

**FINDINGS FOR THE
2040 PLACER COUNTY
REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN UPDATE**
REQUIRED UNDER THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT
(Public Resources Code, Section 21000 et seq)

I. INTRODUCTION

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (Pub. Resources Code, § 21000 et seq.) requires Placer County Transportation Planning Agency (PCTPA), as the CEQA lead agency, to: 1) make written findings when it approves a project for which an environmental impact report (EIR) was certified, and 2) identify overriding considerations for significant and unavoidable impacts identified in the EIR.

This document explains PCTPA's findings regarding the significant and potentially significant impacts identified in the environmental impact report (EIR) prepared for the 2040 Placer County Regional Transportation Plan (RTP or Project). The statement of overriding considerations in section VII identifies economic, social, technical, and other benefits of the Project that override any significant environmental impacts that would result from the Project.

As required under CEQA, the Final EIR describes the Project, adverse environmental impacts of the project, and Mitigation Measures and alternatives that would substantially reduce or avoid those impacts. The information and conclusions contained in the EIR reflect PCTPA's independent judgment.

The Final EIR (which includes the Draft EIR, comments, responses to comments, and revisions to the Draft EIR) for the Project, examined the Proposed Project and several alternatives to the Project including the: (1) No Project Alternative; (2) Road Emphasis Alternative; (3) Transit Enhancement Alternative; and (4) Financially Unconstrained Alternative.

The Findings and Statement of Overriding Considerations are presented for adoption by PCTPA Board, as PCTPA's findings under CEQA and the CEQA Guidelines (Cal. Code Regs., title 14, § 15000 et seq.) relating to the Project. The Findings provide the written analysis and conclusions of this Board regarding the Project's environmental impacts, Mitigation Measures, alternatives to the Project, and the overriding considerations, which in this Board's view, justify approval of the Project, despite its environmental effects.

II. GENERAL FINDINGS AND OVERVIEW

Background

PCTPA is required to adopt and submit an updated RTP (Regional Transportation Plan) to the California Transportation Commission (CTC) and the Department of Transportation (Caltrans) every five years. The RTP is a long-range, 20-year minimum, comprehensive transportation plan for all modes including: highways, local streets and roads, transit, bicycle, aviation, rail and goods movement. The purpose of the RTP is to serve as a foundation for the development of the shorter "action" plans called the Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP), which satisfies California transportation planning requirements, and the federal counterpart referred to as the Federal Transportation Improvement Program (FTIP) for all transportation projects that require federal approval. The 2040 RTP Program EIR covers a programmed and planned (Tier 1-financially constrained) list of projects and as well as a list of projects identified for development activities only (Tier 2-financially unconstrained). The programmed and planned list of projects represents the financially constrained investments that are either budgeted (funded) in the FTIP or are anticipated to be funded over the horizon of the RTP. The project development only list of projects consists of projects that are not fully funded through construction and are identified for preconstruction efforts through the environmental phase of the project.

The 2040 Placer County Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) introduces a planning framework that is updated from the 2036 RTP, to reflect current priorities and practices at the regional, State, and federal levels. This framework provides guidance to policy makers as they make decisions impacting the region's transportation system. Over the 20-year time horizon of this long-range plan, the goals, policies, and objectives will produce a more coordinated and comprehensive transportation system that effectively and efficiently utilizes the region's resources to the benefit of the citizens of Placer County. The goals, policies, and objectives reflect the desired outcomes of the 2040 RTP.

Project Overview

The proposed project is the adoption and implementation of PCTPA 2040 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). The RTP has been prepared to fulfill the state requirements of AB 402 (Government Code Title 7, Chapter 2.5, Sections 65080-65082) using specific guidance from the California Transportation Commission Regional Transportation Plan Guidelines. More specifically, the RTP is a twenty-year, comprehensive transportation plan for all modes including: highways, local streets and roads, transit, bicycle, aviation, rail, and goods movement. PCTPA is required to adopt and submit an updated RTP to the California Transportation Commission (CTC) and the Department of Transportation (Caltrans) every five years.

The secondary purpose of the RTP is to serve as a foundation for the development of the shorter "action" plans called the Regional Transportation Improvement Program (RTIP), which satisfies California transportation planning requirements, and the federal counterpart referred to as the Federal Transportation Improvement Program (FTIP) for all transportation projects that contain federal transportation dollars or require federal approval.

The RTP contains three primary elements: Policy Element, Action Element, and Financial Element.

The **Policy Element** presents guidance to decision-makers of the implications, impacts, opportunities, and foreclosed options that will result from implementation of the RTP. California law (Government Code Section 65080 (b)) states that each RTP shall include a Policy Element that:

1. Describes the transportation issues in the region;
2. Identifies and quantifies regional needs expressed within both short- and long-range planning horizons; and,
3. Maintains internal consistency with the Financial Element and fund estimates.

The **Action Element** identifies programs and actions to implement the RTP in accordance with the goals, objectives, and policies set forth in the Policy Element. It includes regionally significant multimodal projects that currently have funding in place or that are projected to have funding in the future (Fiscally Constrained), while it also identifies other improvement projects that are needed but do not have funding (Fiscally Unconstrained).

The **Financial Element** identifies the current and anticipated revenue sources and financing techniques available to fund the fiscally constrained transportation investments described in the Action Element. It also identifies potential funding shortfalls and sources for the unconstrained project list.

POLICY ELEMENT

The 2040 RTP builds upon the 2036 RTP goals, policies, objectives, and performance measures in order to provide a simplified and more clearly articulated vision of the future that emphasizes the fundamental values reflected in past RTPs.

The purpose of the RTP is to guide the long-range planning and development of transportation projects in Placer County.

The process of updating the RTP provides an opportunity to participate in both planning and priority setting. The process allows the community to focus their attention on transportation in the context of the Placer County as well as the entire Sacramento region, building both local and regional coalitions. The longer time frame of twenty years gives the community a chance to step back from day-to-day concerns and deliberate on how to achieve the desired transportation system.

The RTP defines the goals of the transportation system and sets priorities for project implementation within the context of six regional planning principles:

- Support well-planned growth and land use patterns;
- Improve environmental quality through better stewardship of the transportation system;
- Fit within a financially constrained budget by delivering cost-effective projects that are feasible to construct and maintain;
- Improve economic vitality by efficiently connecting people to jobs and delivering goods and services to markets;

- Improve access and mobility opportunities for all people to jobs, services and housing; and Provide real, viable travel choices for all people within a diverse county.

