

3.15 Transportation and Circulation

3.15.1 Circulation Study Area and Transportation Modes

The following information is excerpted from the RCIP Existing Setting Report (LSA, 1999). Riverside County's transportation system is composed of numerous State highways, (both freeways and arterial highways), as well as numerous County and city routes. The public transit system includes fixed route public transit systems, common bus carriers, AMTRAK (intercity rail service), MetroLink (commuter rail service), and other local agency transit and paratransit (dial-a-ride) services. In addition, the County transportation system includes general aviation facilities, limited passenger air service within the County, extensive air passenger facilities in the Southern California and San Diego regions, freight rail service, bicycle facilities, and other nonmotorized forms of transportation (pedestrian and equestrian trails).

The private automobile is the dominant mode of travel within Riverside County. Trips by transit currently represent less than two percent (2 percent) of all trips made in the County. Public transportation, where service is available, is utilized primarily by a transit-dependent population that generally does not have access to automobiles.

The County is responsible for maintaining an extensive network of low volume rural roads in rural and urbanizing areas to service goods movement and the agricultural industry. Large trucks are the primary means of transporting such goods. In addition, freight rail is an important backbone of the goods movement industry in Riverside County. Nonmotorized forms of transportation are also prevalent in Riverside County including numerous bikeways, pedestrian facilities, and equestrian amenities.

This study area of the proposed WT corridor is defined as the area connecting the unincorporated area of Winchester with the cities of Murrieta and Temecula (See Figure 3.15.1). It also encompasses the unincorporated areas of Menifee, Murrieta Hot Springs, Rancho California, and others.

3.15.2 Existing Regional Circulation System

Figure 3.15.1 illustrates the circulation study area of the WT Corridor.

The principal highway facility in this corridor study area is SR-79, providing north-south mobility throughout the length of the corridor study area. At the southern end of the corridor in Temecula, SR 79 (Winchester Road) is a six-lane facility (plus turning lanes) and one of the City's major thoroughfares. SR 79 then passes just west of Diamond Valley Lake (formerly Eastside Reservoir) and is expected to be the major access route to the recreational activities at the reservoir. SR-79 continues southeastward from southern end of Temecula. This section is currently six lanes from east of the City to I-15. Butterfield Stage Road is planned to directly connect SR-79 north of Temecula with SR-79 south of Temecula. Portions of Butterfield Stage Road have been constructed.

Figure 3.15.1 - Circulation Study Area

I-215 is a four-lane freeway within the study area, connecting I-15 in the Murrieta/Temecula area with Perris, Moreno Valley, and the City of Riverside to the north. The I-215 corridor is developing rapidly and is planned to be one of the primary commercial corridors in western Riverside County.

Major east-west roadways in the corridor study area include:

- C Domenigoni Parkway (a four-lane expressway)
- C Newport Road (a four-lane roadway within several miles east and west of I-215, two lanes elsewhere)
- C Scott Road (a two-lane roadway)
- C Clinton Keith Road (a two-lane roadway between I-215 and I-15; the portion between I-215 and SR-79 does not yet exist)
- C Murrieta Hot Springs Road (a four-lane roadway)
- C Rancho California Road (a four-lane roadway)

3.15.2.1 Functional Classifications for Roadways in the Riverside County General Plan Update

To identify roadway infrastructure needs in western Riverside County, several broad roadway classifications have been identified. The typical cross sections for roadway classifications in Riverside County are shown in the Traffic and Circulation Element of the proposed General Plan for Riverside County.

- C **Freeways.** A freeway is a divided, limited access highway (access is provided at grade-separated interchanges. Other vehicular crossings of these facilities are provided at grade separations). Freeways are designed to carry large volumes of traffic traveling long distances, although localized use of freeways occurs in urban areas. The planned freeway right-of-way varies depending on the needs of the facility.
- C **Expressways.** These are highways that carry large volumes of traffic relatively long distances within or through an urban or rural area. They also often serve considerable local traffic traveling over short distances. Along these facilities, priority is placed on through traffic mobility rather than access to fronting property. Direct access to individual fronting parcels is not allowed -- fully controlled frontage access is required. Expressways should be continuous through the urban or rural community they serve and link to arterial routes. The designated right-of-way for Expressways in Riverside County is currently 56 m (184 ft). Additional right-of-way may be required at some intersections.
- C **Urban Arterials.** These are highways carrying moderately high volumes of long distance and local traffic. Although access to abutting property is permitted, priority is given to through traffic mobility. The right-of-way standard for these facilities is 38 m (152 ft), and additional right-of-way at intersections may be required.
- C **Arterials and Mountain Arterials.** These are highway routes intended to link urban and rural areas, as well as serve through traffic movements across the County. The right-of-way standard is 39 m (128 ft) for arterials and 34 m (110 ft) for mountain arterials. Additional right-of-way may be required at some intersections