction of the West End</p> <p>d) Prior to construction</p> <p>e) Detailed Design Phase</p> <p>f) Prior to construction of the East End</p>	

Impact #	Impact Statement	Mitigation Measures	Responsible Agency	Timing	Initials
		<p>control procedures may be required during some construction activities to minimize exposure to the contaminated soils. If the concentrations of contaminants exceed hazardous waste thresholds, then excavated soils must be managed during construction and may require off-site disposal. Depending on the extent of contamination identified, STA shall report concentrations that exceed hazardous waste thresholds to the Solano County Department of Environmental Management or other appropriate regulatory agency, conduct additional investigation and/or remediation under existing regulatory programs, such as those described in the Regulatory Setting section of this DEIR analysis.</p> <p>Mitigation Measure 4.10-1d: An investigation of groundwater quality shall be required should excavation to the depth of groundwater (which may be located as shallow as 10 ft below ground surface (bgs) in portions of the Project area) be proposed near areas where groundwater may have been affected by reported releases of hazardous materials.</p> <p>Concentrations of contaminants in groundwater shall be compared to construction worker health and safety thresholds and groundwater discharge permit thresholds. If the concentrations of contaminants exceed RWQCB ESLs, worker health and safety measures construction worker health and safety standards, additional site safety measures, such as use of personal protective equipment, may be required during some construction activities to minimize exposure to the contaminated groundwater. If the concentrations of contaminants exceed permit thresholds, then STA shall manage dewatered groundwater during construction and treat and/or dispose off-site. Depending on the extent of contamination identified, the discovery of groundwater contamination may require reporting to the Solano County Department of Environmental Management or other appropriate regulatory agency, and may trigger requirements for additional investigation and/or remediation under existing regulatory programs.</p> <p>Mitigation Measure 4.10-1e: During detailed design and prior to construction, a minimum of eight four-point</p>			

Impact #	Impact Statement	Mitigation Measures	Responsible Agency	Timing	Initials
		<p>composite samples from areas historically under agricultural cultivation shall be collected and analyzed for Title 22 metals and organochlorine pesticides.</p> <p>Concentrations of contaminants in the soils shall be compared to construction worker health and safety and hazardous waste thresholds. If the concentrations of contaminants exceed construction worker health and safety standards, additional site safety measures, such as use of personal protective equipment and/or dust control procedures, may be required during some construction activities to minimize exposure to the contaminated soils. If the concentrations of contaminants exceed hazardous waste thresholds, then excavated soils must be managed during construction and may require off-site disposal. Depending on the extent of contamination identified, concentrations that exceed hazardous waste thresholds may require reporting to the Solano County Department of Environmental Management or other appropriate regulatory agency, and may trigger requirements for additional investigation and/or remediation under existing regulatory programs.</p> <p>Mitigation Measure 4.10-1f: Prior to construction a qualified environmental professional shall take a minimum of four soil samples from areas adjacent to each agricultural outbuilding affected by the Project. These samples shall be analyzed for Title 22 metals, organochlorine pesticides, and total petroleum hydrocarbons (TPH) as gasoline, diesel, and motor oil. If evidence of contaminated soil results from the sampling, further remediation shall be conducted.</p> <p>Concentrations of contaminants in the soils shall be compared to construction worker health and safety and hazardous waste thresholds. If the concentrations of contaminants exceed construction worker health and safety standards, additional site safety measures, such as use of personal protective equipment and/or dust control procedures, may be required during some construction activities to minimize exposure to the contaminated soils. If the concentrations of contaminants exceed hazardous waste thresholds, then excavated soils shall be managed</p>			

Impact #	Impact Statement	Mitigation Measures	Responsible Agency	Timing	Initials
		during construction and may be disposed of off-site. Depending on the extent of contamination identified, STA shall report concentrations that exceed hazardous waste thresholds to the Solano County Department of Environmental Management or other appropriate regulatory agency, and may conduct additional investigation and/or remediation under the regulatory agency's direction.			
Population and Housing					
4.11	The Project would not displace substantial numbers of people, but would result in the displacement of existing business tenants. This is considered a significant adverse impact.	Mitigation Measure 4.11-1: STA shall comply with the requirements of the State of California's Relocation Assistance Law, Government Code § 7260, et seq., STA shall provide qualified displaced businesses (eligibility is dependant on tenancy, status during purchasing process, etc.) relocation benefits. These benefits may include financial compensation, assistance in obtaining and becoming established in a suitable replacement location, supply of information concerning other federal and state programs which may be of assistance, and other advisory services to minimize hardships to business owners. Compliance with the requirements set forth by the State of California's Relocation Assistance Law would reduce displacement impacts to a less than significant level.	STA	Prior to displacement of any residence or business	

Appendix A

Proposed 2006 CWA Section 303(d)
List of Water Quality Limited Segments

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PROPOSED 2006 CWA SECTION 303(d) LIST OF WATER QUALITY LIMITED SEGMENTS