ACTION ELEMENT

The Action Element identifies programs and actions to implement the 2040 RTP in accordance with the goals, objectives, and policies set forth in the Policy Element. The Action Element consists of short-term and long-term activities that address regional transportation issues and needs.

The Action Element represents the heart of the RTP. It describes, by mode of transportation, the current conditions, recent planning activities, and priorities. Federal conformity regulations (Title 40 CFR 93.106, Content of Transportation Plans) identify the short-term horizon as a period up to ten years and the long-term horizon as projects or activities 20 years and beyond.

The Action Element must be consistent with the financial constraints identified in the Financial Element, and must conform to the State Implementation Plan. Regionally significant projects are listed below by transportation mode, and are grouped into Tier 1 and Tier 2 categories.

FINANCIAL ELEMENT

The Financial Element identifies the current and anticipated revenue sources and financing techniques available to fund the planned transportation investments described in Tier 1 of the Action Element. The purpose of the Financial Element is to:

- Inventory existing and potential funding sources from federal, state and local perspectives.
- Summarize costs to operate and maintain the current transportation system.
- Summarize street and road candidate projects with both available funding (Tier 1) and potential funding shortfalls (Tier 2) and the cost to build the projects.
- Summarize deferred maintenance for the region and the resulting shortfall.

Tier 1 investments contain the highest priority and most urgent investment needs, and are separated into short term and long-term categories. Enough funding is anticipated to be available over the life of the RTP to develop and construct or implement these improvements. Tier 1 improvements constitute the “financially constrained” element of the RTP.

Also included in the RTP is a vision element, titled “Tier 2,” which includes additional projects and improvements that are needed and important to the regional system but which are not able to be funded at this time. Tier 2 improvements constitute the “financially unconstrained” element of the RTP.

The tables below describe the projects summary for the Financially Constrained and Financially Unconstrained cases.

PROCEDURAL BACKGROUND

NOP Public Circulation and Initial Study: PCTPA circulated a Notice of Preparation (NOP) of an EIR for the proposed project on June 6, 2019 to trustee and responsible agencies, the State Clearinghouse (SCH# 2019060004), and the public. PCTPA received two comment letters on the NOP. A copy of each letter is provided in Appendix A of this Draft EIR and the comments are summarized below.

Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board (CVRWQCB). The CVRWQCB noted that a Construction Storm Water General Permit would be required, if the project were to disturb one or more acres of soil or where projects disturb less than one acre but are part of a larger common plan of development that in total disturbs one or more acres. The letter noted that this would require a General Permit for Storm Water Discharges Associated with Construction Activities (Construction General Permit), Construction General Permit Order No. 2009-009-DWQ. The comment letter also noted that Phase 1 and II Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System Permits may also be required. The CVRWQCB also noted that other permits may be required for the proposed project, including an Industrial Storm Water General Permit, a Clean Water Act Section 404 Permit, a Clean Water Section 401 Permit, and/or a Low or Limited Threat General NPDES Permit. The letter also lists Waste Discharge Requirements that may be necessary and includes language describing requirements under the Irrigated Lands Regulatory Program.

Native American Heritage Commission. The Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) provided guidance for and lists many of the requirements of AB 52 consultation. The comment requests AB 52 consultation, as necessary, to avoid any damaging effects to any tribal cultural resource, as feasible. The letter describes that AB 52 applies to any project for which a notice of preparation, a notice of negative declaration, or a mitigated negative declaration is filed on or after July 1, 2015. The comment also includes a discussion of SB 18 and how and when it applies, as well as some of its provisions. The comment advises that legal counsel should be sought to ensure compliance with AB 52 and SB 18 as well as compliance with any other applicable laws.

Notice of Availability and Draft EIR: PCTPA published a public Notice of Availability (NOA) for the Draft EIR on August 28, 2019, inviting comment from the general public, agencies, organizations, and other interested parties. The NOA was filed with the State Clearinghouse (SCH # 2019060004) and the County Clerk, and was published in the adjudicated newspaper pursuant to the public noticing requirements of CEQA. The Draft EIR was available for public review from August 28, 2019 through October 14, 2019. The Draft EIR contains a description of the project, description of the environmental setting, identification of project impacts, and mitigation measures for impacts found to be significant, as well as an analysis of project alternatives, identification of significant irreversible environmental changes, growth-inducing impacts, and cumulative impacts. This Draft EIR identifies issues determined to have no impact or a less than significant impact, and provides detailed analysis

of potentially significant and significant and unavoidable impacts. Comments received in response to the NOP were considered in preparing the analysis in the Draft EIR.

Final EIR: PCTPA received one (1) comment letters during the Draft EIR public review period. The California Department of Fish and Wildlife submitted a letter requesting further review of the impacts to wildlife movement. No additional oral or written comments were received. In accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15088, this Final EIR responds to the written comments received.

Responses to comments received during the comment period do not involve any new significant impacts or “significant new information” that would require recirculation of the Draft EIR pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15088.5. Each response is provided in the Final EIR.

RECORD OF PROCEEDINGS AND CUSTODIAN OF RECORD

For purposes of CEQA and the findings set forth herein, the record of proceedings for PCTPA’s findings and determinations consists of the following documents and testimony, at a minimum:

- The NOP, comments received on the NOP, and all other public notices issued by PCTPA in relation to the Project (e.g., Notice of Availability).
- The Draft EIR and Final EIR, including comment letters, and technical materials cited in the documents.
- All non-draft and/or non-confidential reports and memoranda prepared by PCTPA and consultants in relation to the EIR.
- Minutes and transcripts of the discussions regarding the Project and/or Project components at public hearings held by PCTPA.
- Staff reports associated with PCTPA Board meetings on the Project.
- Those categories of materials identified in Public Resources Code Section 21167.6.

These documents are not specifically included in the Final EIR, but they are available by the custodian of the administrative record. PCTPA is the custodian of the administrative record. The documents and materials that constitute the administrative record are available for review at the Placer County Transportation Planning Agency, 299 Nevada St., Auburn CA 95603.

FINDINGS REQUIRED UNDER CEQA

Public Resources Code section 21002 provides that “public agencies should not approve projects as proposed if there are feasible alternatives or feasible Mitigation Measures available which would substantially lessen the significant environmental effects of such projects[.]” Further, the procedures required by CEQA “are intended to assist public agencies in systematically identifying both the significant effects of proposed projects and the feasible alternatives or feasible Mitigation Measures which will avoid or substantially lessen such significant effects.” (*Id.*) Section 21002 also provides that “in the event specific economic, social, or other conditions make infeasible such project alternatives or such Mitigation Measures, individual projects may be approved in spite of one or more significant effects thereof.”

