

University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project

ALAMEDA COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

DISTRICT 4 – ALA – 80 (PM 5.8/5.8)

2K830/0417000030

Initial Study with Negative Declaration



Prepared by the

State of California Department of Transportation



MAY 2019

Governor's Office of Planning & Research

May 31, 2019

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

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General Information About This Document

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) has prepared this Initial Study, which examines the potential environmental impacts of the proposed University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project (project) located in the City of Berkeley, in Alameda County, California. Caltrans is the lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). This document tells you why the project is being proposed; what alternatives have been considered for the project; how the existing environment could be affected by the project; the potential impacts of each of the alternatives; and the proposed avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures.

The Initial Study was circulated to the public for review for 30 days between November 19, 2018, and December 18, 2018, and a public hearing was held at the Berkeley Public Library, at 2090 Kittredge Street in Berkeley, on December 4, 2018. Comments received during this period are included in Chapter 3 of the Initial Study. Elsewhere in this document, a vertical line in the margin indicates a change made since the draft document circulation. Changes since the draft document circulation were made to only clarify information. Minor editorial changes and clarifications have not been so indicated. Additional copies of this document and the related technical studies are available for review at the District 4 Office (111 Grand Avenue, Oakland, California 94612); Berkeley Public Library at 2090 Kittredge Street, Berkeley, California 94704; and the Golden Gate Branch Library at 5606 San Pablo Ave, Oakland, California 94608.

This document may be downloaded from the following website:
<http://www.dot.ca.gov/d4/envdocs.htm>.

Alternative Formats:

For individuals with sensory disabilities, this document can be made available in Braille, in large print, on audiocassette, or on computer disk. To obtain a copy in one of these alternate formats, please call or write to Caltrans, Attn: Yolanda Rivas, Office of Environmental Analysis/Mail Station 8B, Department of Transportation District 4, 111 Grand Avenue, Oakland, CA 94612; (510) 286-6216 (Voice), or use the California Relay Service; 1 (800) 735-2929 (TTY), 1 (800) 735-2929 (Voice) or 711.

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SCH#
04-ALA-80-PM 5.8
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University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project

INITIAL STUDY WITH NEGATIVE DECLARATION

Submitted Pursuant to: (State) Division 13, California Public Resources Code

THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA
Department of Transportation

May 15, 2019
Date of Approval

Melanie Brent
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Deputy District Director
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California Department of Transportation
CEQA Lead Agency

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NEGATIVE DECLARATION

Pursuant to: Division 13, Public Resources Code

Project Description

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) proposes to replace the University Avenue Overcrossing over Interstate 80 (I-80) to increase vertical clearance for freight vehicles in the City of Berkeley in Alameda County.

Determination

Caltrans has prepared an Initial Study for this project and following public review, has determined from this study that the proposed project would not have a significant effect on the environment for the following reasons:

The proposed project would have no effect on Agriculture and Forest Resources, Air Quality, Biological Resources, Hazards and Hazardous Materials, Land Use and Planning, Mineral Resources, Noise, Population and Housing, Public Services, Recreation, Tribal Cultural Resources, Utilities and Service Systems, and Mandatory Findings of Significance.

In addition, the proposed project would have less than significant effects on Aesthetics, Cultural Resources, Hydrology and Water Quality, and Geology and Soils.



MELANIE BRENT
Deputy District Director
Division of Environmental Planning and Engineering
California Department of Transportation

May 15, 2019
Date

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Chapter 1 – Introduction and Project Description

1.1 Introduction

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) proposes to increase the vertical clearance above Interstate 80 (I-80) at the University Avenue Overcrossing at Postmile (PM) 5.8 in the City of Berkeley, in Alameda County, from the current height of 14 feet 4 inches in the westbound (WB) direction and 14 feet 5 inches in the eastbound (EB) direction to the current Caltrans standard of 16 feet 6 inches to allow for more efficient travel of oversized vehicles. The existing vertical clearance below University Avenue Overcrossing does not meet current Caltrans standards. The low vertical clearance impedes safe and efficient movement of oversized vehicles and loads on I-80.

The Accelerated Freight Corridor Bridge Improvement Program has been developed by Caltrans for strategically identifying aging and obsolete bridges that restrict freight movement due to truck load and/or vertical clearance restrictions. Under this program, the state bridge inventory has been reviewed with specific criteria to expedite the repair of critical bridges. I-80 has been identified and selected as one of the corridors that needs improvement. In Alameda County, the University Avenue Overcrossing is one of the bridges identified with vertical clearance restrictions limiting freight movement. Figure 1-1 shows the location of the proposed project.

Caltrans is the lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The project is funded by the 2017 State Highway Operation and Protection Program (SHOPP) under the Bridge Rehabilitation Program. The project is included in the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC's) Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Identification (ID) Various (VAR) 170010.

This Negative Declaration discusses four build alternatives and a no-build alternative.

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Figure 1-1: Location Map



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1.2 Project Description

1.2.1 Proposed Project

Caltrans proposes to increase the vertical clearance above I-80 at the University Avenue Overcrossing (PM 5.8) in the city of Berkeley, in Alameda County, from the current height of 14 feet 4 inches WB and 14 feet 5 inches EB to the current Caltrans standard of 16 feet 6 inches to allow for a more efficient travel of oversized vehicles. The existing vertical clearance below the University Avenue Overcrossing does not meet current Caltrans standards. The low vertical clearance impedes safe and efficient movement of oversized vehicles and loads on I-80. The proposed project would replace the existing structure, including the on- and off-ramps.

University Avenue is a four-lane road with a raised median that extends from the Berkeley Marina in the west, to the University of California, Berkeley, in the east. In the WB direction, the existing I-80 overcrossing includes two 13-foot-wide travel lanes and a 3-foot-wide concrete curb. In the EB direction, there is a 15-foot-wide travel lane, a 12-foot-wide shoulder, and a 6-foot-wide sidewalk. The structure has a 6-foot-tall chain-link fence on top of the barrier on the southern outer edge of the overcrossing. The overcrossing has a staircase on the southeast side of the structure that leads to an unpaved area underneath the overcrossing. The WB I-80 on- and off-ramps intersect with University Avenue. The West Frontage Road and University Avenue intersection is located immediately to the west.

1.2.2 Project Alternatives

Common Features for All Build Alternatives

For all Build Alternative work would include the following features: replacing bridge railings, constructing a 6-foot-tall chain-link fence on top of the barrier on the outer edges on both sides of the overcrossing, removing the existing staircase and replacing it with an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)-compliant pedestrian ramp structure. Pavement on I-80 would be replaced under the University Avenue Overcrossing, as depicted on Figures 1-2 through 1-5. All build alternatives would address liquefaction¹ by constructing soil treatments and/or micropiles. Anticipated construction staging areas are between West Frontage Road and I-80, including the unpaved areas within the on- and off-ramps. Any locations within the project area disturbed either by construction or staging would be landscaped after project construction has been completed.

Alternative 1: Raise Existing Structure

Proposed improvements for alternative 1 are shown in Figure 1-2. This alternative would involve raising the existing structure above I-80, depicted in yellow, to 16 feet 6 inches high. Areas shown in dark grey represent locations that would be repaved. On the University Avenue Overcrossing and adjacent freeway on- and off-ramps, the paving would be constructed to conform to the new height of the overcrossing. The existing raised median barrier on the University Avenue Overcrossing may be replaced with a similar barrier. The WB I-80 on- and off-ramps would be reconfigured. Areas shown in pink (including at-grade roadways and structures) would be removed. The existing sidewalk, depicted in red with black hatched lines, and the proposed sidewalk, in solid red, that would be built to match the new elevation, would lead to the proposed pedestrian ramp, shown in blue and white. The estimated construction duration would be 13 months, the estimated lifespan of the overcrossing after elevation would be 40 years, and the approximate cost would be \$32.3 million.

¹ Liquefaction: A process by which soil deposits below the water table temporarily lose strength and behave as a liquid rather than a solid, typically during a moderate to large earthquake.

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Figure 1-2: Alternative 1, Raise Existing Structure



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Alternative 2: Replace Existing Structure (Signalization of EB Intersection)

Proposed improvements for alternative 2 are depicted in Figure 1-3. This alternative proposes to replace the existing University Avenue Overcrossing structure with a new structure that would be 16 feet 6 inches above I-80. Areas shown as dark grey represent locations that would be repaved. The WB I-80 on- and off-ramps would be re-configured in the same manner as alternative 1. The current EB I-80 on- and off-ramp structures would be completely replaced to attach to the new overcrossing structure. A traffic signal would be installed at the intersection of the University Overcrossing and the EB I-80 on- and off-ramps. Areas shown in pink (including at-grade roadways and structures) would be removed. The sidewalk, shown in red, would lead to the proposed pedestrian ramp, depicted in blue and white. The estimated construction duration would be 25 months, the estimated lifespan of the overcrossing after replacement would be 75 years, and the approximate cost would be \$67.9 million.

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Figure 1-3: Alternative 2, Replace Existing Structure (Signalization of EB Intersection)



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Alternative 3: Replace Existing Structure (Roundabouts)

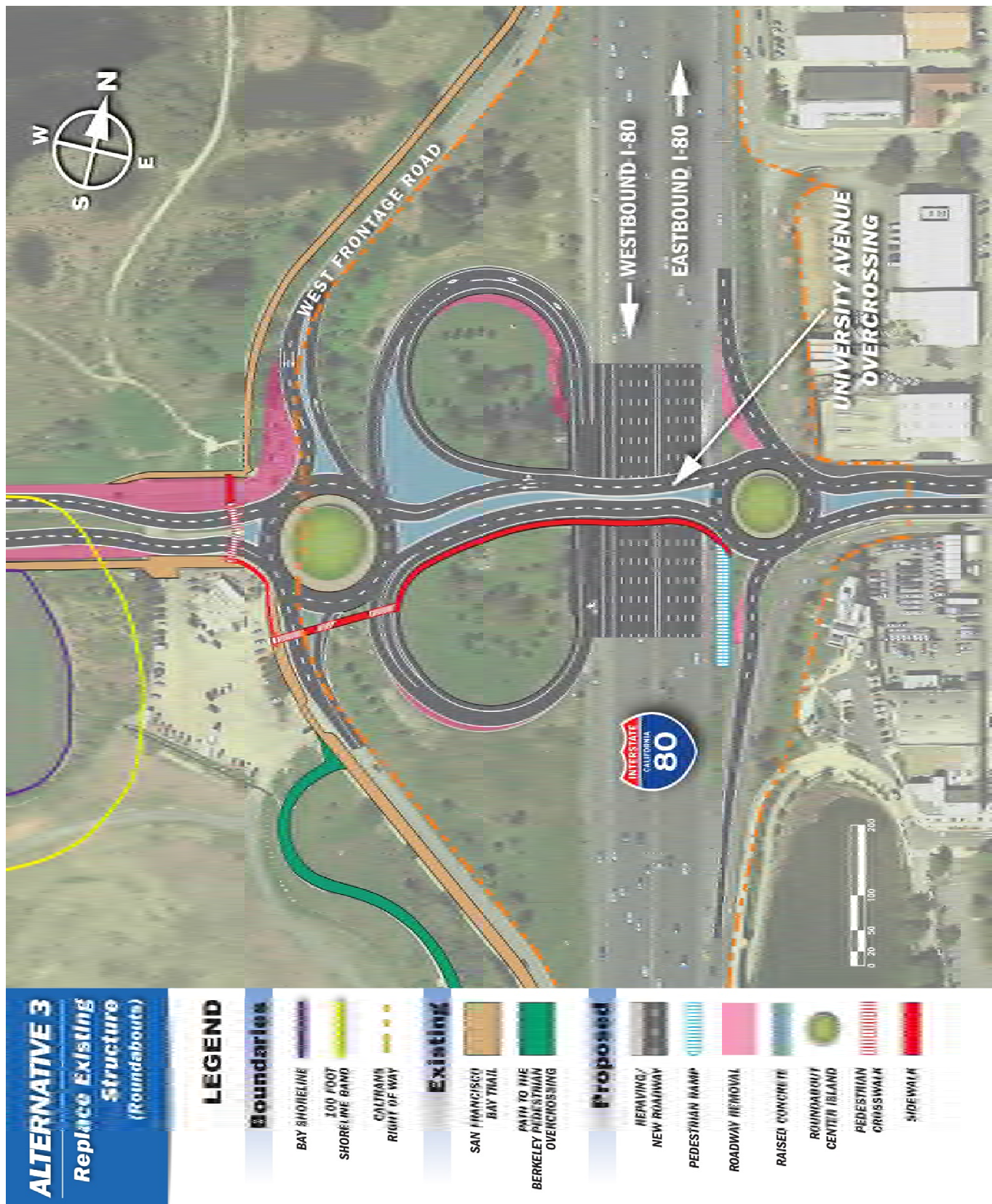
Proposed improvements for alternative 3 are depicted in Figure 1-4. This alternative proposes to replace the existing University Avenue overcrossing with a new structure that would be 16 feet 6 inches high above I-80. Areas shown in dark grey represent locations that would be repaved. The new overcrossing would be constructed with two roundabouts. One roundabout would be on an elevated structure at the intersection of University Avenue and the EB I-80 on- and off-ramps. The other roundabout would create a new intersection that could be accessed from University Avenue, the WB I-80 on- and off-ramps, and the West Frontage Road. This alternative proposes an additional lane be constructed on the overcrossing in the EB direction, resulting in two lanes in each direction on the overcrossing. New structures would be constructed for the EB I-80 on- and off-ramps to conform to the higher proposed overcrossing. The on- and off-ramps for WB I-80 would be reconfigured. The roundabout on the west side of I-80 would incorporate and replace the existing at-grade intersection, which would be reconstructed to meet the new elevated overcrossing. Areas shown in pink (including at-grade roadways and structures) would be removed. New sidewalks shown in red and pedestrian crosswalks, shown in red and white, are proposed to connect to the pedestrian ramp, depicted in blue and white. The estimated construction duration would be 28 months, the estimated lifespan of the overcrossing after replacement would be 75 years, and the approximate cost would be \$96.2 million.

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Figure 1-4: Alternative 3, Replace Existing Structure (Roundabouts)



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Alternative 4: Replace Existing Structure

Proposed improvements for alternative 4 are depicted in Figure 1-5. This alternative proposes to replace the existing University Avenue Overcrossing structure with a new structure that would be 16 feet 6 inches above I-80. Areas shown in dark grey represent locations that would be repaved. The current EB I-80 on- and off-ramp structures would be completely replaced and attached to the new overcrossing structure. A traffic signal would be installed at the intersection of the University Overcrossing and the EB I-80 on- and off-ramps. A roundabout is proposed to create a new intersection that would be accessed from University Avenue, the WB I-80 on- and off-ramps, and the West Frontage Road. The on- and off-ramps for WB I-80 would be reconfigured. The roundabout on the west side of I-80 would be constructed at ground level and to meet the new elevation of the overcrossing. Areas shown in pink (including at-grade roadways and structures) would be removed. New sidewalks, shown in red, and pedestrian crosswalks, shown in red and white, are proposed to connect to the pedestrian ramp, depicted in blue and white. The estimated construction duration would be 25 months, the estimated lifespan of the overcrossing after replacement would be 75 years, and the approximate cost would be \$69.0 million.

No-Build (No Action) Alternative

The no-build alternative would not construct any of the proposed project improvements.

