

development of planning strategies. The transportation portion of the workshops focused on identifying the key transportation corridors for accommodating future growth and on possible transportation solution ideas. A survey of ideas from the public was conducted using a written comment form distributed at the public meetings. The CETAP advisory committee later generated a list of alternatives to evaluate in each of four CETAP priority corridors based on this public input and on engineering and environmental screening analysis. The determination was made in June, 2000, to focus initially on the two priority intracounty corridors to carry into the environmental process. Preliminary alternatives were examined for these two corridors in Working Papers 7a and 7b, prepared in September, 2000. Three workshops were then held in October and November, 2000, to solicit public input on these specific alternatives. A brochure/newsletter had been prepared prior to these workshops, describing the alternatives and summarizing the results of Working Papers 7a and 7b. In early November, 2000, the CETAP Advisory Committee identified the alternatives recommended to be carried into the EIS/EIR process, based on the technical studies and on input received from the public. The RCTC and Board of Supervisors endorsed this recommendation, with minor modifications, shortly thereafter.

C Selection of Alternatives to Be Evaluated

The CETAP Advisory Committee met on November 7, 2000, to consider alternatives to carry forward into the EIS/EIR, based on the analyses documented in Working Paper 7a and on the input received from the public. As a result of these deliberations, specific alternatives were recommended to be either carried forward or eliminated from further consideration.

The recommendations of the CETAP Advisory Committee were approved by the Riverside County Transportation Commission on November 8, 2000, and by the Riverside County Board of Supervisors in December, 2000. While these alternatives reflected local agency and stakeholder input, it was recognized that these recommendations would need to be further considered by the participating federal agencies.

The approved recommendations on alternatives to be carried forward into the EIS/EIR along with the Purpose and Need Statement and Evaluation Criteria were submitted to the agencies that were signatories to the NEPA/404 Memorandum of Understanding (adopted in 1994, signatory agencies include Caltrans, FHWA, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service), along with the Purpose and Need Statement, Evaluation Criteria, and other supporting documentation. The submittal package was transmitted to the federal agencies the first week of January, 2001.

A series of meetings was held with NEPA/404 agencies, resulting in revisions to the alternatives recommended to carry forward into the EIS/EIR. The revisions were primarily in response to the desire on the part of the federal agencies to consider additional options for avoiding impacts to aquatic and biological resources. The federal agencies rendered preliminary agreement on the alternatives in August, 2001. A request for final concurrence on the alternatives was submitted to the federal resource agencies by FHWA in April, 2002. Written concurrence was received from the agencies in May, 2002.

2.3 Project Alternatives

Typically, alternatives in transportation documents are referred to as “Build” and “No Build” alternatives. The Proposed Action of this Tier 1 level of analysis is a route location decision to preserve right-of-way. The precise location of right-of-way and detailed facility engineering plans will be evaluated in a subsequent Tier 2 level environmental document.

2.3.1 No Build Alternatives

Two horizon years have been analyzed: year 2025 and the longer-term build out of the new General Plan. The build out analysis for the CETAP corridors generally corresponds to the build out of the proposed General Plan. For purposes of transportation modeling and associated air quality impacts, a build out horizon year of 2025 has been used to correspond with the most recent regional transportation planning efforts by SCAG. Other than the transportation and air quality analyses, each of the alternatives will be compared against the General Plan no build condition for purposes of the NEPA evaluation.

Both No Build alternatives also assume that an express transit system is in place linking community centers and concentrations of land use in western Riverside County cities and unincorporated areas. The express system would generally use the freeway HOV lanes. The technology would likely consist of rubber-tired vehicles that could run on roadways with mixed traffic or on their own exclusive right-of-way. It assumes the extension of Metrolink from Riverside to Hemet. Express transit would run on SR-79 from the Winchester Metrolink station to the Temecula Mall. Vehicles are assumed to run at 15-minute headways in the peak periods and 30-minute headways in off-peak periods. Bus stations are assumed at Winchester, Garboni Road, French Valley Airport, and the Temecula Mall. Local circulators interface with the express system at each of the stops, providing access to other nearby destinations. The local circulators are assumed to run at ten minute intervals throughout the day.

2.3.1.1 Year 2025 No Build Condition

The No Build alternative includes projects likely to be funded and constructed within the time horizon of the study (2025). In general, these include projects contained in the Southern California Association of Governments’ (SCAG) 2001 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). Among other projects, the no-build alternative assumes a six-lane freeway from the SR-79/Sanderson Ave. junction to SR-79/Domenigoni Parkway generally following the alignment of Warren Road.

The No Build condition assumes no new major multimodal transportation facilities in either of the two corridors. It assumes only the existing freeway system (as assumed to be widened in the RTP) and network of arterial highways expected to exist by year 2025. The no-build condition for year 2025 is based on the level of development forecast to exist by SCAG for that year. Specific additional facilities in the corridor study area included in the no-build condition for year 2025 include:

- C SR-79 as a six-lane freeway from the SR-79/Sanderson Ave. junction to SR-79/Domenigoni Parkway generally following the alignment of Warren Road. (Scheduled for construction completion 01/2007, source: Caltrans District 8 Projects List)