The mandate and principles established by the Legislature in Public Resources Code section 21002 are implemented, in part, through the requirement in Public Resources Code section 21081 that agencies must adopt findings before approving projects for which an EIR is required.

CEQA Guidelines section 15091 provides the following direction regarding findings:

(a) No public agency shall approve or carry out a project for which an EIR has been certified which identifies one or more significant environmental effects of the project unless the public agency makes one or more written findings for each of those significant effects, accompanied by a brief explanation of the rationale for each finding. The possible findings are:

(1) Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project which avoid or substantially lessen the significant environmental effect as identified in the final EIR.

(2) Such changes or alterations are within the responsibility and jurisdiction of another public agency and not the agency making the finding. Such changes have been adopted by such other agency or can and should be adopted by such other agency.

(3) Specific economic, legal, social, technological, or other considerations, including provision of employment opportunities for highly trained workers, make infeasible the Mitigation Measures or project alternatives identified in the final EIR.

(See also Pub. Resources Code, § 21081, subd. (a)(1)-(3).)

As defined by CEQA, “feasible” means capable of being accomplished in a successful manner within a reasonable period of time, taking into account economic, environmental, social, legal, and technological factors. (Pub. Resources Code, § 21061.1; see also CEQA Guidelines, § 15126.6(f)(1) [determining the feasibility of alternatives].) The concept of “feasibility” also encompasses the question of whether a particular alternative or Mitigation Measure promotes the underlying goals and objectives of a project. (See *Association of Irrigated Residents v. County of Madera* (2003) 107 Cal.App.4th 1383, 1400 [court upholds findings rejecting a “reduced herd” alternative to a proposed dairy as infeasible because the alternative failed to meet the “fundamental objective” of the project to produce milk]; *Sierra Club v. County of Napa* (2004) 121 Cal.App.4th 1490, 1506-1508 [agency decision-makers, in rejecting alternatives as infeasible, appropriately relied on project objective articulated by project applicant].) Moreover, “‘feasibility’ under CEQA encompasses ‘desirability’ to the extent that desirability is based on a reasonable balancing of the relevant economic, environmental, social, legal, and technological factors.” (*City of Del Mar v. City of San Diego* (1982) 133 Cal.App.3d 410, 417; see also *California Native Plant Society v. City of Santa Cruz* (2009) 177 Cal.App.4th 957, 1001-1002.

With respect to a project for which significant impacts cannot be feasibly avoided or substantially lessened, a public agency may nevertheless approve the project if the agency first adopts a statement of overriding considerations setting forth the specific reasons that the project’s benefits

outweigh its significant unavoidable adverse environmental effects. (Pub. Resources Code, §§ 21001, 21002.1(c), 21081(b).)

CEQA Guidelines section 15093 provides the following direction regarding a statement of overriding considerations:

(a) CEQA requires the decision-making agency to balance, as applicable, the economic, legal, social, technological, or other benefits, including region-wide or statewide environmental benefits, of a proposed project against its unavoidable environmental risks when determining whether to approve the project. If the specific economic, legal, social, technological, or other benefits, including region-wide or statewide environmental benefits, of a proposed project outweigh the unavoidable adverse environmental effects, the adverse environmental effects may be considered “acceptable.”

(b) When the lead agency approves a project, which will result in the occurrence of significant effects which are identified in the final EIR but are not avoided or substantially lessened, the agency shall state in writing the specific reasons to support its action based on the final EIR and/or other information in the record. The statement of overriding considerations shall be supported by substantial evidence in the record.

(c) If an agency makes a statement of overriding considerations, the statement should be included in the record of the project approval and should be mentioned in the notice of determination. This statement does not substitute for, and shall be in addition to, findings required pursuant to Section 15091.

MITIGATION MONITORING PROGRAM

A Mitigation Monitoring Program has been prepared for the Project and has been adopted concurrently with these Findings. (See Pub. Resources Code, § 21081.6, subd. (a)(1).) PCTPA will use the Mitigation Monitoring Program to track compliance with Project Mitigation Measures.

CONSIDERATION OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

In adopting these Findings, this Board finds that the Final EIR was presented to this Board, the decision-making body of the lead agency, which reviewed and considered the information in the Final EIR prior to approving the Project. By these findings, this Board ratifies, adopts, and incorporates the analysis, explanation, findings, responses to comments, and conclusions of the Final EIR. The PCPTA Board finds that the Final EIR was completed in compliance with CEQA. The Final EIR represents the independent judgment of PCTPA.

SEVERABILITY

If any term, provision, or portion of these Findings or the application of these Findings to a particular situation is held by a court to be invalid, void, or unenforceable, the remaining provisions of these Findings, or their application to other actions related to the Project, shall continue in full force and effect unless amended or modified by PCTPA.

III. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING SIGNIFICANT AND UNAVOIDABLE IMPACTS

A. AGRICULTURAL RESOURCES

1. IMPACT 3.2-1: CONVERSION OF FARMLANDS, INCLUDING PRIME FARMLAND, UNIQUE FARMLAND, AND FARMLAND OF STATEWIDE IMPORTANCE, TO NON-AGRICULTURAL USES, OR CONFLICT WITH EXISTING ZONING FOR AGRICULTURAL USE OR A WILLIAMSON ACT CONTRACT.
 - (a) Potential Impact. The potential for the Project to cause a conversion of farmlands or conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act Contract is discussed on pages 3.2-8 through 3.2-9 of the Draft EIR.
 - (b) Mitigation Measures. The following Mitigation Measures are hereby adopted and will be implemented as provided by the Mitigation Monitoring Program: Mitigation Measure 3.2-1 would reduce farmland impacts to the greatest extent feasible. There is no additional feasible mitigation available that would reduce this impact to a less than significant level.
 - (c) Findings. Based upon the EIR and the entire record before this Board, this Board finds that:
 - (1) Effects of Mitigation and Remaining Impacts. Due to the importance of the region's agricultural resources, any impacts on Farmland Mapping & Monitoring Program (FMMP) designated farmland are considered significant and unavoidable. Implementation of Mitigation Measure 3.2-1 would reduce impacts to existing farmlands to the greatest extent feasible, including compensation for unavoidable conversion at a 1:1 ratio, if necessary. However, even after implementation of Mitigation Measures included in the RTP and EIR, the proposed project will still contribute to a net loss of agricultural land in Placer County. Therefore, this is considered a significant and unavoidable impact. There is no additional feasible mitigation available that would reduce this impact to a less than significant level.
 - (2) Overriding Considerations. The environmental, economic, social and other benefits of the Project override any remaining significant adverse impact of the Project associated with impacts to farmland impacts in the region, as more fully stated in the Statement of Overriding Considerations in Section VII.

B. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS AND CLIMATE CHANGE

1. IMPACT 3.5-1: GENERATE GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS, EITHER DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY, THAT MAY HAVE A SIGNIFICANT IMPACT ON THE ENVIRONMENT
 - (a) Potential Impact. The potential for the Project to generate greenhouse gas emissions that may have a significant impact on the environments is discussed on pages 3.5-20 through 3.2-24 of the Draft EIR.

- (b) Mitigation Measures. The following Mitigation Measure is hereby adopted and will be implemented as provided by the Mitigation Monitoring Program: Mitigation Measures 3.5-1, 3.5-2, 3.5-3, 3.5-4, and 3.5-5.
- (c) Findings. Based upon the EIR and the entire record before this Board, this Board finds that:
 - (1) Effects of Mitigation and Remaining Impacts. While Mitigation Measure 3.5-1, 3.5-2, 3.5-3, 3.5-4, and 3.5-5 would reduce per capita VMT levels throughout Placer County, thereby reducing overall greenhouse gas emissions beyond what would be expected without mitigation, the proposed project would still contribute to an overall significant increase in GHG emissions generated by the County. There is no additional feasible mitigation available that would reduce this impact to a less than significant level.
 - (2) Overriding Considerations. The environmental, economic, social and other benefits of the Project override any remaining significant adverse impact of the Project associated with an increase in greenhouse gas emissions, as more fully stated in the Statement of Overriding Considerations in Section VII.

C. CUMULATIVE

1. IMPACT 4.2: CUMULATIVE IMPACT ON AGRICULTURAL AND FOREST LAND AND USES

- (a) Potential Impact. The potential for the Project to result in a cumulative impact on agricultural land and uses is discussed on pages 4.0-3 of the Draft EIR.
- (b) Mitigation Measures. Mitigation Measure 3.2-1 (as previously described in Impact 3.2.1).
- (c) Findings. Based upon the EIR and the entire record before this Board, this Board finds that:
 - (1) Effects of Mitigation and Remaining Impacts. Due to the importance of the region's agricultural resources, any impacts on FMMP designated farmland are considered significant and unavoidable. Implementation of Mitigation Measure 3.2-1 would reduce impacts to existing farmlands to the greatest extent feasible, including compensation for unavoidable conversion at a 1:1 ratio, if necessary. However, even after implementation of Mitigation Measures included in the RTP and EIR, the proposed project will still contribute to a net loss of agricultural land in Placer County. There is no additional feasible mitigation available that would reduce this impact to a less than significant level. Therefore, this is a cumulatively considerable and significant and unavoidable impact.
 - (2) Overriding Considerations. The environmental, economic, social and other benefits of the Project override any remaining significant adverse impact of the Project

associated with a conversion of agricultural land to non-agricultural uses, as more fully stated in the Statement of Overriding Considerations in Section VII.

2. **IMPACT 4.5: INCREASED TRANSPORTATION GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS MAY CONTRIBUTE TO CLIMATE CHANGE**

- (a) **Potential Impact.** The potential for the Project to generate greenhouse gas emissions that may have a cumulative impact on the environment is discussed on pages 4.0-4 through 4.0-5 of the Draft EIR.
- (b) **Mitigation Measures.** Mitigation Measures 3.5-1, 3.5-2, 3.5-3, 3.5-4, and 3.5-5 (as previously described in Section 3.5).
- (c) **Findings.** Based upon the EIR and the entire record before this Board, this Board finds that:
 - (1) **Effects of Mitigation and Remaining Impacts.** While Mitigation Measure 3.5-1, 3.5-2, 3.5-3, 3.5-4, and 3.5-5 would reduce per capita VMT levels throughout Placer County, thereby reducing overall greenhouse gas emissions beyond what would be expected without mitigation, the proposed project would still contribute to an overall significant increase in GHG emissions generated by the County. There is no additional feasible mitigation available that would reduce this impact to a less than significant level. Therefore, this is a cumulatively considerable and significant and unavoidable impact.
 - (2) **Overriding Considerations.** The environmental, economic, social and other benefits of the Project override any remaining significant adverse impact of the Project associated with an increase in cumulative greenhouse gas emissions, as more fully stated in the Statement of Overriding Considerations in Section VII.

IV. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS WHICH ARE MITIGATED TO A LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT LEVEL

A. AESTHETICS

IMPACT 3.1-2: SUBSTANTIAL ADVERSE EFFECTS ON SCENIC RESOURCES OR SUBSTANTIAL DEGRADATION OF VISUAL CHARACTER

- (a) **Potential Impact.** The potential for the Project to adversely affect scenic vistas and resources or substantially degrade the visual character is discussed on pages 3.1-8 and 3.1-9 of the Draft EIR.
- (b) **Mitigation Measures.** The following Mitigation Measures are hereby adopted and will be implemented as provided by the Mitigation Monitoring Program: Mitigation Measure 3.1-1 and 3.1-2.

(c) Findings. Based upon the EIR and the entire record before this Board, this Board finds that the potential for adverse effects on scenic resources or substantial degradation of visual character will be mitigated to a less than significant level as Mitigation Measure 3.1-1 and 3.1-2 would require projects to include design measures to avoid or reduce removal of scenic features and scenic views. Any remaining impacts related to this environmental topic after implementation of Mitigation Measure 3.1-1 and 3.1-2 would not be significant.

1. IMPACT 3.1-3: CREATION OF NEW SOURCES OF LIGHT AND GLARE

(a) Potential Impact. The potential for the Project to create new sources of light and glare near sensitive receptors is discussed at pages 3.1-9 and 3.1-10 of the Draft EIR.

(b) Mitigation Measures. The following Mitigation Measure is hereby adopted and will be implemented as provided by the Mitigation Monitoring Program: Mitigation Measure 3.1-3.

(c) Findings. Based upon the EIR and the entire record before this Board, this Board finds that the impacts to light and glare will be mitigated to a less than significant level as Mitigation Measure 3.1-3 would require lighting that is directed downward and away from adjacent sensitive land uses, installation of shields to avoid light spillage, and, where necessary, installation of dense landscaping to block light from sensitive land uses, and would also require use of non-glare finishes for luminary mountings. Any remaining impacts related to light and glare after implementation of Mitigation Measure 3.1-3 would not be significant.