1.2.3 Permits and Approvals Needed

The following permit may be required for project construction:

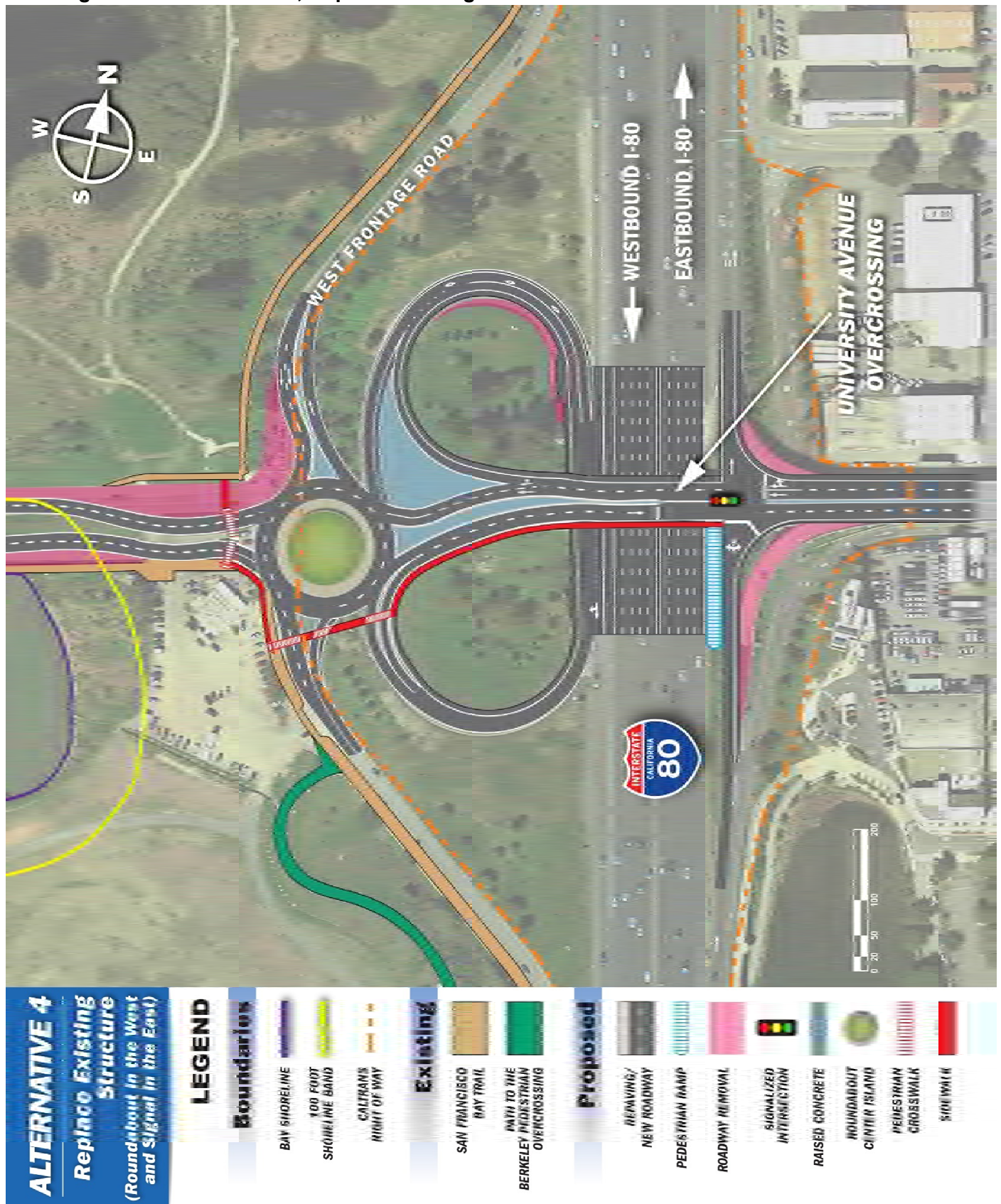
Table 1.2.3-1: Required Permits

Agency	Status
San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC)	Consultation with BCDC will occur during the design phase to determine if a permit would be required and to identify any potential issues that could impact the Bay, shoreline or Bay/shoreline public access.

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Figure 1-5: Alternative 4, Replace Existing Structure



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1.2.4 Identification of the Preferred Alternative

Following circulation of the Project Initial Study, the Project Development Team (PDT) evaluated all four Build Alternatives against the criteria shown in Table 1.2.4-1. As can be seen in Table 1.2.4-1, the alternatives share many similarities. While all of the alternatives would sufficiently raise the vertical clearance of the overcrossing over I-80; the proposed roundabouts under Alternative 3 would significantly improve traffic operations on the overcrossing and the on- and off-ramps over the other alternatives. In addition, traffic operations during construction would be less disruptive under Alternative 3 when compared to the other Build Alternatives. The PDT also took public comments into consideration and found that Alternative 3 was most favored by the public and the City of Berkeley. Please see Table 1.2.4-1 for a summary of the criteria and information that the PDT considered in identifying Alternative 3 as the preferred alternative.

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Table 1.2.4-1: Alternatives Analysis

University Avenue Alternatives Analysis			2/27/2019							
	Alternatives								Notes:	
	1		2		3		4			
	Raise Existing Structure		Replace - Signalization of EB Intersection		Replace - Roundabouts		Replace - Roundabout West, Signalization East			
Construction Cost and Duration (Based on Traditional Construction Methods)										
Estimated cost	\$33 million	3	\$62 million	1	\$71 million	1	\$62 million	1		
Estimated construction duration	13 months	3	25 months	2	28 months	2	25 months	2		
Estimated lifespan after construction	35 years	1	75+ years	3	75+ years	3	75+ years	3		
Ongoing maintenance cost	High (*see Risk)	1	Low	3	Low	3	Low	3		
Traffic movements	No change	0	Improvement predicted (signal east and stop signs west)	1	Significant improvement predicted (round-about)	3	Improvement predicted (signal east)	2	EB 80 off ramp to WB University and EB University to EB 80 movements added.	
Pedestrian/bicycle access	Change existing stairs to ADA ramp, protected pathway along frontage road to Hearst Ave	1	Added ADA ramp on east side north of University, wider sidewalk on bridge, crosswalks on west side north of University, protected pathway along frontage road to Hearst Ave	3	Added ADA ramp on east side north of University, wider sidewalk on bridge, crosswalks on west side north of University, protected pathway along frontage road to Hearst Ave	3	Added ADA ramp on east side north of University, wider sidewalk on bridge, crosswalks on west side north of University, protected pathway along frontage road to Hearst Ave	3		
Traffic Impacts/Closures During Construction										
Interstate I-80	Incremental jacking: Multiple full closures overnight for several months during jacking.	1	Traditional construction: Multiple full closures overnight for many months during staged demolition and construction.	1	Traditional construction: Multiple full closures overnight for many months during staged demolition and construction.	1	Traditional construction: Multiple full closures overnight for many months during staged demolition and construction.	1	Assumptions: Close University for 1 week. Closing EB ramps for extended duration. Close I-80 for weekend for jacking.	
	One-time jacking: 1 full weekend closure for jacking only	3	Roll-in/out: 2 to 4 full weekend closures. (Number of closures depends on bridge alignment and number of individual structures)	2	Roll-in/out: 2 to 4 full weekend closures. (Number of closures depends on bridge alignment and number of individual structures)	2	Roll-in/out: 2 to 4 full weekend closures. (Number of closures depends on bridge alignment and number of individual structures)	2		
WB On/Off Ramps	Incremental jacking: Multiple full closures overnight for several months during jacking.	1	Traditional construction: Multiple full closures overnight for many months during staged demolition and construction.	1	Traditional construction: Multiple full closures overnight for many months during staged demolition and construction.	1	Traditional construction: Multiple full closures overnight for many months during staged demolition and construction.	1		
	One-time jacking: 1 full weekend closure for jacking only	3	Roll-in/out: 2 to 4 full weekend closures. (Number of closures depends on bridge alignment and number of individual structures)	2	Roll-in/out: 2 to 4 full weekend closures. (Number of closures depends on bridge alignment and number of individual structures)	2	Roll-in/out: 2 to 4 full weekend closures. (Number of closures depends on bridge alignment and number of individual structures)	2		
EB On/Off Ramps	Incremental jacking: Extended full closure over several weeks during jacking and reconstruction of ramps at tie-in	0	Traditional construction: Extended full closure over many months during staged demolition and construction.	0	Traditional construction: Extended full closure over many months during staged demolition and construction.	1	Traditional construction: Extended full closure over many months during staged demolition and construction.	0	Alternatives with east side round-about offer more opportunity to reduce ramp closure duration because may be able to build new ramp adjacent to existing. Signalized intersection not possible because new ramp will be in same	
	One-time jacking: Extended full closure over several weeks to allow for jacking and reconstruction of ramps at tie-in	0	Roll-in/out: Extended full closure over many months to tie into new structure	0	Roll-in/out: Extended full closure over many months to tie into new structure	1	Roll-in/out: Extended full closure over many months to tie into new structure	0		
University Ave.	Incremental jacking: Multiple full closures overnight for several months during jacking	1	Traditional construction: Reduced lanes over many months during staged demolition and construction.	2	Traditional construction: Reduced lanes over many months during staged demolition and construction.	2	Traditional construction: Reduced lanes over many months during staged demolition and construction.	2		
	One-time jacking: 1 full week closure for conform work	3	Roll-in/out: 2 to 4 full weekend closures. (Number of closures depends on bridge alignment and number of individual structures)	2	Roll-in/out: 2 to 4 full weekend closures. (Number of closures depends on bridge alignment and number of individual structures)	2	Roll-in/out: 2 to 4 full weekend closures. (Number of closures depends on bridge alignment and number of individual structures)	2		
EB off-ramps to Hearst Ave and 2nd Street	Incremental jacking: Extended full closure over several weeks during jacking and reconstruction of ramps at tie-in	1	Traditional construction: Extended full closure over many months during staged demolition and construction.	1	Traditional construction: Extended full closure over many months during staged demolition and construction.	1	Traditional construction: Extended full closure over many months during staged demolition and construction.	1		
	One-time jacking: Extended full closure over several weeks to allow for jacking and reconstruction of ramps at tie-in	3	Roll-in/out: Extended full closure over many months to tie into new structure	2	Roll-in/out: Extended full closure over many months to tie into new structure	2	Roll-in/out: Extended full closure over many months to tie into new structure	2		
Pedestrians/Bicycles	Incremental jacking: Detour to adjacent pedestrian bridge for duration of construction.	1	Traditional construction: Detour to adjacent pedestrian bridge for duration of construction	1	Traditional construction: Detour to adjacent pedestrian bridge for duration of construction	1	Traditional construction: Detour to adjacent pedestrian bridge for duration of construction	1		
	One-time jacking: Detour to adjacent pedestrian bridge for duration of construction.	3	Roll-in/out: Detour to adjacent pedestrian bridge for duration of construction	2	Roll-in/out: Detour to adjacent pedestrian bridge for duration of construction	2	Roll-in/out: Detour to adjacent pedestrian bridge for duration of construction	2		
Constructability										
Complexity of traffic staging	Not required	3	Required for tie-ins	2	Most complex to build round-about	1	Required to build round-about	2		
Live traffic on bridge (University) on temporary falsework	High risk	0	Not applicable	3	Not applicable	3	Not applicable	3	Falsework designed for live loads and earthquakes	
Live traffic (I-80) under bridge on temporary falsework	Medium risk	1	Typical construction methods. Medium risk from working over traffic while using temporary bracing/formwork.	2	Typical construction methods. Medium risk from working over traffic while using temporary bracing/formwork.	2	Typical construction methods. Medium risk from working over traffic while using temporary bracing/formwork.	2		
University West Abutment Raise Challenge	Will have added difficulty of cutting abutment, curtain walls, and support beams, as well as replacing deck slabs over abutment	0	Not applicable	3	Not applicable	3	Not applicable	3		
Environmental/Community Impacts										
Aesthetics	Same bridge; columns will be visibly out-of-plumb because of variable raise	0	New bridge provides opportunity for improved bridge aesthetics	1	Opportunity for improved bridge aesthetics and local landscaping	3	Opportunity for improved bridge aesthetics and local landscaping	2		
Impacts to existing City of Berkeley culvert	No opportunity to design bridge location around it. Highest possibility of damage.	0	Provides opportunity to design bridge type or alignment to minimize conflicts with culvert	2	Provides opportunity to design bridge type or alignment to minimize conflicts with culvert	2	Provides opportunity to design bridge type or alignment to minimize conflicts with culvert	2	Minimal impacts if build new to south of existing structure	
Permanent impacts to environment	No change	3	No impact	3	No impact	3	No impact	3		
Noise/dust/light during construction	All alternatives similar	0	All alternatives similar	0	All alternatives similar	0	All alternatives similar	0		
Impacts to utilities/cultural/archaeological	Least excavation of all alternatives; no high risk utilities	3	Impact will depend in design of structure; no high risk utilities	2	Impact will depend in design of structure; no high risk utilities	2	Impact will depend in design of structure; no high risk utilities	2		
Requirements for additional ROW	No change	3	None required	3	Additional ROW on west side	1	Additional ROW on west side	1		
Required staging areas	Least required of all alternatives	3	Additional may be required depending on construction method chosen (roll-in/out vs. traditional); potentially use Hearst Ave off-	2	Additional may be required depending on construction method chosen (roll-in/out vs. traditional); potentially use Hearst Ave off-	2	Additional may be required depending on construction method chosen (roll-in/out vs. traditional); potentially use Hearst Ave off-	2		
Risks/Unknowns										
Damage to existing bridge during raising	Unprecedented operation (variable raise) on 70+ year old structure	0	No risk	3	No risk	3	No risk	3		
Late opening after closure	More unknowns equals greater risk of schedule delays	0	Less unknowns equals lower risk	2	Less unknowns equals lower risk	2	Less unknowns equals lower risk	2		
Increased risk of cost overruns	More unknowns equals greater risk of additional cost	0	Less unknowns equals lower risk	2	Less unknowns equals lower risk	2	Less unknowns equals lower risk	2		
Susceptible to earthquake	High - Minimal probability of collapse but severe damage; likely bridge replacement required	0	Low - Flexibility of designing new bridge for any of the six level of damage state (DS) as desired by owner need. These levels vary from immediate service to low probability of collapse after a design seismic earthquake.	3	Low - Flexibility of designing new bridge for any of the six level of damage state (DS) as desired by owner need. These levels vary from immediate service to low probability of collapse after a design seismic earthquake.	3	Low - Flexibility of designing new bridge for any of the six level of damage state (DS) as desired by owner need. These levels vary from immediate service to low probability of collapse after a design seismic earthquake.	3		
Damage to existing City of Berkeley Culvert	High Risk	0	Low Risk	2	Low Risk	2	Low Risk	2		
Live traffic on bridge (University) on temporary falsework	High risk	0	Not applicable	3	Not applicable	3	Not applicable	3		
Live traffic (I-80) under bridge on temporary falsework	Medium risk	1	Typical construction methods. Medium risk from working over traffic while using temporary bracing/formwork.	2	Typical construction methods. Medium risk from working over traffic while using temporary bracing/formwork.	2	Typical construction methods. Medium risk from working over traffic while using temporary bracing/formwork.	2		
Benefits/Opportunities										
Allows for innovation during design	Only provides opportunity for innovation on means and methods	1	New bridge allows for innovation in bridge type, means and methods, alignment, and staging.	3	New bridge allows for innovation in bridge type, means and methods, alignment, and staging.	3	New bridge allows for innovation in bridge type, means and methods, alignment, and staging.	3		
Final public safety - wider lanes, wider shoulders, and wider sidewalk on University	Opportunity to improve these items exists on current structure but may increase price	1	New bridge provides opportunity to include these considerations in the design	3	New bridge provides opportunity to include these considerations in the design	3	New bridge provides opportunity to include these considerations in the design	3		
Can work be done without closing EB ramps?	Possibly jack ramps at night along with bridge	1	Build temporary or new ramps adjacent to existing ramps before demolishing existing	2	Build temporary or new ramps adjacent to existing ramps before demolishing existing	3	Build temporary or new ramps adjacent to existing ramps before demolishing existing	2		
Total Points with incremental jacking (Alt 1) and traditional construction (Alt 2-3-4) options:		34		67		70		67		
Possible Points:		111		111		111		111		
% of Total Possible Points:		31%		60%		63%		60%		
Total Points with one-time jacking (Alt 1) and roll-in/out construction (Alt 2-3-4) options:		44		71		74		71		
Possible Points:		111		111		111		111		
% of Total Possible Points:		40%		64%		67%		64%		
Scoring:		No value = 0; Little value = 1; Some value = 2; High value = 3								

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1.2.5 Alternatives Considered but Eliminated from Further Discussion Prior to the Initial Study

Additional project alternatives were studied and reviewed during the Project Initiation (PID) and early environmental scoping phases but were eliminated from further consideration. These alternatives are described below. The Project Initiation Document (PID) approved on 5/1/2017 that considered raising or replacing the overcrossing. An Intersection Control Evaluation (ICE) study completed on 9/19/2018 created alternatives 3-8. Alternative 9, described below, was assessed and eliminated from consideration before the PID was approved, but was examined again in the environmental phase. A brief description of alternatives 5-9, along with the reasons these alternatives were eliminated from further discussion, is listed below.