SAN FRANCISCO BAY REGIONAL BOARD

SWRCB APPROVAL DATE: OCTOBER 25, 2006

REGION TYPE	NAME	CALWATER WATERSHED	POLLUTANT/STRESSOR	POTENTIAL SOURCES	ESTIMATED SIZE AFFECTED	PROPOSED TMDL COMPLETION
2 C	Pacific Ocean at Pillar Point Beach	20221012	Coliform Bacteria	Nonpoint Source	1.1 Miles	2019
2 C	Pacific Ocean at Rockaway Beach	20221011	Coliform Bacteria	Urban Runoff/Storm Sewers Nonpoint Source	0.29 Miles	2019
2 C	Pacific Ocean at Venice Beach	20222011	Coliform Bacteria	Nonpoint Source	0.38 Miles	2019
2 R	Permanente Creek	20550021	Diazinon <i>This listing was made by USEPA.</i>	Nonpoint Source	13 Miles	2005
2 R	Pescadero Creek	20240013	Sedimentation/Siltation <i>If California Department of Fish and Game and the National Marine Fisheries Service find that for this water body fish populations are not impacted, the State Water Board supports removing this water body and pollutant from the list.</i>	Urban Runoff/Storm Sewers	26 Miles	2019
2 R	Petaluma River	20630020	Diazinon <i>Data source: Abelli-Amen, Petaluma Tree Planters, 1999.</i>	Nonpoint Source	22 Miles	2005
			Nutrients <i>TMDL will be developed as part of ongoing watershed management effort. Additional monitoring and assessment needed.</i>	Urban Runoff/Storm Sewers	22 Miles	2019
			Agriculture Construction/Land Development Urban Runoff/Storm Sewers			

PROPOSED 2006 CWA SECTION 303(d) LIST OF WATER QUALITY LIMITED SEGMENTS

SAN FRANCISCO BAY REGIONAL BOARD

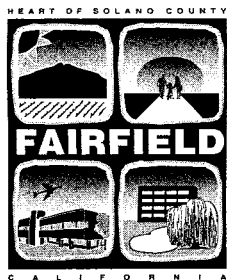
SWRCB APPROVAL DATE: OCTOBER 25, 2006

REGION TYPE	NAME	CALWATER WATERSHED	POLLUTANT/STRESSOR	POTENTIAL SOURCES	ESTIMATED SIZE AFFECTED	PROPOSED TMDL COMPLETION
2 R	Stevens Creek	20550020	Diazinon <i>This listing was made by USEPA.</i>	Urban Runoff/Storm Sewers	20 Miles	2005
			Toxicity		20 Miles	2019
2 L	Stevens Creek Reservoir	20550031	Chlordane	Source Unknown	85 Acres	2019
			Dieldrin	Source Unknown	85 Acres	2019
			Mercury	Source Unknown	85 Acres	2019
			PCBs (Polychlorinated biphenyls)	Source Unknown	85 Acres	2019
				Source Unknown		
2 B	Suisun Bay	20710020	Chlordane <i>This listing was made by USEPA.</i>	Nonpoint Source	25335 Acres	2008
			DDT <i>This listing was made by USEPA.</i>	Nonpoint Source	25335 Acres	2008
			Dieldrin <i>This listing was made by USEPA.</i>	Nonpoint Source	25335 Acres	2008
			Dioxin Compounds (including 2,3,7,8-TCDD) <i>The specific compounds are 2,3,7,8-TCDD, 1,2,3,7,8-PeCDD, 1,2,3,6,7,8-HxCDD, 1,2,3,7,8,9-HxCDD, 1,2,3,4,6,7,8-HpCDD, and OCDD. This listing was made by USEPA.</i>	Atmospheric Deposition	25335 Acres	2019

Appendix B

City of Fairfield Department of
Community Development Letter
(April 22, 2008)

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CITY OF FAIRFIELD

Founded 1856

Incorporated December 12, 1903

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Home of
Travis Air Force Base

COUNCIL

Mayor
Harry T. Price
707.428.7395
Vice-Mayor
John Mraz
707.429.6298
Councilmembers
707.429.6298
Frank Kardos
Chuck Timm
Matt Garcia

April 22, 2008

Solano Transportation Authority
c/o Janet Adams
One Harbor Center, Suite 130
Suisun City, CA 94585

Re: Draft Environmental Impact Report for the North Connector Project

Dear Ms. Adams:

This letter is provided as a follow-up to our letter dated February 13, 2008 and supersedes Comments 1, 2 and 4 of that letter.

It has come to our attention that the Solano Land Trust (SLT) has concerns with the removal of the Linear Trail between Abernathy Road and Suisun Creek where the SLT holds a conservation easement. The City has discussed this issue with the SLT and both agencies have discussed a solution to resolve the SLT's concerns. The City and the SLT have discussed transferring the existing conservation easement from the disconnected Linear Trail segment (Abernathy to Suisun Creek) to a new segment of the Linear Trail planned in the northeast portion of the City. The City will present the proposal to SLT's Executive Committee on May 12th and request consideration at SLT's next available Board meeting. Once the SLT Board has taken action, the easement transfer will be brought before the City Council in June for their action.

Once SLT's easement is transferred and the new trail segment along the North Connector is constructed, the City will abandon the existing trail segment and close it off to public access. Additionally, once the STA has adopted their Final EIR, the City will finalize a General Plan Amendment, which has been initiated, that eliminates the portion of the Linear Trail from Abernathy to the new North Connector Bridge over Suisun Creek from the Recreation and Open Space and Circulation Elements of our General Plan.

DEPARTMENTS

Community Services
707.428.7465
Finance
707.428.7496
Fire
707.428.7375
Human Resources
707.428.7394
Community
Development
707.428.7461
Police
707.428.7551
Public Works
707.428.7485

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ■ HOUSING ■ NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION ■ PLANNING ■ REDEVELOPMENT

Solano Transportation Authority
c/o Janet Adams
April 22, 2008
Page 2

If you should have any questions, please feel free to contact Erin Beavers of my staff at (707) 428-7649. Thank you again for the opportunity to comment on the DEIR.

Sincerely,



EVE SOMJEN
Director

ESS:ELB:ccs

c: Birgitta Corsello, Solano County
Sean P. Quinn, City Manager
Greg Stepanicich, City Attorney
Gene Cortright, Director of Public Works
Erin Beavers, Assistant Director of Community Development