B. AGRICULTURAL AND FOREST RESOURCES

1. IMPACT 3.2-2: POTENTIAL TO CONFLICTS WITH FOREST OR TIMBER ZONING OR RESULT IN THE CONVERSION OF FOREST LANDS OR TIMBER LANDS

(a) Potential Impact. The potential for the Project to adversely affect scenic vistas and resources or substantially degrade the visual character is discussed on pages 3.2-9 and 3.2-10 of the Draft EIR.

(b) Mitigation Measures. The following Mitigation Measure is hereby adopted and will be implemented as provided by the Mitigation Monitoring Program: Mitigation Measure 3.2-2.

(c) Findings. Based upon the EIR and the entire record before this Board, this Board finds that the impacts to forest or timber will be mitigated to a less than significant level as Mitigation Measure 3.2-2 would require that a qualified arborist, forester, and/or biologist to assess the potential impacts of tree removal. Any remaining impacts related to forestlands or timberlands after implementation of Mitigation Measure 3.2-2 would not be significant.

C. AIR QUALITY

1. **IMPACT 3.3-2: SHORT-TERM - CONFLICT WITH, OR OBSTRUCT, THE APPLICABLE AIR QUALITY PLAN, OR RESULT IN A CUMULATIVELY CONSIDERABLE NET INCREASE OF A CRITERIA POLLUTANT IN A NON-ATTAINMENT AREA**
 - (a) **Potential Impact.** The potential for the Project to have short-term air quality impacts is discussed at pages 3.3-24 through 3.3-25 of the Draft EIR.
 - (b) **Mitigation Measures.** The following Mitigation Measure is hereby adopted and will be implemented as provided by the Mitigation Monitoring Program: Mitigation Measure 3.3-1.
 - (c) **Findings.** Based upon the EIR and the entire record before this Board, this Board finds that the short-term air quality impacts will be mitigated to a less than significant level as Mitigation Measure 3.3-1 would ensure that a dust control plan shall be prepared in accordance with APCD Rule 228 (Fugitive Dust Emissions). Any remaining impacts related to short-term air quality after implementation of Mitigation Measure 3.3-1 would not be significant.

2. **IMPACT 3.3-3: OCCASIONAL LOCALIZED CARBON MONOXIDE CONCENTRATIONS FROM TRAFFIC CONDITIONS AT SOME INDIVIDUAL LOCATIONS**
 - (a) **Potential Impact.** The potential for the Project to impact occasional localized carbon monoxide concentrations from traffic conditions at individual locations is discussed on pages 3.3-25 through 3.3-26 of the Draft EIR.
 - (b) **Mitigation Measures.** The following Mitigation Measure is hereby adopted and will be implemented as provided by the Mitigation Monitoring Program: Mitigation Measure 3.3-2.
 - (c) **Findings.** Based upon the EIR and the entire record before this Board, this Board finds that the localized CO impacts will be mitigated to a less than significant level as Mitigation Measure 3.3-2 would ensure individual RTP projects will be screened at the time of design in order to reduce the potential for the formation of CO hot spots. Any remaining impacts related to CO concentration after implementation of Mitigation Measure 3.3-2 would not be significant.

3. **IMPACT 3.3-5: IMPACT 3.3-5: POTENTIAL TO RELEASE ASBESTOS FROM EARTH MOVEMENT OR STRUCTURAL ASBESTOS FROM DEMOLITION/RENOVATION OF EXISTING STRUCTURES**
 - (a) **Potential Impact.** The potential for the Project to result in impacts from the release asbestos from earth movement, or structural asbestos from demolition/renovation of existing structures is discussed on pages 3.1-26 through 3.1-27 of the Draft EIR.

- (b) Mitigation Measures. The following Mitigation Measure is hereby adopted and will be implemented as provided by the Mitigation Monitoring Program: Mitigation Measure 3.3-3.
- (c) Findings. Based upon the EIR and the entire record before this Board, this Board finds that the asbestos impacts will be mitigated to a less than significant level as Mitigation Measure 3.3-3 would ensure that the implementing agency will assess the site for the presence of asbestos, and, in the event that asbestos is present, the implementing agency will comply with state and local regulations, including ARB's ACTM and Placer County APCD Rule 228 – Fugitive Dust. Any remaining impacts related to asbestos after implementation of Mitigation Measure 3.3-3 would be less than significant.

E. CULTURAL AND TRIBAL RESOURCES

1. IMPACT 3.4-1: POTENTIAL TO CAUSE A SUBSTANTIAL ADVERSE CHANGE TO A SIGNIFICANT HISTORICAL RESOURCE, AS DEFINED IN CEQA GUIDELINES §15064.5
 - (a) Potential Impact. The potential for the Project to have an impact on significant historic resources is discussed at page 3.4-10 of the Draft EIR.
 - (b) Mitigation Measures. The following Mitigation Measure is hereby adopted and will be implemented as provided by the Mitigation Monitoring Program: Mitigation Measure 3.4-1.
 - (c) Findings. Based upon the EIR and the entire record before this Board, this Board finds that impacts to significant historical resources will be mitigated to a less than significant level, as Mitigation Measure 3.4-1 would first require projects to perform a site-specific study to identify the potential for significant historical resources to be present, and, if present, to avoid, preserve, or otherwise mitigate potentially significant impacts to the resources. Any remaining impacts related to historical resources after implementation of Mitigation Measure 3.4-1 would not be significant.
2. IMPACT 3.4-2: DAMAGE TO OR THE DESTRUCTION OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESOURCES
 - (a) Potential Impact. The potential for the Project to have a significant archaeological resource is discussed at page 3.4-11 through 3.4-11 of the Draft EIR.
 - (b) Mitigation Measures. The following Mitigation Measure is hereby adopted and will be implemented as provided by the Mitigation Monitoring Program: Mitigation Measure 3.4-2.
 - (c) Findings. Based upon the EIR and the entire record before this Board, this Board finds that impacts to archaeological resources will be mitigated to a less than significant level as Mitigation Measure 3.4-2 would ensure consultations with Native American organizations and a records search shall be conducted. In the event the records indicate that no previous survey has been conducted, the Central California Information Center

will make a recommendation on whether a survey is warranted based on the archaeological sensitivity of the project areas. Additionally, implementing agencies and contractors performing improvements to the projects shall adhere to project-specific requirements. Any remaining impacts related human remains after implementation of Mitigation Measure 3.4-2 would not be significant.