Alternative 5: Replace Existing Structure (No Signalization)

The overcrossing and EB on- and off-ramps would have been reconstructed as in alternative 2, but with no signal on the east side of the structure, removing the ability to turn left towards the Berkeley Marina when coming from the EB I-80 off-ramp. This alternative was rejected based on the traffic study that determined this alternative would operate worse than the no-build conditions during the opening year of 2022 and design year of 2042.

Alternative 6: Replace Existing Structure (Roundabout)

The I-80 EB on- and off-ramp structure would have been realigned to provide a roundabout at the intersection and would have been built up to accommodate the new structure height. The existing I-80 WB on- and off-ramp would have a roundabout at the intersection. This alternative was rejected based on a traffic study that determined this alternative would operate worse than the no-build conditions during the opening year of 2022 and design year of 2042.

Alternative 7: Replace Existing Structure (Signalization)

This alternative would have included a signalized control intersection on the west end of the overcrossing and roundabout at the east end. This alternative was rejected based on a traffic study that determined this alternative would operate worse than the no-build conditions during the opening year of 2022 and design year of 2042.

Alternative 8: Replace Existing Structure (Signalization and Roundabout)

The east end of the overcrossing would have had a similar design as alternative 2 with a left turn on the EB off-ramp at University Avenue, and a roundabout similar to alternatives 3 and 4 on the west end. This alternative was rejected based on a traffic study that determined this alternative would operate worse than the no-build conditions during the opening year of 2022 and design year of 2042.

Alternative 9: Lower I-80 Mainline

The increased vertical clearance would have been achieved by lowering the I-80 mainline 2.5 feet and the existing overcrossing would have remained in place unaltered. Since the vertical profile of I-80 would have been lowered, the ramps connecting to I-80 would also have been lowered to meet the roadway. A storm drain facility, owned and maintained by the City of Berkeley, lies directly beneath I-80. This culvert was constructed in the 1940s by the City of Berkeley and begins on the western slope of the Berkeley Hills, carrying water from Strawberry Creek to the Bay. This alternative was rejected due to the potential damage to the culvert and potential effects caused by Sea Level Rise (SLR).

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Chapter 2 – Affected Environment; Environmental Consequences; and Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

2.1 CEQA Environmental Checklist

This checklist identifies physical, biological, social, and economic factors that might be affected by the proposed project. In many cases, background studies performed in connection with the projects will indicate that there are no impacts to a particular resource. A “no impact” answer in the last column reflects this determination. The questions in this form are intended to encourage the thoughtful assessment of impacts and do not represent thresholds of significance. All Avoidance and Minimization Measures are found in Appendix A.

All technical studies prepared for this project analyzed the four proposed build alternatives and the no-build alternative. The results of the technical studies showed that while there are four unique alternatives, the impacts for each alternative were generally identical. As such, the topics covered below have one discussion regarding impacts unless explicitly stated otherwise.

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2.1.1 AESTHETICS

Would the project:	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

The information in this section is generated from the Visual Impact Analysis (VIA) approved on July 17, 2018, with an addendum approved on November 5, 2018.

CEQA Significance Determinations for Aesthetics

Affected Environment

The existing corridor within the project area has two distinct characteristics: commercial and natural. I-80 and University Avenue are both heavily congested roadways. This location has multiple overhead structures (shown in Figure 2.1.1-1 and Figure 2.1.1-2) that are the most visually dominant elements in the area. Commercial and residential development surrounds the roadway on the east side. West of I-80, views are dominated by a natural setting with mature trees and shrubs inside the on- and off-ramps and the San Francisco Bay further to the west.

No Impact

B and D

Less Than Significant Impact

A and C

The visual quality of the I-80 corridor is not anticipated to be substantially altered by the proposed project. Either the existing structure would be raised, or a similar structure would be constructed in the same location as the existing overcrossing. All alternatives would include landscaping, which would improve the overall aesthetics of the project area. The following analysis leads to the conclusion that the proposed project would not alter the natural and commercial character within the project area. The proposed project would have a less than significant impact on a scenic vista and would not substantially degrade the visual character of the project area.

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Figures 2.1.1-1 through 2.1.1-4 show the existing conditions of I-80 and the University Avenue Overcrossing. The figures show that this is a highly urbanized area with mature landscaping. To the west, there is a view of the San Francisco Bay with some mature trees and parklands. To the east there are commercial and residential properties with the Berkeley Aquatic Park to the southeast. To the northeast, the Berkeley Hills are visible.

Figures 2.1.1-5 and 2.1.1-6 show alternative 2 travelling WB on University Avenue. Alternative 2 would add left-turn lanes for both the EB University Avenue on-ramp to EB I-80 and the EB I-80 off-ramp to WB University Avenue. The replaced overcrossing would look similar to existing conditions. The most notable changes would be the signal at the on- and off-ramps of EB I-80 (shown in Figure 2.1.1-5), the realignment of the existing ramps (west of I-80 on- and off-ramps shown in Figure 2.1.1-6), and the replacement of the pedestrian staircase on the east side of the overcrossing.

Figures 2.1.1-7 and 2.1.1-8 show that alternative 3 would replace the overcrossing and construct roundabouts. One would be on an elevated structure at the intersection of University Avenue and the EB I-80 on and off-ramps (shown in Figure 2.1.1-8). The other roundabout would create a new intersection that could be accessed from University Avenue, the WB I-80 on- and off-ramps, and the West Frontage Road. The replaced overcrossing would look similar to existing conditions (shown in Figure 2.1.1-7). The most noticeable changes would be the realignment of the existing on- and off-ramps, the addition of the roundabouts, and the replacement of the pedestrian staircase on the east side of the overcrossing.

Figures 2.1.1-9 and 2.1.1-10 show that alternative 4 would replace the overcrossing and construct a roundabout on the westside of I-80 and a signal at the on- and off-ramps of EB I-80 and University Avenue. The roundabout would create a new intersection that could be accessed from University Avenue, the WB I-80 on- and off-ramps, and West Frontage Road (shown in Figure 2.1.1-9). The replaced overcrossing would look similar to existing conditions. The most noticeable changes would be the realignment of the existing on- and off-ramps, the addition of a signal at the on- and off-ramps of EB I-80 (shown in Figure 2.1.1.10), the addition of the roundabout on the westside of I-80, and the replacement of the pedestrian staircase on the east side of the overcrossing.

Avoidance and Minimization Measures

The design, color, and aesthetic treatment for the new overcrossing, support columns and support walls shall be similar in design to the existing adjacent structures. This treatment would ensure that columns would be visually compatible and consistent with the existing structures along the corridor.

Areas disturbed by the construction of this project would be landscaped.

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Figure 2.1.1-1: Existing conditions from WB I-80 looking at the University Avenue Overcrossing.



Figure 2.1.1-2: Existing conditions looking north at the University Avenue Overcrossing.

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Figure 2.1.1-3: Existing conditions along University Avenue looking west at the EB I-80 on and off-ramps.



Figure 2.1.1-4: Existing conditions along University Avenue looking east at the WB I-80 on and off-ramps.

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Figure 2.1.1-5: Alternative 2: WB Visual Simulation of University Avenue Overcrossing.



Figure 2.1.1-6: Alternative 2: WB Visual Simulation of University Avenue.

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Figure 2.1.1-7 Alternative 3: Visual Simulation of University Avenue Overcrossing looking north from I-80.



Figure 2.1.1-8 Alternative 3: EB Visual Simulation of University Avenue.

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Figure 2.1.1-9 Alternative 4: WB Visual Simulation of University Avenue.



Figure 2.1.1-10 Alternative 4: WB Visual Simulation of University Avenue.

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2.1.2 AGRICULTURE AND FOREST RESOURCES

In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model (1997) prepared by the California Dept. of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state's inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment Project and the Forest Legacy Assessment Project; and the forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board.				
Would the project:	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance (Farmland), as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program of the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

CEQA Significance Determinations for Agriculture and Forest Resources

No Impact

A–E

There are no farmlands or forest resources within the project limits.

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2.1.3 AIR QUALITY

Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations.				
Would the project:	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions which exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

A Mobile Source Air Toxic (MSAT) study for the proposed project was approved on March 26, 2018.

CEQA Significance Determinations for Air Quality

No Impact

A-E

This project is a Freight Corridor Improvement Project and is exempt from air quality conformity per 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 93.126 (Table 2 - Widening narrow pavements or reconstructing bridges [no additional travel lanes]). An air quality study is not required. This project would be required to comply with Caltrans Standard Specification 14-9, Air Quality, which requires compliance with air pollution control rules, regulations, ordinances, and statutes that apply within the project area. This project has been determined to generate minimal air quality impacts for Clean Air Act criteria pollutants and has not been linked with any special Mobile Source Air Toxic (MSAT) concerns. This project will not result in changes in traffic volumes, vehicle mix, or any other factor that would cause a meaningful increase in MSAT impacts from that of the no-build alternative.

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2.1.4 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Would the project:	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or US Fish and Wildlife Service?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Have a substantial adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Interfere substantially with the movement of any native resident or migratory fish or wildlife species or with established native resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of native wildlife nursery sites?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

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f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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A Natural Environment Study for the proposed project was approved on 7/23/2018 with an addendum approved on 10/10/2018.

CEQA Significance Determinations for Biological Resources

No Impact

A–F

The project area consists primarily of pavement, human structures, bare earth, and ruderal/landscaped vegetation. Existing vegetation is subject to routine maintenance by Caltrans such as mowing, trimming, and herbicide treatments. The project area is highly disturbed, exposed, and lacking species. The project area is unlikely to provide habitat for most wildlife. The project area consists of low-quality habitat, dense urban development, and has a severe lack of habitat connectivity.

Avoidance and Minimization Measures

A qualified biologist will perform preconstruction surveys for sensitive biological resources prior to vegetation removal, ground-disturbing work, or construction-related activities in unpaved areas.

Prior to construction, a qualified biologist will survey potential nesting and roosting sites within the Biological Study Area (BSA) for the presence of bat species.

Staging and access areas will be confined to previously disturbed areas or areas with existing pavement.

A qualified biologist will remain on site during the initial construction activities of each phase (preparation, demolition, bridge building, non-bridge work, etc.). The monitor will actively assess whether construction activities cause impacts to special-status species, and will immediately notify the Resident Engineer (RE) to cease all construction activities if impacts are observed. Construction will resume at the discretion of the biologist. Agencies may need to be consulted in the meantime.

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2.1.5 CULTURAL RESOURCES

Would the project:	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in §15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of dedicated cemeteries?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

The following cultural resource studies were prepared for this project: A Historic Property Survey Report, approved 3/15/2018, an Archaeological Survey Report, approved 1/7/2018, and a Historical Resources Evaluation Report, approved 3/29/2018. A Supplemental Historic Property Survey Report, Extended Phase I Report and Post-Review Discovery, Archaeological Monitoring Plan, and an Environmentally Sensitive Area Action Plan were approved 7/31/2018.

CEQA Significance Determinations for Cultural Resources

Affected Environment

One archaeological historic resource was identified within the project area. This resource consists of the remains of what was once an extensive pre-contact Native American village and cemetery shellmound. The site was previously found to be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). The site is listed as Landmark #228 on the local landmark register as designated by the Berkeley Landmarks Preservation Commission.

Four built resources were evaluated for inclusion in the NRHP as part of this project. Three properties were determined not eligible for the NRHP. One property previously determined eligible for the NRHP, the Southern Pacific Railroad Depot (700 University Avenue), was reevaluated and found to remain eligible under Criterion C as a distinctive and rare surviving example of a Mission Style railroad depot in the San Francisco Bay Area. The four built resources were also evaluated for inclusion in the California Register of Historical Resources (CRHR), two of which were found not eligible and as a result are not historical resources for the purposes of CEQA. One property, Spenger's Fish Grotto, determined not eligible for the NRHP, is a historical resource for the purposes of CEQA because it is listed on a local register as a City of Berkeley Landmark (#210) and meets the CRHR criteria at the local level under Criterion 1

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for its association with the early development of West Berkeley, and under Criterion 2 for its association with Johann Spenger (founder of Spenger's Fish Grotto). The Southern Pacific Railroad Depot is eligible for the CRHR under Criterion 3 and is a historical resource for the purposes of CEQA.

No Impact

A and C–D

The proposed project has no impact on historical resources, paleontological resources, unique geological features, and would not disturb any human remains. No impacts are anticipated to built resources.

Less than Significant Impact

B

The project area is near archaeological resources that consist of the remains of what was once an extensive pre-contact Native American village and cemetery shellmound. Extended Phase I (XPI) subsurface testing was undertaken for this project to confirm the presence or absence of materials associated with archaeological resources and to address high sensitivity for potential submerged sites along the historic shoreline within the project area. No cultural materials were identified within the project area. However, there is a potential for the discovery of archaeological artifacts within the project area. Due to this potential, this project would have a less than significant impact.

Avoidance and Minimization Measures

If cultural materials are discovered during construction, all earth-moving activity within and around the immediate discovery area will be diverted until a qualified archaeologist can assess the nature and significance of the find. Unintentional impacts upon archaeological resources will be avoided by implementing the Monitoring and Post-Review Discovery Plan prepared for the project, to include the following:

If previously unidentified cultural materials are unearthed during construction, work shall be halted in that area until a qualified archaeologist can assess the significance of the find.