3. IMPACT 3.4-3: POTENTIAL TO DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY DESTROY A UNIQUE PALEONTOLOGICAL RESOURCE

- (a) Potential Impact. The potential for the Project to have an impact on significant paleontological resources is discussed at pages 3.4-12 through 3.4-13 of the Draft EIR.
- (b) Mitigation Measures. The following Mitigation Measure is hereby adopted and will be implemented as provided by the Mitigation Monitoring Program: Mitigation Measure 3.4-3.
- (c) Findings. Based upon the EIR and the entire record before this Board, this Board finds that impacts to significant paleontological resources will be mitigated to a less than significant level as Mitigation Measure 3.4-3 would ensure that all individual projects either avoid known paleontological resources, or take steps to implement amelioration methods to reduce impacts to known paleontological resources. Any remaining impacts related to paleontological resources after implementation of Mitigation Measure 3.4-3 would not be significant.

4. IMPACT 3.4-4: DISTURBANCE OF HUMAN REMAINS

- (a) Potential Impact. The potential for the Project to have an impact on significant paleontological resources is discussed at pages 3.4-13 through 3.4-14 of the Draft EIR.
- (b) Mitigation Measures. The following Mitigation Measure is hereby adopted and will be implemented as provided by the Mitigation Monitoring Program: Mitigation Measure 3.4-4.
- (c) Findings. Based upon the EIR and the entire record before this Board, this Board finds that impacts to significant human remains will be mitigated to a less than significant level as Mitigation Measure 3.4-4 would ensure that all individual projects, in the event of discovery or recognition of any human remains during construction or excavation or disturbance of the site or any nearby area reasonably suspected to overlie adjacent human remains, project-specific measures will be taken. Any remaining impacts related to disturbance of humans after implementation of Mitigation Measure 3.4-4 would be less than significant.

I. LAND USE AND POPULATION

1. IMPACT 3.6-1: PHYSICAL DIVISION OF AN ESTABLISHED COMMUNITY.

- (a) Potential Impact. The potential for the Project result in the physical division of an established community is discussed on pages 3.6-6 through 3.6-7 of the Draft EIR.
- (b) Mitigation Measures. The following Mitigation Measure is hereby adopted and will be implemented as provided by the Mitigation Monitoring Program: Mitigation Measure 3.6-1.
- (c) Findings. Based upon the EIR and the entire record before this Board, this Board finds that the potential for the Project to physically divide an established community will be mitigated to a less than significant level as Mitigation Measure 3.6-1 would ensure that all individual projects are designed to maintain the cohesiveness of the existing communities to the greatest extent feasible, and where full design mitigation is not feasible, measures would be incorporated into the design to minimize the impacts associated with project implementation. Any remaining impacts after implementation of Mitigation Measure 3.6-1 would not be significant.

L TRANSPORTATION AND CIRCULATION

1. IMPACT 3.7-2: THE PROPOSED PROJECT COULD RESULT IN THE ALTERATION OF PRESENT PATTERNS OF VEHICULAR, BICYCLE, AND PEDESTRIAN CIRCULATION, INCREASED TRAFFIC DELAY, AND INCREASED TRAFFIC HAZARDS DURING CONSTRUCTION OF FUTURE PROJECTS.

- (a) Potential Impact. The potential for the Project to result in the alteration of present patterns of vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian circulation, increased traffic delay, and increased traffic hazards during construction of future projects is discussed on page 3.7-24 of the Draft EIR.
- (b) Mitigation Measures. The following Mitigation Measure is hereby adopted and will be implemented as provided by the Mitigation Monitoring Program: Mitigation Measure 3.7-1.
- (c) Findings. Although required permits would be obtained prior to construction of RTP projects, construction of RTP projects could lead to traffic delays, temporary reductions in roadway capacity and levels of service, damage to property, or injury. Mitigation Measure 3.7-1 would require the preparation of a traffic control plan for all construction projects. Implementation of a traffic control plan would ensure continued emergency vehicle access during construction activities. Any remaining impacts after implementation of Mitigation Measure 3.7-1 would be less than significant.

2. IMPACT 3.7-4: ALTERATION OF EMERGENCY ACCESS DURING CONSTRUCTION OF FUTURE PROJECTS

- (a) Potential Impact. The potential for the Project to result in alteration of emergency access during construction of future projects is discussed on page 3.7-4 of the Draft EIR.
- (b) Mitigation Measures. The following Mitigation Measure is hereby adopted and will be implemented as provided by the Mitigation Monitoring Program: Mitigation Measure 3.7-1.
- (c) Findings. The proposed project could result in the alteration of emergency access during construction of future projects. Mitigation Measure 3.7-1 would require the preparation of a traffic control plan for all construction projects. Implementation of a traffic control plan would ensure continued emergency vehicle access during construction activities. Any remaining impacts after implementation of Mitigation Measure 3.7-1 would be less than significant.

V. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING THOSE IMPACTS WHICH ARE LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT OR LESS THAN CUMULATIVELY CONSIDERABLE

Specific impacts within the following categories of environmental effects were found to be less than significant as set forth in more detail in the Draft EIR.

Aesthetics: The following specific impacts were found to be less than significant: 3.1-1.

Air Quality: The following specific impacts were found to be less than significant: 3.3-1 and 3.3-4.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions: The following specific impacts were found to be less than significant: 3.5-2 and 3.5-3.

Land Use and Population: The following specific impacts were found to be less than significant: 3.6-2, 3.6-3, and 3.6-4.

Traffic and Circulation: The following specific impacts were found to be less than significant: 3.7-1, 3.7-3, 3.7-4, 3.7-5.

The project was found to have a less than cumulatively considerable contribution to specific impacts within the following categories of environmental effects as set forth in more detail in the Draft EIR.

Aesthetics: The following specific impact was found to be less than cumulatively considerable: Impact 4.1.

Air Quality: The following specific impact was found to be less than cumulatively considerable: Impact 4.3.

Cultural and Tribal Resources: The following specific impact was found to be less than cumulatively considerable: Impact 4.4.

Land Use and Planning and Population: The following specific impact was found to be less than cumulatively considerable: 4.6.

Transportation and Circulation: The following specific impact was found to be less than cumulatively considerable: 4.7.

The above impacts are less than significant or less than cumulatively considerable for one of the following reasons:

- The EIR determined that the impact is less than significant for the Project.
- The EIR determined that the Project would have a less than cumulatively considerable contribution to the cumulative impact.
- The EIR determined that the impact is beneficial (would be reduced) for the Project.

VI. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS REGARDING THOSE IMPACTS DETERMINED IN THE INITIAL STUDY TO HAVE NO IMPACT, A LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACT, OR A LESS THAN SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS WITH MITIGATION

An Initial Study was prepared and circulated with a Notice of Preparation at the beginning of the process. The Initial Study found that there were a variety of environmental topics that would have no impact, a less than significant impact, or a less than significant impact with certain measures that would avoid, minimize, or mitigate the impact to an insignificant level. The Initial Study concluded that the environmental topics did not warrant more detailed analysis in the EIR. The Initial Study was circulated for public comment, and no public comments received conflicted with these determinations. As such, the following environmental topics were scoped out of the EIR: Biological Resources, Geology and Soils, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Hydrology and Water Quality, Mineral Resources, Noise, Public Services, Recreation, Utilities and Service Systems, and Wildfire. The findings of fact for each topic is presented below:

IV. Biological Resources: The Initial Study found that impacts within this topic would have a less than significant impact with mitigation. Mitigation Measure BIO-1 would reduce Impact a) to a less than significant level. Mitigation Measures BIO-2, BIO-3, and BIO-4 would reduce Impacts b) and c) to a less than significant level. Mitigation Measure BIO-5 would reduce Impact d) to a less than significant level. Lastly, Mitigation Measure BIO-6 would reduce Impacts e) and f) to a less than significant level.

VII. Geology and Soils: The Initial Study found that impacts within this topic would have a less than significant impact with mitigation. Mitigation Measure GEO-1 would reduce Impacts a.i) and a.ii) to a less than significant level. Mitigation Measures HYDRO-1 and HYDRO-2 would reduce impact b) to a less than significant level. Mitigation Measure GEO-2 would reduce Impacts a.iii), a.iv), and c) to a less than significant level. Lastly, Mitigation Measure GEO-3 would reduce Impact d) to a less than significant level.

- IX. Hazards and Hazardous Materials:** The Initial Study found that impacts within this topic would have a less than significant impact with mitigation. Mitigation Measure HAZ-1 would reduce this impact d) to a less than significant level. All other impacts were less than significant.
- X. Hydrology and Water Quality:** The Initial Study found that impacts within this topic would have a less than significant impact with mitigation. Mitigation Measures HYDRO-1, HYDRO-2, HYDRO-3, and HYDRO-4 would reduce Impacts a) and e) to a less than significant level. Mitigation Measures HYDRO-5, HYDRO-6, and HYDRO-7 would reduce Impacts c.i), c.ii), c.iii.), and c.iv) to a less than significant level. All other impacts were less than significant.
- XII. Mineral Resources:** The Initial Study found that impacts within this topic would have a less than significant impact.
- XIII. Noise:** The Initial Study found that impacts within this topic would have a less than significant impact with mitigation. Mitigation Measure NOISE-1 would reduce Impact a) to a less than significant level. Mitigation Measure NOISE-2 would reduce Impact b) to a less than significant level.
- XV. Public Services:** The Initial Study found that impacts within this topic would have a less than significant impact.
- XVI. Recreation:** The Initial Study found that impacts within this topic would have a less than significant impact.
- XIX. Utilities and Service Systems:** The Initial Study found that impacts within this topic would have a less than significant impact with mitigation. Mitigation Measures UTILITIES-1, UTILITIES-2, UTILITIES-3, UTILITIES-4 would reduce Impact a) to a less than significant level. Mitigation Measure UTILITIES-5 would reduce Impact b) to a less than significant level. Mitigation Measure UTILITIES-6 would reduce Impact c) to a less than significant level. Mitigation Measure UTILITIES-7 would reduce Impacts d) and e) to a less than significant level.
- XX. Wildfire:** The Initial Study found that impacts within this topic would have a less than significant impact with mitigation. Mitigation Measure WILDFIRE-1 would reduce Impacts a), b), c), and d) to a less than significant level.

VII. PROJECT ALTERNATIVES

A. IDENTIFICATION OF PROJECT OBJECTIVES

An EIR is required to identify a range of reasonable alternatives to the project. The “range of potential alternatives to the project shall include those that could feasibly accomplish most of the basic purposes of the project and could avoid or substantially lessen one or more of the significant effects.” (CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(c).) “Among the factors that may be taken into account

when addressing the feasibility of alternatives are site suitability, economic viability, availability of infrastructure, general plan consistency, other plans or regulatory limitations, jurisdictional boundaries (projects with a regionally significant impact should consider the regional context), and whether the proponent can reasonably acquire, control or otherwise have access to the alternative site (or the site is already owned by the proponent).” (CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(f)(1).)

Chapter 2.0 (page 2.0-1 through 2.0-4) of the Draft EIR identifies the Project’s goals and objectives. The purpose of the 2040 Placer County RTP is to provide a clear vision of the regional transportation goals, objectives, and policies in PCTPA planning area. The 2040 Placer County RTP provides short-term and long-term strategies for implementation, which includes realistic and fiscally constrained alternatives. The following goals and objectives, by transportation mode and strategy, have been identified for the 2040 Placer County RTP.

The RTP contains ten specific goals, each with supporting policies and objectives, for highways/streets/roadways, public transit, passenger rail, aviation, goods movement, bicycle, pedestrian, and low-speed vehicles, transportation systems management (TSM), recreational travel, integrated land use, air quality, and transportation planning, and funding:

1. Maintain and upgrade a safe, efficient, and convenient countywide roadway system that meets the travel needs of people and the movement of goods through and within the region.
2. Provide effective, convenient, regionally and locally coordinated transit service that connects residential areas with employment centers, serves key activity centers and facilities, and offers a viable option to the drive-alone commute.
3. Improve the availability and convenience of passenger rail service.
4. Promote general and commercial aviation facilities and services that complement the regional transportation system.
5. Provide for the safe and efficient movement of goods through, within, and into Placer County.
6. Promote a safe, convenient, and efficient transportation system for bicyclists, pedestrians, and users of low speed vehicles, as part of a balanced overall transportation system.
7. Provide an economical alternative to the single-occupant vehicle travel through the use of alternative transportation methods.
8. Promote a transportation system that integrates all available modes and facilitates recreational travel and activities.
9. By integrating land, air, and transportation planning, build and maintain the most efficient and effective transportation system possible while achieving the highest possible environmental benefit.
10. Secure maximum available funding; pursue new sources of funds for maintenance, expansion, and improvement of transportation facilities and services; and educate the public about the need for funding for transportation projects.