If a Caltrans professional qualified specialist determines that cultural materials include human remains, State Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 states that further disturbances and activities shall stop in any area or nearby area suspected to overlie remains. Caltrans' Cultural Resources Studies Office will contact Alameda County Coroner. Pursuant to California Public Resources Code (PRC) section 5097.98, if the remains are thought by the coroner to be Native American, the coroner will notify the Native American Heritage Commission, which will then notify the Most Likely Descendent. Caltrans, District 4, Cultural Resources Studies Office, will work with the Most Likely Descendent on the respectful treatment and disposition of the remains. Further provisions of PRC 5097.98 are to be followed as applicable.

Per the Environmentally Sensitive Area Action Plan, unintentional impacts on archaeological resources will be avoided by establishing Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESAs) around the known archaeological site boundaries within the Area of Potential Effect (APE). Caltrans shall inform interested Native Americans about the proposed project activities and the ESA Action Plan prior to construction.

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2.1.6 GEOLOGY AND SOILS

Would the project:	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
i) Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Special Publication 42?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
iv) Landslides?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

A Preliminary Geotechnical Report for the proposed project was approved on 3/12/2018.

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Affected Environment

Based on the geologic map for the area, the site is underlain by artificial fill. The artificial fill that was placed in the project area before 1965 consists of dumped materials that are not firm or compacted. Geologists and seismologists recognize the San Francisco Bay Area as one of the most active seismic regions in the United States. There are three major faults that trend in a northwest direction through the Bay Area, which have generated about 12 earthquakes per century large enough to cause significant structural damage. These earthquakes occur on faults that are part of the San Andreas Fault system that extends for at least 700 miles along the California Coast, and includes the San Andreas, Hayward, and Calaveras Faults. Some seismic effects result from various soil responses to ground acceleration. The soils and loose fill within the project area are subjected to:

Liquefaction – Liquefaction is a process by which soil deposits below the water table temporarily lose strength and behave as a liquid rather than a solid, typically during a moderate to large earthquake. The liquefaction susceptibility at the project area is very high. An evaluation was performed for this project and confirmed that the site has the high liquefaction potential, which can induce settlement ranging from 2 to 20 inches.

Cracking – Cracks may develop in the soil overlying the site. Since the project is underlain by artificial fill, there is a moderate to high potential for cracking.

Differential Compaction – During moderate and large earthquakes, soft or loose, natural or fill soils can densify and consolidate, often unevenly across a site. Since the project area is underlain by fill, it is susceptible to differential compaction.

Ground Shaking – Moderate to large earthquakes are probable along several active faults in the greater Bay Area. Therefore, strong ground shaking should be expected at some time during the design life of the proposed development.

Shrink Swell – The expansion and/or contraction of soil can cause foundations to shift and roadways to crack. The potential for shrink swell to the proposed improvements is considered moderate to high.

CEQA Significance Determinations for Geology and Soils

No Impact

A–Ai and Aiii–E

All alternatives would use soil treatments and/or micropiles to ensure the structure would meet current seismic standards and would be able to withstand potential liquefaction in a seismic event.

Less than Significant Impact

Aii

The project area is susceptible to strong seismic ground shaking due to its proximity to the San Andreas Fault system. As part of the design, this project will involve a soil treatment that includes the injection of cement into the ground, which will ensure that in the instance of a seismic event that the soil will not experience liquefaction. The soil injection referred to as grouting would employ techniques that inject a range of materials into soil or rock formations, via boreholes (drilled holes), to alter the physical characteristics of the formation when the materials set. The grouting would have no effect on the environmental setting and would in general improve the geology and soil conditions.

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2.1.7 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Would the project:	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?	Caltrans has used the best available information based to the extent possible on scientific and factual information, to describe, calculate, or estimate the amount of greenhouse gas emissions that may occur related to this project. The analysis included in the climate change section of this document provides the public and decision-makers as much information about the project as possible. It is Caltrans' determination that in the absence of statewide-adopted thresholds or GHG emissions limits, it is too speculative to make a significance determination regarding an individual project's direct and indirect impacts with respect to global climate change. Caltrans remains committed to implementing measures to reduce the potential effects of the project. These measures are outlined in the climate change section that follows.			
b) Conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?				

Climate Change

Climate change refers to long-term changes in temperature, precipitation, wind patterns, and other elements of the Earth's climate system. An ever-increasing body of scientific research attributes these climatological changes to greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, particularly those generated from the production and use of fossil fuels.

While climate change has been a concern for several decades, the establishment of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) by the United Nations and World Meteorological Organization in 1988 has led to increased efforts devoted to GHG emissions reduction and climate change research and policy. These efforts are primarily concerned with the emissions of GHGs generated by human activity, including carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄), nitrous oxide (N₂O), tetrafluoromethane, hexafluoroethane, sulfur hexafluoride (SF₆), HFC-23 (fluoroform), HFC-134a (1,1,1,2-tetrafluoroethane), and HFC-152a (difluoroethane).

In the U.S., the main source of GHG emissions is electricity generation, followed by transportation.² In California, however, transportation sources (including passenger cars, light-duty trucks, other trucks, buses, and motorcycles) are the largest contributors of GHG emissions.³ The dominant GHG emitted is CO₂, mostly from fossil fuel combustion.

² <https://www.epa.gov/ghgemissions/us-greenhouse-gas-inventory-report-1990-2014>

³ <https://www.arb.ca.gov/cc/inventory/data/data.htm>

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Two terms are typically used when discussing how Caltrans address the impacts of climate change: greenhouse gas mitigation and adaptation. Greenhouse gas mitigation covers the activities and policies aimed at reducing GHG emissions to limit or mitigate the impacts of climate change. Adaptation, on the other hand, is concerned with planning for and responding to impacts resulting from climate change (such as adjusting transportation design standards to withstand more intense storms and higher sea levels).

Regulatory Setting

To date, no national standards have been established for nationwide mobile-source GHG reduction targets, nor have any regulations or legislation been enacted specifically to address climate change and GHG emissions reduction at the project level.

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (42 United States Code [USC] Part 4332) requires federal agencies to assess the environmental effects of their proposed actions prior to making a decision on the action or project.

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) recognizes the threats that extreme weather, sea-level change, and other changes in environmental conditions pose to valuable transportation infrastructure and those who depend on it. FHWA therefore supports a sustainability approach that assesses vulnerability to climate risks and incorporates resilience into planning, asset management, project development and design, and operations and maintenance practices.⁴ This approach encourages planning for sustainable highways by addressing climate risks while balancing environmental, economic, and social values—"the triple bottom line of sustainability."⁵ Program and project elements that foster sustainability and resilience also support economic vitality and global efficiency, increase safety and mobility, enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, and improve the quality of life. Addressing these factors up front in the planning process will assist in decision-making and improve efficiency at the program level, and will inform the analysis and stewardship needs of project-level decision-making.

Various efforts have been made widely known at the federal level to improve fuel economy and energy efficiency to address climate change and its associated effects.

The Energy Policy Act of 1992 (EPACT92, 102nd Congress H.R.776.ENR): With this act, Congress set goals, created mandates, and amended utility laws to increase clean energy use and improve overall energy efficiency in the United States. EPACT92 consists of 27 titles detailing various measures designed to lessen the nation's dependence on imported energy, provide incentives for clean and renewable energy, and promote energy conservation in buildings. Title III of EPACT92 addresses alternative fuels. It gave the U.S. Department of Energy administrative power to regulate the minimum number of light-duty alternative fuel vehicles required in certain federal fleets beginning in fiscal year 1993. The primary goal of the Program is to cut petroleum use in the United States by 2.5 billion gallons per year by 2020.

Energy Policy Act of 2005 (109th Congress H.R.6 (2005–2006): This act sets forth an energy research and development program covering: (1) energy efficiency; (2) renewable energy; (3) oil and gas; (4) coal; (5) Indian energy; (6) nuclear matters and security; (7) vehicles and motor fuels, including ethanol; (8) hydrogen; (9) electricity; (10) energy tax incentives; (11) hydropower and geothermal energy; and (12) climate change technology.

⁴ <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/sustainability/resilience/>

⁵ <https://www.sustainablehighways.dot.gov/overview.aspx>

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Energy Policy and Conservation Act of 1975 (42 USC Section 6201) and Corporate Average Fuel Standards: This act establishes fuel economy standards for on-road motor vehicles sold in the United States. Compliance with federal fuel economy standards is determined through the Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) program on the basis of each manufacturer's average fuel economy for the portion of its vehicles produced for sale in the United States.

U.S. EPA's authority to regulate GHG emissions stems from the U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Massachusetts v. EPA* (2007). The Supreme Court ruled that GHGs meet the definition of air pollutants under the existing Clean Air Act and must be regulated if these gases could be reasonably anticipated to endanger public health or welfare. Responding to the Court's ruling, U.S. EPA finalized an endangerment finding in December 2009. Based on scientific evidence it found that six GHGs constitute a threat to public health and welfare. Thus, it is the Supreme Court's interpretation of the existing Act and EPA's assessment of the scientific evidence that form the basis for EPA's regulatory actions.

U.S. EPA, in conjunction with the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), issued the first of a series of GHG emission standards for new cars and light-duty vehicles in April 2010⁶ and significantly increased the fuel economy of all new passenger cars and light trucks sold in the United States. The standards required these vehicles to meet an average fuel economy of 34.1 miles per gallon by 2016. In August 2012, the federal government adopted the second rule that increases fuel economy for the fleet of passenger cars, light-duty trucks, and medium-duty passenger vehicles for model years 2017 and beyond to average fuel economy of 54.5 miles per gallon by 2025. Because NHTSA cannot set standards beyond model year 2021 due to statutory obligations and the rules' long timeframe, a mid-term evaluation is included in the rule. The mid-term evaluation is the overarching process by which NHTSA, EPA, and Air Resources Board (ARB) will decide on CAFE and GHG emissions standard stringency for model years 2022–2025. NHTSA has not formally adopted standards for model years 2022 through 2025. However, the EPA finalized its mid-term review in January 2017, affirming that the target fleet average of at least 54.5 miles per gallon by 2025 was appropriate. In March 2017, President Trump ordered EPA to reopen the review and reconsider the mileage target.⁷

NHTSA and EPA issued a Final Rule for "Phase 2" for medium- and heavy-duty vehicles to improve fuel efficiency and cut carbon pollution in October 2016. The agencies estimate that the standards will save up to 2 billion barrels of oil and reduce CO₂ emissions by up to 1.1 billion metric tons over the lifetimes of model year 2018–2027 vehicles.

State

With the passage of legislation including State Senate, Assembly bills, and executive orders, California has been innovative and proactive in addressing GHG emissions and climate change.

Assembly Bill 1493, Pavley Vehicular Emissions: Greenhouse Gases, 2002: This bill requires the California Air Resources Board (ARB) to develop and implement regulations to reduce automobile and light truck GHG emissions. These stricter emissions standards were designed to apply to automobiles and light trucks beginning with the 2009-model year.

⁶ <https://one.nhtsa.gov/Laws-&-Regulations/CAFE-%E2%80%93-Fuel-Economy>

⁷ <http://www.nbcnews.com/business/autos/trump-rolls-back-obama-era-fuel-economy-standards-n734256> and <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2017/03/22/2017-05316/notice-of-intention-to-reconsider-the-final-determination-of-the-mid-term-evaluation-of-greenhouse>

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Executive Order S-3-05 (June 1, 2005): The goal of this executive order (EO) is to reduce California's GHG emissions to: (1) year 2000 levels by 2010, (2) year 1990 levels by 2020, and (3) 80 percent below year 1990 levels by 2050. This goal was further reinforced with the passage of Assembly Bill 32 in 2006 and SB 32 in 2016.

Assembly Bill 32 (AB 32), Chapter 488, 2006: Núñez and Pavley, The Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006: AB 32 codified the 2020 GHG emissions reduction goals as outlined in EO S-3-05, while further mandating that ARB create a scoping plan and implement rules to achieve "real, quantifiable, cost-effective reductions of greenhouse gases." The Legislature also intended that the statewide GHG emissions limit continue in existence and be used to maintain and continue reductions in emissions of GHGs beyond 2020 (Health and Safety Code Section 38551(b)). The law requires ARB to adopt rules and regulations in an open public process to achieve the maximum technologically feasible and cost-effective GHG reductions.

Executive Order S-01-07 (January 18, 2007): This order sets forth the low carbon fuel standard (LCFS) for California. Under this EO, the carbon intensity of California's transportation fuels is to be reduced by at least 10 percent by the year 2020. ARB re-adopted the LCFS regulation in September 2015, and the changes went into effect on January 1, 2016. The program establishes a strong framework to promote the low-carbon fuel adoption necessary to achieve the Governor's 2030 and 2050 GHG reduction goals.

Senate Bill 97 (SB 97), Chapter 185, 2007, Greenhouse Gas Emissions: This bill requires the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) to develop recommended amendments to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines for addressing GHG emissions. The amendments became effective on March 18, 2010.

Senate Bill 375 (SB 375), Chapter 728, 2008, Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection: This bill requires ARB to set regional emissions reduction targets for passenger vehicles. The Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for each region must then develop a "Sustainable Communities Strategy" (SCS) that integrates transportation, land-use, and housing policies to plan how it will achieve the emissions target for its region.

Senate Bill 391 (SB 391), Chapter 585, 2009, California Transportation Plan: This bill requires the State's long-range transportation plan to meet California's climate change goals under AB 32.

Executive Order B-16-12 (March 2012) orders State entities under the direction of the Governor, including ARB, the California Energy Commission, and the Public Utilities Commission, to support the rapid commercialization of zero-emission vehicles. It directs these entities to achieve various benchmarks related to zero-emission vehicles.

Executive Order B-30-15 (April 2015) establishes an interim statewide GHG emission reduction target of 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030 in order to ensure California meets its target of reducing GHG emissions to 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050. It further orders all state agencies with jurisdiction over sources of GHG emissions to implement measures, pursuant to statutory authority, to achieve reductions of GHG emissions to meet the 2030 and 2050 GHG emissions reductions targets. It also directs ARB to update the Climate Change Scoping Plan to express the 2030 target in terms of million metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (MMTCO_{2e}). Finally, it requires the Natural Resources Agency to update the state's climate adaptation

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strategy, *Safeguarding California*, every 3 years, and to ensure that its provisions are fully implemented.

Senate Bill 32, (SB 32) Chapter 249, 2016, codifies the GHG reduction targets established in EO B-30-15 to achieve a mid-range goal of 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030.

Environmental Setting

In 2006, the Legislature passed the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 (AB 32), which created a comprehensive, multi-year program to reduce GHG emissions in California. AB 32 required ARB to develop a Scoping Plan that describes the approach California will take to achieve the goal of reducing GHG emissions to 1990 levels by 2020. The Scoping Plan was first approved by ARB in 2008 and must be updated every 5 years. The second updated plan, *California's 2017 Climate Change Scoping Plan*, adopted on December 14, 2017, reflects the 2030 target established in EO B-30-15 and SB 32.

The AB 32 Scoping Plan and the subsequent updates contain the main strategies California will use to reduce GHG emissions. As part of its supporting documentation for the updated Scoping Plan, ARB released the GHG inventory for California.⁸ ARB is responsible for maintaining and updating California's GHG Inventory per H&SC Section 39607.4. The associated forecast/projection is an estimate of the emissions anticipated to occur in the year 2020 if none of the foreseeable measures included in the Scoping Plan were implemented.