B. ALTERNATIVE CONSIDERATION

1. NO PROJECT ALTERNATIVE

The No Project Alternative is discussed on pages 5.0-3 and 5.0-4 through 5.0-6 of the Draft EIR. As required by CEQA, this alternative assumes that the adopted 2036 RTP would remain in place and would guide improvements to the transportation network.

Findings: The No Project Alternative is rejected as an alternative because it would not achieve the Project's objectives. Environmental benefits of this alternative over the proposed project including the reduction of impacts to aesthetics, agricultural and forest resources, and cultural and tribal resources, while impacts to air quality, greenhouse gases and climate change impacts, land use planning & population, and transportation are worse than the Project.

Explanation: This alternative would not realize the benefits of the Project nor achieve the Project objectives. The improvements under the prior RTP would not be funded because there would be a lapse in the requirement to update the RTP as required by the CTC.

2. ROAD EMPHASIS ALTERNATIVE:

The Road Emphasis Alternative is discussed on pages 5.0-3 and 5.0-6 through 5.0-7 of the Draft EIR.

Findings: The Road Emphasis Alternative is rejected because it would require shifting funds from the Financially Unconstrained Alternative to fund roadway improvements, operation, and maintenance. However, funding under the Financially Unconstrained Alternative is not anticipated to be available at this time and it is not known if any funds identified under the Financially Unconstrained Alternative will become available under this alternative. Environmental benefits of this alternative over the proposed project include traffic/circulation impacts, while impacts that are worse than the Project include impacts related to aesthetics, agricultural and forest resources, air quality, cultural and tribal resources, greenhouse gases, and land use and population.

Explanation: This alternative focuses investments, and implements projects based on a road emphasis that are included in the Financially Constrained (programmed and planned projects), and would require shifting funds from the Financially Unconstrained Alternative to fund roadway improvements, operation, and maintenance. It should be noted that funding under the Financially Unconstrained Alternative is not anticipated to be available at this time and it is not known if any funds identified under the Financially Unconstrained Alternative will become available under this alternative.

3. TRANSIT ENHANCEMENT ALTERNATIVE

The Transit Enhancement Alternative is discussed on pages 5.0-3 and 5.0-7 through 5.0-9 of the Draft EIR.

Findings: The Transit Enhancement Alternative is rejected because it is not considered fiscally feasible and because it will not achieve the Project's objectives. Environmental benefits of this alternative over the proposed project include the reduction of cultural and tribal resources, while there would be an equal level of environmental impact related to aesthetics, agricultural and forestry resources, air quality, and greenhouse gases, while impacts that are worse than the Project include land use and population and transportation and circulation.

Explanation: The Transit Enhancement Alternative focuses investment into transit modes, while also funding the locally-funded transportation improvements included in the Financially Constrained Alternative. This alternative would require shifting funds from the Financially Unconstrained Alternative to fund transit capital, operational, and maintenance. It should be noted that funding under the Financially Unconstrained Alternative is not anticipated to be available at this time and it is not known if any funds identified under the Financially Unconstrained Alternative will become available. It should also be noted that the increase in transit service under this alternative would not result in a proportionate increase in ridership, particularly in the smaller communities and more rural areas.

4. FINANCIALLY UNCONSTRAINED ALTERNATIVE

The Financially Unconstrained Alternative is discussed on pages 5.0-4 and 5.0-9 through 5.0-11 of the Draft EIR.

Findings: The Financially Unconstrained Alternative is rejected because it is not considered fiscally feasible. Environmental benefits of this alternative over the proposed project include land use and population and transportation and circulation, while impacts would be worse than the Project for aesthetics, agricultural and forestry resources, air quality, cultural and tribal resources, and greenhouse gases.

Explanation: The Financially Unconstrained Alternative includes all of the individual projects identified under the Financially Constrained Alternative (discussed above and in Section 2.0 Project Description) plus numerous additional projects that are needed but not yet funded over the planning horizon. This alternative includes all projects without regard to whether or not they can be funded. It should be noted that funding under the Financially Unconstrained Alternative is not anticipated to be available at this time and it is not known if any funds identified under the Financially Unconstrained Alternative will become available.

5. ENVIRONMENTALLY SUPERIOR ALTERNATIVE:

CEQA requires that an environmentally superior alternative be identified among the alternatives that are analyzed in the EIR. If the No Project Alternative is the environmentally superior alternative, an EIR must also identify an environmentally superior alternative among the other alternatives

(CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(e)(2)). The environmentally superior alternative is that alternative with the least adverse environmental impacts when compared to the proposed project.

As discussed in Chapter 5.0 of the Draft EIR and summarized in Table 5.4-1 of the Draft EIR, the Financially Constrained Alternative (the proposed project) has the lowest overall impact (score of 14) and is deemed the environmentally superior alternative because it provides the greatest reduction of potential impacts in comparison to the other alternatives. The Transit Enhancement Alternative ranks second with a score of 15, and the Financially Unconstrained Alternative ranks third with a score of 18, the No Project Alternative ranks fourth with a score of 20, and the Road Emphasis Alternative ranks fifth with a score of 21.

VIII. STATEMENTS OF OVERRIDING CONSIDERATIONS RELATED TO THE 2040 PLACER COUNTY RTP FINDINGS

As described in detail in Section III of these Findings, the following significant and unavoidable impacts could occur with implementation of the Project:

- Impact 3.2-1: Conversion of Farmlands, including Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, and Farmland of Statewide Importance, to non-agricultural uses, or conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use or a Williamson Act Contract.
- Impact 3.5-1: Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment.
- Impact 4.2: Cumulative Impact on Agricultural Land and Uses.
- Impact 4.5: Increased Transportation Greenhouse Gas Emissions May Contribute to Climate Change.

The adverse effects listed above, and described in detail in Section III, are substantive issues of concern to PCTPA. However, PCTPA has developed a Regional Transportation Plan that emphasizes reductions in traffic congestion while improving human mobility, safety enhancements, community connectivity, socioeconomic growth that supports a sustainable broad-based economy, preservation and enhancement of community character and the environment, and ensures the implementation of a feasible funding plan, to preserve and enhance the existing countywide transportation system.

Based on the entire record and the EIR, the economic and social benefits of the Project throughout Placer County outweigh and override any significant unavoidable environmental effects that would result from future Project implementation as more fully described in Section III Findings and Recommendations Regarding Significant and Unavoidable Impacts. PCTPA Board has determined that any environmental detriment caused by the proposed project has been minimized to the extent feasible through the Mitigation Measures identified herein, and, where mitigation is not feasible, has been outweighed and counterbalanced by the significant transportation, environmental, and health and safety benefits throughout the region.

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