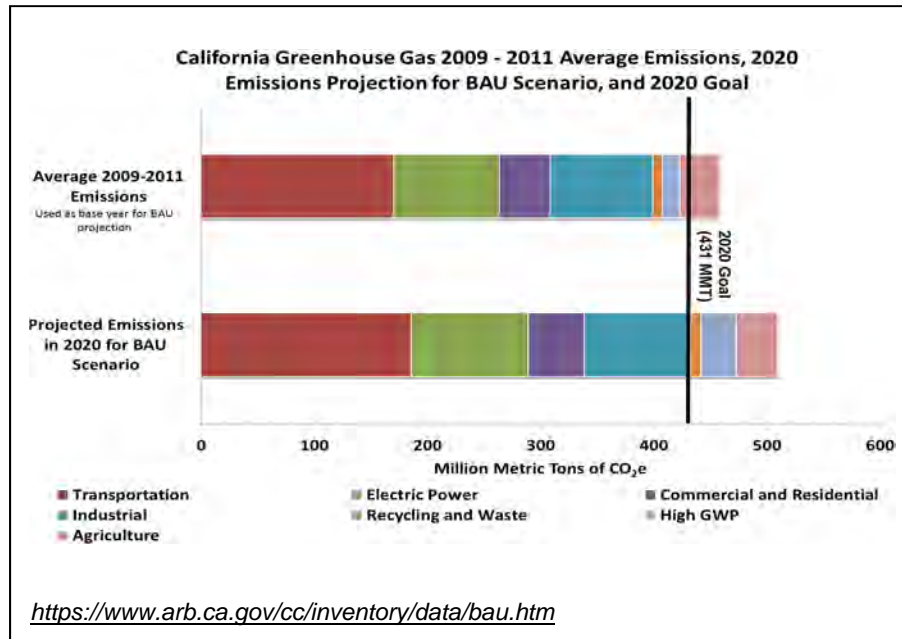
An emissions projection estimates future emissions based on current emissions, expected regulatory implementation, and other technological, social, economic, and behavioral patterns. The projected 2020 emissions provided in Figure 2.1.7-1 represent a business-as-usual (BAU) scenario assuming none of the Scoping Plan measures are implemented. The 2020 BAU emissions estimate assists ARB in demonstrating progress toward meeting the 2020 goal of 431 MMTCO₂e⁹. The 2018 edition of the GHG emissions inventory found total California emissions of 429 MMTCO₂e for 2016.

The 2020 BAU emissions projection was revisited in support of the First Update to the Scoping Plan (2014). This projection accounts for updates to the economic forecasts of fuel and energy demand as well as other factors. It also accounts for the effects of the 2008 economic recession and the projected recovery. The total emissions expected in the 2020 BAU scenario include reductions anticipated from Pavley I and the Renewable Electricity Standard (30 MMTCO₂e total). With these reductions in the baseline, estimated 2020 statewide BAU emissions are 509 MMTCO₂e.

⁸ 2018 Edition of the GHG Emission Inventory released (July 2018):
<https://www.arb.ca.gov/cc/inventory/data/data.htm>

⁹ The revised target using Global Warming Potentials (GWP) from the IPCC Fourth Assessment Report (AR4)

Figure 2.1.7-1: 2020 Business as Usual (BAU) Emissions Projection 2014 Edition



Project Analysis

An individual project does not generate enough GHG emissions to significantly influence global climate change. Rather, global climate change is a cumulative impact. This means that a project may contribute to a potential impact through its *incremental* change in emissions when combined with the contributions of all other sources of GHG.¹⁰ In assessing cumulative impacts, it must be determined if a project's incremental effect is "cumulatively considerable" (CEQA Guidelines Sections 15064(h)(1) and 15130). To make this determination, the incremental impacts of the project must be compared with the effects of past, current, and probable future projects. To gather sufficient information on a global scale of all past, current, and future projects to make this determination is a difficult, if not impossible, task.

GHG emissions for transportation projects can be divided into those produced during operations and those produced during construction. The following represents a best faith effort to describe the potential GHG emissions related to the proposed project.

Operational Emissions

The purpose of the proposed project is to allow safer, more efficient travel for oversized vehicles on I-80 by increasing the vertical clearance of the University Avenue Overcrossing in Berkeley, California. Raising or replacing the existing structure would not increase the capacity of I-80 or

¹⁰ This approach is supported by the AEP: *Recommendations by the Association of Environmental Professionals on How to Analyze GHG Emissions and Global Climate Change in CEQA Documents* (March 5, 2007), as well as the South Coast Air Quality Management District (Chapter 6: The CEQA Guide, April 2011) and the US Forest Service (Climate Change Considerations in Project Level NEPA Analysis, July 13, 2009).

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University Avenue, and would not change vehicle miles traveled. Accordingly, no increase in operational GHG emissions is anticipated.

Construction Emissions

Construction GHG emissions would result from material processing, on-site construction equipment, and traffic delays due to construction. These emissions will be produced at different levels throughout the construction phase; their frequency and occurrence can be reduced through innovations in plans and specifications and by implementing better traffic management during construction phases.

In addition, with innovations such as longer pavement lives, improved traffic management plans, and changes in materials, the GHG emissions produced during construction can be offset to some degree by longer intervals between maintenance and rehabilitation activities.

The analysis was focused on carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions, as it is the single most important GHG pollutant due to its abundance when compared with other vehicle-emitted GHGs, including methane (CH₄), nitrous oxide (N₂O), hydrofluorocarbon (HFCs), and black carbon (BC). Based on project information available for environmental studies, the construction-related CO₂ emissions were calculated using the Road Construction Emissions Model (RCEM), version 8.1.0, provided by the Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District. The estimated amounts of CO₂ produced during construction of the following Build Alternatives are as follows:

1. Alternative 1 (project construction time of 13 months) - 1651.47 tons (CO₂)
2. Alternative 2 (project construction time of 25 months) - 3456.83 tons (CO₂)
3. Alternative 3 (project construction time of 28 months) - 3456.83 tons (CO₂)
4. Alternative 4 (project construction time of 25 months) - 3456.83 tons (CO₂)

A summary of all GHG emissions is provided in Table 2.1.7-1.¹¹

¹¹ For this analysis, "carbon dioxide equivalent," or CO₂e, consists CH₄ and N₂O converted to units of CO₂, then added to CO₂ emissions to obtain CO₂e. The conversion uses the global warming potential (GWP) of each gas. The GWP of each gas is a multiple of the GWP of CO₂, which is 1, by definition.

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Table 2.1.7-1: Summary of GHG Emissions

Alternatives	Construction-related GHG Emissions			
	Parameters			
	CO ₂ (tons)	CH ₄ (tons)	N ₂ O (tons)	CO ₂ e (MT) ¹²
Alternative 1 - Raise Bridge and Ramps				
Annual	1238.60	0.29	0.02	1133.62
Total	1651.47	0.38	0.02	1511.49
Alternatives 2, 3, and 4 - Remove and Replace Bridge and Ramps				
Annual	1728.42	0.45	0.02	1582.77
Total	3456.83	0.89	0.04	3165.53

Caltrans Standard Specifications Section 14-9.02, Air Pollution Control, a part of all construction contracts, requires that contractors comply with all federal, state, and local rules, regulations, statutes, and ordinances related to air quality, some of which also reduce GHG emissions. Measures to reduce construction GHG emissions include maintenance of construction equipment and vehicles, limiting construction vehicle idling time, and scheduling and routing of construction traffic to reduce engine emissions.

CEQA Conclusion

While the project will result in GHG emissions during construction, it is anticipated that the project will not result in any increase in operational GHG emissions. While it is Caltrans' determination that in the absence of further regulatory or scientific information related to GHG emissions and CEQA significance, it is too speculative to make a significance determination regarding the project's direct impact and its contribution on the cumulative scale to climate change, Caltrans is firmly committed to implementing measures to help reduce GHG emissions. These measures are outlined in the following section.

Greenhouse Gas Reduction Strategies

Statewide Efforts

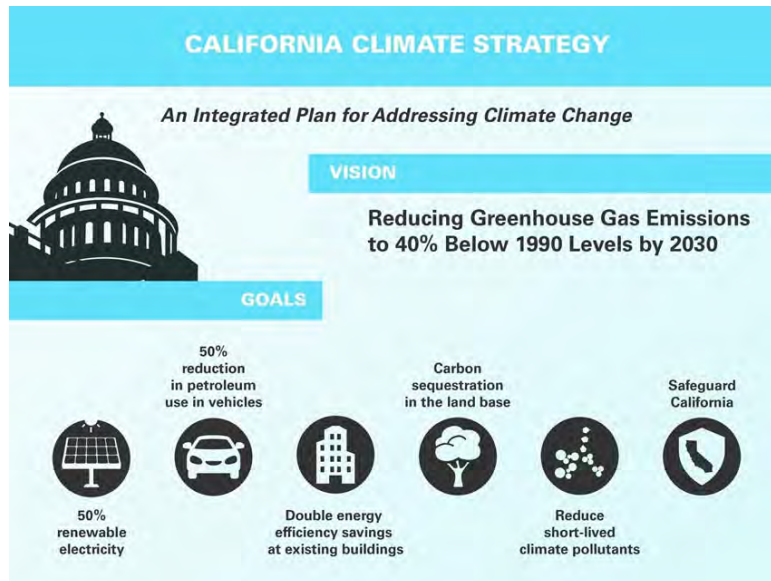
In an effort to further the vision of California's GHG reduction targets outlined in AB 32 and SB 32, Governor Jerry Brown identified key climate change strategy pillars (concepts). These pillars highlight the idea that several major areas of the California economy will need to reduce emissions to meet the 2030 GHG emissions target. These pillars are (1) reducing today's petroleum use in cars and trucks by up to 50 percent; (2) increasing from one-third to 50 percent

¹² Gases are converted to CO₂e by multiplying by their Global Warming Potential (GWP). Specifically, GWP is a measure of how much energy the emissions of 1 ton of a gas will absorb over a given period of time, relative to the emissions of 1 ton of carbon dioxide (CO₂).

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our electricity derived from renewable sources; (3) doubling the energy efficiency savings achieved at existing buildings and making heating fuels cleaner; (4) reducing the release of methane, black carbon, and other short-lived climate pollutants; (5) managing farm and rangelands, forests, and wetlands so they can store carbon; and (6) periodically updating the state's climate adaptation strategy, *Safeguarding California*.

Figure 2.1.7-2: The Governor's Climate Change Pillars: 2030 GHG Reduction Goals



The transportation sector is integral to the people and economy of California. To achieve GHG emission reduction goals, it is vital that we build on our past successes in reducing criteria and toxic air pollutants from transportation and goods movement activities. GHG emission reductions will come from cleaner vehicle technologies, lower-carbon fuels, and reduction of vehicle miles traveled. One of Governor Brown's key pillars sets the ambitious goal of reducing today's petroleum use in cars and trucks by up to 50 percent by 2030.

Governor Jerry Brown called for support to manage natural and working lands, including forests, rangelands, farms, wetlands, and soils, so they can store carbon. These lands have the ability to remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere through biological processes, and to then sequester carbon in above- and below-ground matter.

Caltrans Activities

Caltrans continues to be involved on the Governor's Climate Action Team as the ARB works to implement EOs S-3-05 and S-01-07 and help achieve the targets set forth in AB 32. EO B-30-15, issued in April 2015, and SB 32 (2016), set a new interim target to cut GHG emissions to 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030. The following major initiatives are underway at Caltrans to help meet these targets.

California Transportation Plan (CTP 2040)

The California Transportation Plan (CTP) is a statewide, long-range transportation plan to meet our future mobility needs and reduce GHG emissions. The CTP defines performance-based

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goals, policies, and strategies to achieve our collective vision for California's future statewide, integrated, multimodal transportation system. It serves as an umbrella document for all of the other statewide transportation planning documents.

SB 391 (Liu 2009) requires the CTP to meet California's climate change goals under AB 32. Accordingly, the CTP 2040 identifies the statewide transportation system needed to achieve maximum feasible GHG emission reductions while meeting the state's transportation needs. While MPOs have primary responsibility for identifying land use patterns to help reduce GHG emissions, CTP 2040 identifies additional strategies in Pricing, Transportation Alternatives, Mode Shift, and Operational Efficiency.

Caltrans Strategic Management Plan

The Strategic Management Plan, released in 2015, creates a performance-based framework to preserve the environment and reduce GHG emissions, among other goals. Specific performance targets in the plan that will help to reduce GHG emissions include:

- Increasing percentage of non-auto mode share
- Reducing VMT per capita
- Reducing Caltrans' internal operational (buildings, facilities, and fuel) GHG emissions

Funding and Technical Assistance Programs

In addition to developing plans and performance targets to reduce GHG emissions, Caltrans also administers several funding and technical assistance programs that have GHG reduction benefits. These include the Bicycle Transportation Program, Safe Routes to School, Transportation Enhancement Funds, and Transit Planning Grants. A more extensive description of these programs can be found in Caltrans Activities to Address Climate Change (2013).

Caltrans Director's Policy 30 (DP-30) Climate Change (June 22, 2012) is intended to establish a department policy that will ensure coordinated efforts to incorporate climate change into departmental decisions and activities.

Caltrans Activities to Address Climate Change (April 2013) provides a comprehensive overview of activities undertaken by Caltrans statewide to reduce GHG emissions resulting from agency operations.

Project-Level GHG Reduction Strategies

The following measures will also be implemented in the project to reduce GHG emissions and potential climate change impacts from the project.

- Caltrans Standard Specifications Sections 7-1.02C, Emissions Reduction, and 14-9.02, Air Pollution Control, a part of all construction contracts, require that contractors certify awareness of and comply with all federal, state, and local rules, regulations, statutes, and ordinances related to air quality, some of which also reduce GHG emissions.
- All construction equipment and vehicles will be properly tuned and maintained to minimize emissions.
- Construction vehicle idling time will be limited to 2 minutes.
- A transportation construction management plan will be developed to minimize construction traffic delays and reduce engine emissions.

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- This project will improve bike and pedestrian connectivity to the San Francisco Bay Trail and all intersections within the project area will become controlled which increases bike and pedestrian safety. There will also be the construction of an ADA-compliant ramp on the East side of I-80 which will serve bicyclists and pedestrians.
- This project will require landscaping, the additional trees and other plants absorb carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and release oxygen in the process.
- Concrete will be made with fly ash per Caltrans standard specification 90.
- Prepare a transportation construction plan for all phases of construction.
- Establish construction phasing/staging schedule and sequence that minimizes impacts of a work zone on traffic by using operationally-sensitive phasing and staging throughout the life of the project.
- Identify arrival/departure times for trucks and construction workers to avoid peak periods of adjacent street traffic and minimize traffic affects.
- Identify optimal delivery and haul routes to and from the site to minimize impacts to traffic, transit, pedestrians, and bicyclists.
- Identify appropriate detour routes for bicycles and pedestrians in areas affected by construction.
- Provide current and/or real-time information to road users regarding the project work zone (e.g., changeable message sign to notify road users of lane and road closures and work activities, temporary conventional signs to guide motorists through the work zone).

Adaptation Strategies

“Adaptation strategies” refer to how Caltrans and others can plan for the effects of climate change on the state’s transportation infrastructure and strengthen or protect the facilities from damage—or, put another way, planning and design for resilience. Climate change is expected to produce increased variability in precipitation, rising temperatures, rising sea levels, variability in storm surges and their intensity, and the frequency and intensity of wildfires. These changes may affect the transportation infrastructure in various ways, such as damage to roadbeds from longer periods of intense heat; increasing storm damage from flooding and erosion; and inundation from rising sea levels. These effects will vary by location and may, in the most extreme cases, require that a facility be relocated or redesigned. These types of impacts to the transportation infrastructure may also have economic and strategic ramifications.

Federal Efforts

At the federal level, the Climate Change Adaptation Task Force, co-chaired by the CEQ, the Office of Science and Technology Policy (OSTP), and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), released its interagency task force progress report on October 28, 2011¹³, outlining the federal government's progress in expanding and strengthening the nation's capacity to better understand, prepare for, and respond to extreme events and other climate change impacts. The report provided an update on actions in key areas of federal adaptation, including: building resilience in local communities, safeguarding critical natural resources such as fresh water, and providing accessible climate information and tools to help decision-makers manage climate risks.

The federal Department of Transportation issued *U.S. DOT Policy Statement on Climate Adaptation* in June 2011, committing to “integrate consideration of climate change impacts and

¹³ <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/administration/eop/ceq/initiatives/resilience>

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adaptation into the planning, operations, policies, and programs of DOT in order to ensure that taxpayer resources are invested wisely and that transportation infrastructure, services and operations remain effective in current and future climate conditions.”¹⁴

To further the DOT Policy Statement, on December 15, 2014, FHWA issued order 5520 (*Transportation System Preparedness and Resilience to Climate Change and Extreme Weather Events*).¹⁵ This directive established FHWA policy to strive to identify the risks of climate change and extreme weather events to current and planned transportation systems. The FHWA will work to integrate consideration of these risks into its planning, operations, policies, and programs in order to promote preparedness and resilience; safeguard federal investments; and ensure the safety, reliability, and sustainability of the nation’s transportation systems.

FHWA has developed guidance and tools for transportation planning that fosters resilience to climate effects and sustainability at the federal, state, and local levels.¹⁶

State Efforts

On November 14, 2008, then-Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger signed EO S-13-08, which directed a number of state agencies to address California’s vulnerability to sea-level rise caused by climate change. This EO set in motion several agencies and actions to address the concern of sea-level rise and directed all state agencies planning to construct projects in areas vulnerable to future sea-level rise to consider a range of sea-level rise scenarios for the years 2050 and 2100, assess project vulnerability and, to the extent feasible, reduce expected risks and increase resiliency to sea-level rise. Sea-level rise estimates should also be used in conjunction with information on local uplift and subsidence, coastal erosion rates, predicted higher high-water levels, and storm surge and storm wave data.

Governor Schwarzenegger also requested the National Academy of Sciences to prepare an assessment report to recommend how California should plan for future sea-level rise. The final report, *Sea-Level Rise for the Coasts of California, Oregon, and Washington* (Sea-Level Rise Assessment Report)¹⁷ was released in June 2012 and included relative sea-level rise projections for the three states, taking into account coastal erosion rates, tidal impacts, El Niño and La Niña events, storm surge, and land subsidence rates; and the range of uncertainty in selected sea-level rise projections. It provided a synthesis of existing information on projected sea-level rise impacts to state infrastructure (such as roads, public facilities, and beaches), natural areas, and coastal and marine ecosystems; and a discussion of future research needs regarding sea-level rise.

In response to EO S-13-08, the California Natural Resources Agency (Resources Agency), in coordination with local, regional, state, federal, and public and private entities, developed *The California Climate Adaptation Strategy* (Dec 2009),¹⁸ which summarized the best available science on climate change impacts to California, assessed California’s vulnerability to the identified impacts, and outlined solutions that can be implemented within and across state agencies to promote resiliency. The adaptation strategy was updated and rebranded in 2014 as *Safeguarding California: Reducing Climate Risk* (Safeguarding California Plan).

¹⁴ https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/sustainability/resilience/policy_and_guidance/usdot.cfm

¹⁵ <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/legregs/directives/orders/5520.cfm>

¹⁶ <https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/sustainability/resilience/>

¹⁷ *Sea Level Rise for the Coasts of California, Oregon, and Washington: Past, Present, and Future* (2012) is available at: http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=13389.

¹⁸ <http://www.climatechange.ca.gov/adaptation/strategy/index.html>

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Governor Jerry Brown enhanced the overall adaptation planning effort by signing EO B-30-15 in April 2015, requiring state agencies to factor climate change into all planning and investment decisions. In March 2016, sector-specific Implementation Action Plans that demonstrate how state agencies are implementing EO B-30-15 were added to the Safeguarding California Plan. This effort represents a multi-agency, cross-sector approach to addressing adaptation to climate change-related events statewide.

EO S-13-08 also gave rise to the *State of California Sea-Level Rise Interim Guidance Document* (SLR Guidance), produced by the Coastal and Ocean Working Group of the California Climate Action Team (CO-CAT), of which Caltrans is a member. First published in 2010, the document provided “guidance for incorporating Sea Level Rise (SLR) projections into planning and decision making for projects in California,” specifically, “information and recommendations to enhance consistency across agencies in their development of approaches to SLR.”¹⁹

Climate change adaptation for transportation infrastructure involves long-term planning and risk management to address vulnerabilities in the transportation system from increased precipitation, and flooding; the increased frequency and intensity of storms and wildfires; rising temperatures; and rising sea levels. Caltrans is actively engaged in working towards identifying these risks throughout the state and will work to incorporate this information into all planning and investment decisions as directed in EO B-30-15.

The project is within the proximity of the San Francisco Bay, which may potentially require approval from the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC) and is within a location eventually subject to SLR. BCDC would be consulted to determine if a permit would be required and to identify any potential issues that could impact the Bay or shoreline. Please refer to the Ocean Protection Council (OPC) mapping below that depicts the anticipated SLR within the project area under the 2050 scenario (Figure 2.1.7-3).

2018 guidance on future sea level rise published by the Ocean Protection Council determined that sea levels in San Francisco, California are projected to rise as follows:

Table 2.1.7-2: Projected Sea Level Rise (in feet) for San Francisco

Year	Median (50% Probability)	Likely Range (66% Probability)	1 in 20 Chance (5% Probability)	1 in 200 Chance (0.5% Probability)	Extreme Risk Aversion Scenario
2050	0.9	0.6 – 1.1	1.4	1.9	2.7
2100 (High Emissions)	2.5	1.6 – 3.4	4.4	6.9	10.2

The SLR information from the Ocean Protection Council (OPC) guidance, is available at http://www.opc.ca.gov/webmaster/ftp/pdf/agenda_items/20180314/Item3_Exhibit-A_OPC_SLR_Guidance-rd3.pdf. A SLR risk screening for the proposed project was conducted in the accordance with OPC. According to Figure 2.1.7-3 and compared to the information stated in Table 2.1.7-2, both provided by the OPC, the proposed project is in a low-lying area subject to SLR inundation impacts. The project would not be directly impacted during its

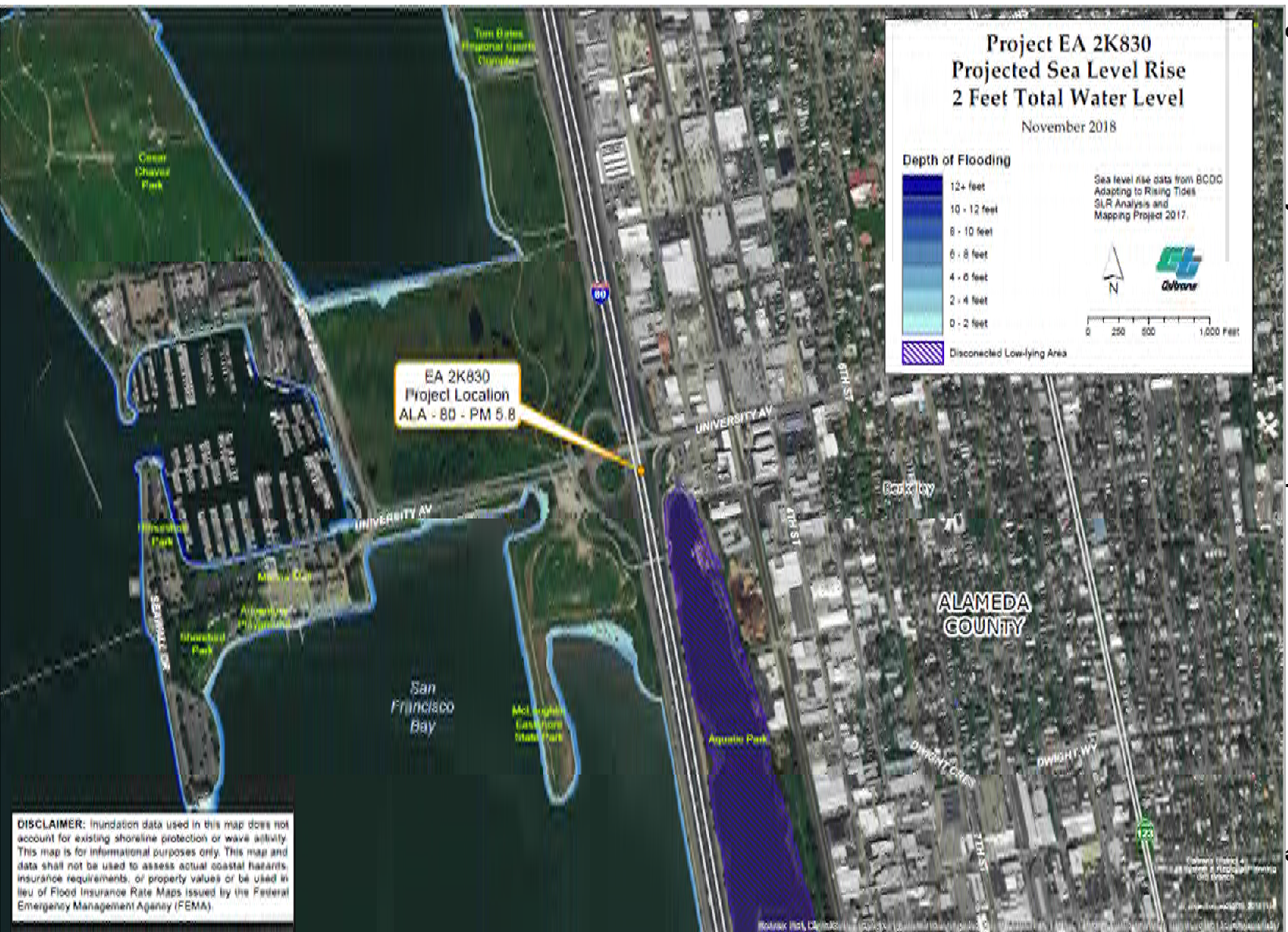
¹⁹ <http://www.opc.ca.gov/2013/04/update-to-the-sea-level-rise-guidance-document/>

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anticipated lifespan of 20 years (the lifespan of the pavement). The project has no anticipated risk of future damage from SLR.

The project has no anticipated impacts involving erosion, wave action, coastal or riverine flood hazards, tsunamis, SLR, or beach nourishment.

Figure 2.1.7-3: Projected Sea Level Rise: Represents 2 feet of Sea Level Rise (year 2050)



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2.1.8 HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Would the project:	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Be located on a site which is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
g) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

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h) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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A Hazardous Waste Study was approved for the project on 5/1/2018.

CEQA Significance Determinations for Hazards and Hazardous Materials

No Impact

A–H

This project would not create a significant hazard to the public or the environment. The route has been used as a highway for many years, and there is the potential for soil pollution from motor vehicle exhaust (from aurally deposited lead due to historically leaded gas). Any contamination in the soils closer to the edge of the pavement would be located and addressed by the Hazardous Waste Branch who would address any soil pollution during the design phase of the project.

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2.1.9 HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

Would the project:	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on- or off-site?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or substantially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner which would result in flooding on- or off-site?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Create or contribute runoff water which would exceed the capacity of existing or planned stormwater drainage systems or provide substantial additional sources of polluted runoff?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f) Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
g) Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

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mapped on a federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?				
h) Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures which would impede or redirect flood flows?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
i) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
j) Inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

A Water Quality Study was approved for the proposed project on 3/28/2018.

CEQA Significance Determinations for Hydrology and Water Quality

Affected Environment

The project area is surrounded by the San Francisco Bay with anticipated groundwater throughout. There are no existing drainage facilities on the structure and no existing water quality improvement devices.

No Impact

C-J

Caltrans will assess the condition of the City of Berkeley's existing storm drain culvert. The project will increase runoff due to additional impervious surfaces; however, the project will also incorporate permanent stormwater treatment measures. No relocation or modification to the existing storm drain culvert is anticipated. The existing storm drain culvert will be protected in place during construction. Detailed plans and specifications will be submitted to the City for review and approval before construction begins.

The project has no anticipated impacts involving erosion, wave action, coastal or riverine flood hazards, tsunamis, SLR, or beach nourishment.

Less Than Significant Impact

A-B

This project would create over 1 acre in disturbed soil area and has a potential to interfere with groundwater recharge within the project area. A Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) would be prepared by the construction contractor and approved by Caltrans prior to the start of construction to minimize pollution and stormwater runoff. The SWPPP would address potential temporary impacts and permanent impacts via the implementation of appropriate Best Management Practices (BMPs).

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The proposed soil treatments would ensure the structure can withstand liquefaction during a seismic event may potentially displace ground water within the project area. The existing groundwater within the project area does not serve any municipal and domestic water supply, industrial process supply, industrial water supply, or agricultural water supply. Therefore, while there may be some impacts to water quality, these impacts would be less than significant.

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2.1.10 LAND USE AND PLANNING

Would the project:	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Physically divide an established community?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

CEQA Significance Determinations for Land Use and Planning

No Impact

A–C

The proposed project complies with the stated goals of the (2016 Alameda) Countywide Transportation Plan, including goals for movement of goods. This project would allow freight vehicles more direct access to and from the Port of Oakland as the reliability of freight movement in these corridors is essential to the nation's economy. Therefore, there would be no impacts to land use and planning.

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2.1.11 MINERAL RESOURCES

Would the project:	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally-important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

CEQA Significance Determinations for Mineral Resources

No Impact

A–B

There are no mineral resources mapped within the vicinity of the proposed project. Therefore, implementation of the project would not result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site. Furthermore, the project would not result in the loss of availability of a known mineral resource.

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2.1.12 NOISE

Would the project result in:	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Exposure of persons to or generation of noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) For a project located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f) For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

The Noise Study for the proposed project was approved 6/6/2018.

No Impact

A-F

The proposed work is not considered Type 1 based on 23 CFR 772 and Caltrans' Noise Analysis Protocol. Neither a Noise Abatement Decision Report nor a Traffic Noise Study are required. However, a Construction Noise Study (June 2018) was performed because the project extends to Fifth Street, with sensitive receptors within 500 feet of the project area. The study concluded that under all alternatives, construction noise levels throughout the project duration would be at or below existing ambient hourly average and maximum noise levels during daytime and nighttime hours at the nearby residences, and no additional mitigation would be needed to reduce noise.

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Avoidance and Minimization Measures

All construction equipment should conform to Section 14-8.02, Noise Control, of the latest Caltrans Standard Specifications.

2.1.13 POPULATION AND HOUSING

Would the project:	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

CEQA Significance Determinations for Population and Housing

Affected Environment

The project area currently has a transient homeless encampment of approximately 10–40 individuals (based on periodic visual surveys) located within the project area.

No Impact

A–C

This project would not cause population growth, effect housing, and would not displace individuals from housing.

Avoidance and Minimization Measures

Caltrans would follow its Illegal Encampment Removal Policy and present and post a 72-hour “Notice to Vacate” for all occupants within the project area to vacate the premises with their personal property. The notice would state that abandoned personal property would be disposed of after the date indicated on it. Items of some apparent value would be collected and stored for no less than ninety days. The “Notice to Vacate” would have information where social services and shelter may be obtained in the community in the form of a list of service providers with addresses and telephone number contacts. No work would be done while encampment occupants are still present within the project area.

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2.1.14 PUBLIC SERVICES

a) Would the project result in substantial adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
Fire protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Police protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Schools?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Parks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Other public facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

CEQA Significance Determinations for Public Services

No Impact

A

The proposed project would maintain acceptable service ratios or response times. Furthermore, it would not impede performance objectives for any public services. There are multiple freeway on and off-ramps within two miles with Ashby Avenue and Powell Street in the Westbound direction and Gilman Street and Buchanan Street in the Eastbound direction. No area would be isolated by the closures caused by this project and there would be a Traffic Management Plan (TMP) implemented during construction activities that would result in detours. The closures of this project would not affect fire protection, police protection, schools, parks or other public facilities, due the TMP and implemented detours. There would be no impact on public services.

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2.1.15 RECREATION

	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

CEQA Significance Determinations for Recreation

No Impact

A-B

The proposed project would improve facilities which would provide better connectivity to McLaughlin Eastshore State Park, including areas known as Berkeley Meadow and Brickyard Cove. The project would improve connectivity from University Overcrossing to the San Francisco Bay Trail, as well as the Berkeley Pedestrian Overcrossing. The improvements would include an ADA-compliant ramp from the University Avenue Overcrossing and areas for pedestrians to cross the Eastbound on- and off-ramps safely.

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2.1.16 TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC

Would the project:	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance or policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system, taking into account all modes of transportation including mass transit and non-motorized travel and relevant components of the circulation system, including but not limited to intersections, streets, highways and freeways, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and mass transit?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Conflict with an applicable congestion management program, including, but not limited to level of service standards and travel demand measures, or other standards established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Result in inadequate emergency access?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f) Conflict with adopted policies, plans or programs regarding public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities, or otherwise decrease the performance or safety of such facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

The Traffic Operation Analysis Report (TOAR) was completed on 9/19/2018.

CEQA Significance Determinations for Transportation/Traffic

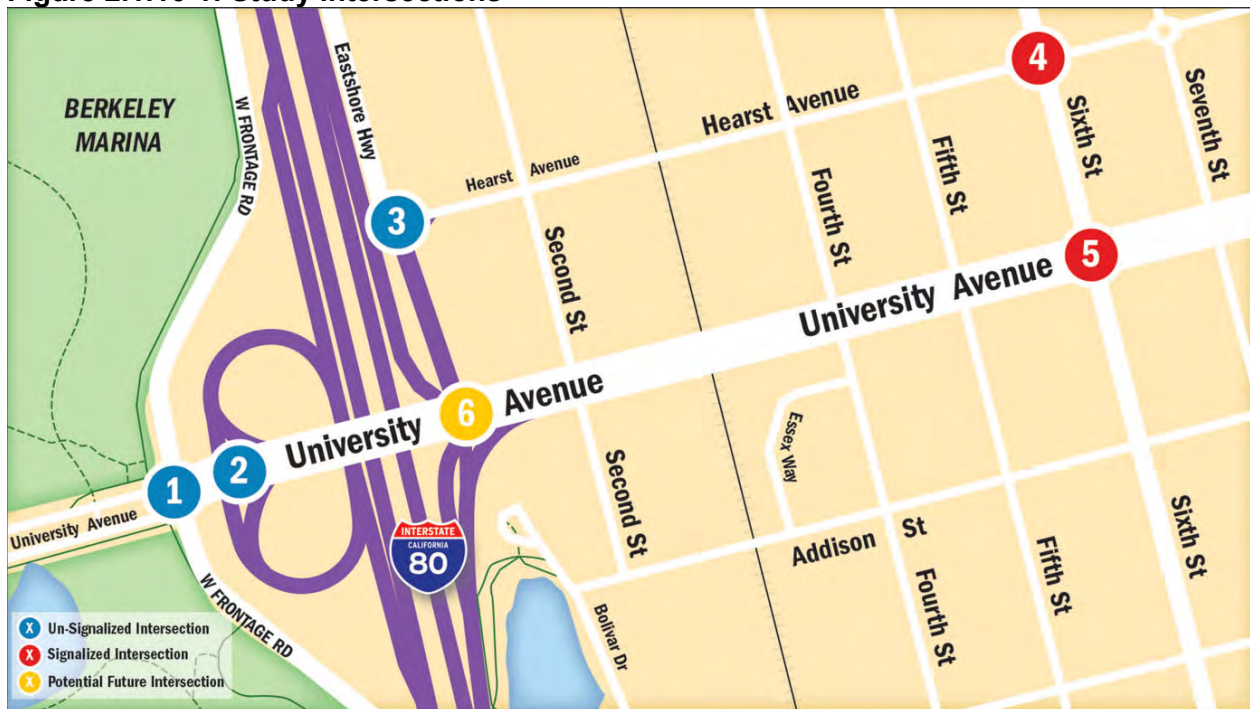
No Impact

A–F

The proposed project would not conflict with any transportation plans or congestion management programs. It would not result in a change in air traffic patterns or increase hazards due to design. The project would not result in inadequate emergency access and would not conflict with any public transportation or bicycle and pedestrian policies, plans, or programs. The project would not further degrade the traffic within the area or impact any transportation plans. Therefore, the project would have no impact to traffic resources.

The traffic forecasting analysis in the TOAR did find that the level of service (LOS), a measurement of vehicle traffic flow further defined in Table 2.1.16.2, was different at six key study interchanges for each alternative. The following discussion defines which intersections were studied, and the projected LOS at these intersections for each alternative.

Figure 2.1.16-1: Study Intersections



Traffic forecasting was conducted using the Alameda Countywide Travel Demand Model maintained by Alameda County Transportation Commission (ACTC). The forecast model generated the information for the opening year of 2022 (the year the project construction would be completed) and the design year of 2042 (20 years after the completed construction of the project), predicting traffic volumes for the project alternatives. The following study intersections, shown in Figure 2.1.16-1, and listed in Table 2.1.16-1 along with the peak hours (the hour in the AM and PM where the highest vehicle congestion occurs), were identified for analysis to address the traffic circulation around the overcrossing. Individual peak hours for each intersection were used to analyze worst-case traffic conditions.

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Table 2.1.16-1: Study Intersection Peak Hours

Number	Intersection	AM Peak Hour	PM Peak Hour
1	W. Frontage Road/ University Avenue	7:45 – 8:45	4:45 – 5:45
2	I-80 WB Ramps/ University Avenue	8:15 – 9:15	5:15 – 6:15
3	I-80 EB Off-Ramp/ Hearst Avenue	8:00 – 9:00	5:00 – 6:00
4	Sixth Street/ Hearst Avenue	8:15 – 9:15	4:45 – 5:45
5	Sixth Street / University Avenue	8:00 – 9:00	4:45 – 5:45
6	I-80 EB Ramps/ University Avenue	N/A	N/A

For I-80 EB Ramps/University Avenue there are no existing conditions for the intersection as it is a proposed intersection for alternatives 3 and 4.

Table 2.1.16-2: Intersection Level of Service Thresholds

Delay (second/vehicle)		
LOS	Signalized	Un-signalized
A	Less than or equal to 10	Less than or equal to 10
B	>10-20	>10-15
C	>20-35	>15-25
D	>35-55	>25-35
E	>55-80	>35-50
F	>80	>50

Table 2.1.16-2 defines the grading of LOS. LOS D is used as the acceptable LOS and LOS E and LOS F are considered unacceptable based on the Caltrans criteria.

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Table 2.1.16-3: Current Conditions

INT	INTERSECTIONS	CONTROL (Existing)	ALTERNATIVE 1 (Existing Conditions)			
			AM Peak		PM Peak	
			Delay (sec)	LOS	Delay (sec)	LOS
1	W. Frontage Road / University Avenue	All Way Stop	77.0	F	110.1	F
2	I-80 Westbound Ramps / University Avenue	Two Way Stop	17.7	C	63.7	F
3	I-80 Eastbound Off Ramp / Hearst Avenue	All Way Stop	10.0	A	8.0	A
4	Sixth Street / Hearst Avenue	Signal	9.3	A	10.6	B
5	Sixth Street / University Avenue	Signal	36.0	D	51.0	D
6	I-80 Eastbound Ramps / University Avenue	Free	N/A			

Currently, all the study intersections operate at an acceptable LOS, except for intersections 1 and 2. As shown in Table 2.1.16-3, the intersection of University Avenue and the West Frontage Road is at LOS F in both the AM and PM peak hours. The intersection of the University Avenue and the I-80 WB ramps operates at LOS F in the PM peak hour. For I-80 EB Ramps/University Avenue there are no existing conditions for the intersection as it is a proposed intersection for alternatives 3 and 4.

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Table 2.1.16-4: Opening Year 2022

ID	Intersection	Alternative 1/2 (No Build)				Alternative 3 (Roundabouts at I-80 EB/WB Ramps/Frontage Road)				Alternative 4 (Roundabout at I-80 WB/Frontage Road, Signal at I-80 EB Ramps)			
		AM Peak		PM Peak		AM Peak		PM Peak		AM Peak		PM Peak	
		Delay	LOS	Delay	LOS	Delay	LOS	Delay	LOS	Delay	LOS	Delay	LOS
1	W. Frontage Road/University Avenue	96.1	F	128.5	F	10.9 [6.1]	B [A]	9.2 [6.6]	A [A]	10.9 [6.1]	B [A]	9.2 [6.6]	A [A]
2	I-80 Westbound Ramps /University Avenue	19.3	C	82.1	F								
3	I-80 Eastbound Off Ramp /Hearst Avenue	10.4	B	8.2	A	10.4	B	8.2	A	10.4	B	8.2	A
4	Sixth Street/ Hearst Avenue	10.1	B	11.4	B	9.6	A	11.1	B	9.6	A	11.1	B
5	Sixth Street/ University Avenue	38.4	D	57.1	E	38.2	D	56.1	E	38.2	D	56.1	E
6	I-80 Eastbound Ramps/ University Avenue*	NA				8.1 [3.6]	A [A]	11.6 [4.0]	B [A]	11.0	B	11.7	B

Table 2.1.16-4 shows the projected LOS for the six study intersections in 2022, when construction on the proposed project would be complete. The table indicates notable improvements at the study intersections. Alternatives 1 and 2 had the same results as the no-build, as they do not propose changes to lane configurations or intersection controls. Intersection 5 shows that traffic would degrade the current condition of LOS D to LOS E in the PM peak hour for all alternatives. Alternatives 1 and 2 and the no-build would stay at the same LOS in the opening year as current conditions. Alternatives 3 and 4 show improvements from LOS F to B between the existing conditions and the opening year in both the AM and PM peak hours for intersections 1 and 2. Under Alternative 3, Intersection 4 would also improve from LOS B to LOS A in the AM Peak in 2022.

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Table 2.1.16-5: Design Year 2042

ID	Intersection	Alternative 1/2 (No Build)				Alternative 3 (Roundabouts at I-80 EB/WB Ramps/Frontage Road)				Alternative 4 (Roundabout at I-80 WB/Frontage Road, Signal at I-80 EB Ramps)			
		AM Peak		PM Peak		AM Peak		PM Peak		AM Peak		PM Peak	
		Delay	LOS	Delay	LOS	Delay	LOS	Delay	LOS	Delay	LOS	Delay	LOS
1	W. Frontage Road/University Avenue	184.2	F	263.8	F	24.1 [8.6]	C [A]	24.2 [11.5]	C [B]	24.1 [8.6]	C [A]	24.2 [11.5]	C [B]
2	I-80 Westbound Ramps /University Avenue	33.8	D	320.1	F								
3	I-80 Eastbound Off Ramp /Hearst Avenue	11.2	B	9.9	A	11.2	B	9.9	A	11.2	B	9.9	A
4	Sixth Street/ Hearst Avenue	15.4	B	22.2	C	14.4	B	21.0	C	14.4	B	21.0	C
5	Sixth Street/ University Avenue	47.9	D	89.7	F	49.6	D	90.1	F	49.6	D	90.1	F
6	I-80 Eastbound Ramps/ University Avenue*	NA				9.4 [3.9]	A [A]	18.3 [4.4]	C [A]	11.8	B	14.7	B

Table 2.1.16-6 shows the projected LOS for the six study intersections in the design year of 2042, 20 years after the project has been constructed. The table indicates an improvement at the study intersections. Alternatives 1 and 2 had the same results as the no-build, as they do not propose changes to lane configurations or intersection controls. This forecast shows that at intersection 5, traffic degrades to a LOS of F in the PM peak for all alternatives. Alternatives 1, 2, and the no-build would operate at a similar LOS to the current conditions. Alternatives 3 and 4 improve traffic conditions in the design year for intersections 1 and 2 when compared to existing conditions.

Avoidance and Minimization Measures

A Traffic Management Plan (TMP) would be developed and implemented for traffic during construction. TMP encompasses activities that are implemented to minimize traffic delays that may result from lane restrictions or closures in a work zone. TMP strategies are designed to improve mobility, as well as safety for the traveling public and highway workers.

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2.1.17 TRIBAL CULTURAL RESOURCES

Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, defined in Public Resources Code section 21074 as either a site, feature, place, cultural landscape that is geographically defined in terms of the size and scope of the landscape, sacred place, or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe, and that is:	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Listed or eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources, or in a local register of historical resources as defined in Public Resources Code section 5020.1(k), or	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) A resource determined by the lead agency, in its discretion and supported by substantial evidence, to be significant pursuant to criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resources Code Section 5024.1. In applying the criteria set forth in subdivision (c) of Public Resource Code Section 5024.1, the lead agency shall consider the significance of the resource to a California Native American tribe.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

CEQA Significance Determinations for Tribal Cultural Resources

Caltrans contacted the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) on August 7, 2017, requesting a search of their sacred lands file and a list of interested Native American parties. Individuals and tribes provided by the NAHC were contacted on August 14, 2017. A field visit was conducted with representatives from the Ohlone tribe on December 7, 2017. Subsurface fieldwork was performed in February 2018, to confirm the presence or absence of archaeological resources, and all fieldwork was conducted in the presence of a Native American monitor. Consultation is ongoing.

No Impact

A-B

The proposed project would not cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource, feature, place, cultural landscape, sacred place or object with cultural value to a California Native American tribe.

*University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project
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Avoidance and Minimization Measures

A Native American monitor will be present during ground-disturbing construction activities in culturally sensitive areas and as determined through continuing consultation with tribal representatives.

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Initial Study with Negative Declaration*

2.1.18 UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

Would the project:	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Require or result in the construction of new water or wastewater treatment facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider which serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f) Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
g) Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

*University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project
Initial Study with Negative Declaration*

CEQA Significance Determinations for Utilities and Service Systems

No Impact

A–G

The proposed project would not create additional wastewater, create/treat solid waste, require new stormwater drainage that would result in a significant environmental effect, require additional water supplies, or be served by landfill.

*University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project
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2.1.19 MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

	Significant and Unavoidable Impact	Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
a) Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? ("Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are considerable when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

CEQA Significance Determinations for Mandatory Findings of Significance

No Impact

A–C

The proposed project would not degrade the environment, would not have a cumulative impact, and would not result in indirect or direct environmental impacts on human beings.

*University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project
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Chapter 3 – Comments and Coordination

3.1 Comments and Coordination

Early and continuing coordination with public agencies and the general public is an essential part of the environmental process. This coordination helps the agency identify potential impacts and avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures and related environmental requirements. Agency consultation and public participation for this project have been accomplished through a variety of formal and informal methods, including interagency coordination meetings, public meetings, public notices, and solicitation of public input. This chapter summarizes the results of Caltrans' efforts to fully identify, address, and resolve project-related issues through early and continuing coordination.

The Initial Study with Proposed Negative Declaration (IS) for the University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project was released on November 16, 2018. Caltrans' published a Notice of Availability for this project on November 23, 2018, via a quarter-page ad run in the East Bay Times. On November 30, 2018, a quarter-page ad was run in the Berkeley Voice/EI Cerrito Journal. Between November 25, 2018, and November 31, 2018, there were 75,000 digital banner ads run on eastbaytimes.com announcing the availability of the IS. The notices also contained an invitation to upcoming informational meetings and the deadline for public comments. On November 27, 2018, the Notice of Availability was email blasted by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission. On November 29, 2018, the Notice of Availability was posted on the Alameda CTC's Twitter and Facebook. In addition to standard releases of public information to media news outlets, social media postings were published by Caltrans on Facebook and Twitter.

A public meeting was held near the project area at the Berkeley Public Library branch at 2090 Kittredge Street, in Berkeley, an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)-compliant facility. This meeting occurred during the public review period, on December 4, 2018, from 5–7 p.m. There was also an online public meeting at <http://www.dot.ca.gov/d4/80universityclearance>, from December 5–18, 2018. The purpose of these meetings was to give the public an opportunity to view informational exhibits and ask questions of project team members. The number of attendees at the meeting was 10.

3.2 Comments Received and Responses

Caltrans filed a Notice of Completion for the Draft Initial Study with Negative Declaration with the State Clearinghouse on November 19, 2018. The filing of the Notice of Completion began a public review and comment period that extended from November 19, 2018, through December 18, 2018. State and local agencies, organizations, and members of the public submitted comments. Each comment letter, e-mail, or comment card that was received was reviewed and substantive comments were identified. This chapter presents the comments that were received and the responses to those comments. The comments are presented in the following order:

- State agencies
- Local agencies
- Organizations
- Individuals

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*University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project
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Comment 1, Native American Heritage Commission

STATE OF CALIFORNIA

Edmund G. Brown, Jr., Governor

NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE COMMISSION

Environmental and Cultural Department
1550 Harbor Blvd., Suite 100
West Sacramento, CA 95691
Phone (916) 373-3710
Fax (916) 373-6471



November 29, 2018

Rebecca De Pont/ Cristin Hallissy
California Department of Transportation, District 4
111 Grand Avenue, MS-8B
Oakland, CA 94612

Also e-mailed to: cristin.hallissy@dot.ca.gov

Re: SCH# 2018112052, University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project; City of Berkeley, Alameda County, California

Dear Ms. De Pont and Ms. Hallissy:

The Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) has reviewed the Negative Declaration prepared for the project referenced above. The review included the Project Description; and the CEQA Environmental Checklist, section 2.1.5, Cultural Resources and section 2.1.17, Tribal Cultural Resources prepared by the California Department of Transportation, District 4. We have the following concerns:

1-1

1. There is no documentation of **government-to-government consultation by the lead agency** under AB-52 with Native American tribes traditionally and culturally affiliated to the project area as required by statute, or that mitigation measures were developed in consultation with the tribes.

Please contact me at gayle.totton@nahc.ca.gov or call (916) 373-3714 if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Gayle Totton

Gayle Totton, B.S., M.A., Ph.D
Associate Governmental Project Analyst

Attachment

cc: State Clearinghouse

University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project Initial Study with Negative Declaration

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)¹, specifically Public Resources Code section 21084.1, states that a project that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource is a project that may have a significant effect on the environment.² If there is substantial evidence, in light of the whole record before a lead agency, that a project may have a significant effect on the environment, an environmental impact report (EIR) shall be prepared.³ In order to determine whether a project will cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource, a lead agency will need to determine whether there are historical resources with the area of project effect (APE).

CEQA was amended in 2014 by Assembly Bill 52. (AB 52).⁴ **AB 52 applies to any project for which a notice of preparation or a notice of negative declaration or mitigated negative declaration is filed on or after July 1, 2015.** AB 52 created a separate category for "tribal cultural resources"⁵, that now includes "a project with an effect that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a tribal cultural resource is a project that may have a significant effect on the environment."⁶ Public agencies shall, when feasible, avoid damaging effects to any tribal cultural resource.⁷ Your project may also be subject to **Senate Bill 18 (SB 18)** (Burton, Chapter 905, Statutes of 2004), Government Code 65352.3, if it also involves the adoption of or amendment to a general plan or a specific plan, or the designation or proposed designation of open space. **Both SB 18 and AB 52 have tribal consultation requirements.** Additionally, if your project is also subject to the federal National Environmental Policy Act (42 U.S.C. § 4321 et seq.) (NEPA), the tribal consultation requirements of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966⁸ may also apply.

Consult your legal counsel about compliance with AB 52 and SB 18 as well as compliance with any other applicable laws.

Agencies should be aware that AB 52 does not preclude agencies from initiating tribal consultation with tribes that are traditionally and culturally affiliated with their jurisdictions before the timeframes provided in AB 52. For that reason, we urge you to continue to request Native American Tribal Consultation Lists and Sacred Lands File searches from the NAHC. The request forms can be found online at: <http://nahc.ca.gov/resources/forms/>. Additional information regarding AB 52 can be found online at http://nahc.ca.gov/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/AB52TribalConsultation_CalEPAPDF.pdf, entitled "Tribal Consultation Under AB 52: Requirements and Best Practices".

The NAHC recommends lead agencies consult with all California Native American tribes that are traditionally and culturally affiliated with the geographic area of your proposed project as early as possible in order to avoid inadvertent discoveries of Native American human remains and best protect tribal cultural resources.

A brief summary of portions of AB 52 and SB 18 as well as the NAHC's recommendations for conducting cultural resources assessments is also attached.

Pertinent Statutory Information:

Under AB 52:

AB 52 has added to CEQA the additional requirements listed below, along with many other requirements:

Within fourteen (14) days of determining that an application for a project is complete or of a decision by a public agency to undertake a project, a **lead agency** shall provide formal notification to a designated contact of, or tribal representative of, traditionally and culturally affiliated California Native American tribes that have requested notice.

A **lead agency** shall begin the consultation process within 30 days of receiving a request for consultation from a California Native American tribe that is traditionally and culturally affiliated with the geographic area of the proposed project.⁹ and **prior to the release of a negative declaration, mitigated negative declaration or environmental impact report.** For purposes of AB 52, "consultation shall have the same meaning as provided in Gov. Code § 65352.4 (SB 18)."¹⁰

The following topics of consultation, if a tribe requests to discuss them, are mandatory topics of consultation:

- a. Alternatives to the project.
- b. Recommended mitigation measures.
- c. Significant effects.¹¹

1. The following topics are discretionary topics of consultation:

¹ Pub. Resources Code § 21000 et seq.

² Pub. Resources Code § 21084.1; Cal. Code Regs., tit.14, § 15064.5 (b); CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5 (b)

³ Pub. Resources Code § 21080 (d); Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, § 15064 subd.(a)(1); CEQA Guidelines § 15064 (a)(1)

⁴ Government Code 65352.3

⁵ Pub. Resources Code § 21074

⁶ Pub. Resources Code § 21084.2

⁷ Pub. Resources Code § 21084.3 (a)

⁸ 154 U.S.C. 300101, 36 C.F.R. § 800 et seq.

⁹ Pub. Resources Code § 21080.3.1, subds. (d) and (e)

¹⁰ Pub. Resources Code § 21080.3.1 (b)

¹¹ Pub. Resources Code § 21080.3.2 (a)

University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project Initial Study with Negative Declaration

- a. Type of environmental review necessary.
- b. Significance of the tribal cultural resources.
- c. Significance of the project's impacts on tribal cultural resources.

If necessary, project alternatives or appropriate measures for preservation or mitigation that the tribe may recommend to the lead agency.¹²

With some exceptions, any information, including but not limited to, the location, description, and use of tribal cultural resources submitted by a California Native American tribe during the environmental review process **shall not be included in the environmental document or otherwise disclosed by the lead agency or any other public agency to the public, consistent with Government Code sections 6254 (r) and 6254.10.** Any information submitted by a California Native American tribe during the consultation or environmental review process shall be published in a confidential appendix to the environmental document unless the tribe that provided the information consents, in writing, to the disclosure of some or all of the information to the public.¹³

If a project may have a significant impact on a tribal cultural resource, **the lead agency's environmental document shall discuss** both of the following:

- a. Whether the proposed project has a significant impact on an identified tribal cultural resource.
- b. Whether feasible alternatives or mitigation measures, including those measures that may be agreed to pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21082.3, subdivision (a), avoid or substantially lessen the impact on the identified tribal cultural resource.¹⁴

Consultation with a tribe shall be considered concluded when either of the following occurs:

- a. The parties agree to measures to mitigate or avoid a significant effect, if a significant effect exists, on a tribal cultural resource; or
- b. A party, acting in good faith and after reasonable effort, concludes that mutual agreement cannot be reached.¹⁵

Any mitigation measures agreed upon in the consultation conducted pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21080.3.2 **shall be recommended for inclusion in the environmental document and in an adopted mitigation monitoring and reporting program**, if determined to avoid or lessen the impact pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21082.3, subdivision (b), paragraph 2, and shall be fully enforceable.¹⁶

If mitigation measures recommended by the staff of the lead agency as a result of the consultation process are not included in the environmental document or if there are no agreed upon mitigation measures at the conclusion of consultation, or if consultation does not occur, and if substantial evidence demonstrates that a project will cause a significant effect to a tribal cultural resource, **the lead agency shall consider feasible mitigation** pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21084.3 (b).¹⁷

An environmental impact report **may not be certified**, nor may a mitigated negative declaration or a negative declaration be adopted unless one of the following occurs:

- a. The consultation process between the tribes and the lead agency has occurred as provided in Public Resources Code sections 21080.3.1 and 21080.3.2 and concluded pursuant to Public Resources Code section 21080.3.2.
- b. The tribe that requested consultation failed to provide comments to the lead agency or otherwise failed to engage in the consultation process.
- c. The lead agency provided notice of the project to the tribe in compliance with Public Resources Code section 21080.3.1 (d) and the tribe failed to request consultation within 30 days.¹⁸

This process should be documented in the Tribal Cultural Resources section of your environmental document.

Under SB 18:

Government Code § 65352.3 (a) (1) requires consultation with Native Americans on general plan proposals for the purposes of "preserving or mitigating impacts to places, features, and objects described § 5097.9 and § 5091.993 of the Public Resources Code that are located within the city or county's jurisdiction. Government Code § 65560 (a), (b), and (c) provides for consultation with Native American tribes on the open-space element of a county or city general plan for the purposes of protecting places, features, and objects described in Sections 5097.9 and 5097.993 of the Public Resources Code.

- SB 18 applies to **local governments** and requires them to contact, provide notice to, refer plans to, and consult with tribes prior to the adoption or amendment of a general plan or a specific plan, or the designation of open space. Local governments should consult the Governor's Office of Planning and Research's "Tribal Consultation Guidelines," which can be found online at: https://www.opr.ca.gov/docs/09_14_05_Updated_Guidelines_922.pdf
- **Tribal Consultation:** If a local government considers a proposal to adopt or amend a general plan or a specific plan, or to designate open space it is required to contact the appropriate tribes identified by the NAHC by requesting a "Tribal Consultation List." If a tribe, once contacted, requests consultation the local government must consult with the tribe on the plan proposal. **A tribe has 90 days from the date of receipt of notification to request consultation unless a shorter timeframe has been agreed to by the tribe.**¹⁹

¹² Pub. Resources Code § 21080.3.2 (a)

¹³ Pub. Resources Code § 21082.3 (c)(1)

¹⁴ Pub. Resources Code § 21082.3 (b)

¹⁵ Pub. Resources Code § 21080.3.2 (b)

¹⁶ Pub. Resources Code § 21082.3 (a)

¹⁷ Pub. Resources Code § 21082.3 (e)

¹⁸ Pub. Resources Code § 21082.3 (d)

¹⁹ (Gov. Code § 65352.3 (a)(2)).

University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project Initial Study with Negative Declaration

- There is no Statutory Time Limit on Tribal Consultation under the law.
- Confidentiality: Consistent with the guidelines developed and adopted by the Office of Planning and Research,²⁰ the city or county shall protect the confidentiality of the information concerning the specific identity, location, character, and use of places, features and objects described in Public Resources Code sections 5097.9 and 5097.993 that are within the city's or county's jurisdiction.²¹
- Conclusion Tribal Consultation: Consultation should be concluded at the point in which:
 - The parties to the consultation come to a mutual agreement concerning the appropriate measures for preservation or mitigation; or
 - Either the local government or the tribe, acting in good faith and after reasonable effort, concludes that mutual agreement cannot be reached concerning the appropriate measures of preservation or mitigation.²²

NAHC Recommendations for Cultural Resources Assessments:

- Contact the NAHC for:
 - A Sacred Lands File search. Remember that tribes do not always record their sacred sites in the Sacred Lands File, nor are they required to do so. A Sacred Lands File search is not a substitute for consultation with tribes that are traditionally and culturally affiliated with the geographic area of the project's APE.
 - A Native American Tribal Contact List of appropriate tribes for consultation concerning the project site and to assist in planning for avoidance, preservation in place, or, failing both, mitigation measures.
 - The request form can be found at <http://nahc.ca.gov/resources/forms/>.
- Contact the appropriate regional California Historical Research Information System (CHRIS) Center (http://ohp.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=1068) for an archaeological records search. The records search will determine:
 - If part or the entire APE has been previously surveyed for cultural resources.
 - If any known cultural resources have been already been recorded on or adjacent to the APE.
 - If the probability is low, moderate, or high that cultural resources are located in the APE.
 - If a survey is required to determine whether previously unrecorded cultural resources are present.
- If an archaeological inventory survey is required, the final stage is the preparation of a professional report detailing the findings and recommendations of the records search and field survey.
 - The final report containing site forms, site significance, and mitigation measures should be submitted immediately to the planning department. All information regarding site locations, Native American human remains, and associated funerary objects should be in a separate confidential addendum and not be made available for public disclosure.
 - The final written report should be submitted within 3 months after work has been completed to the appropriate regional CHRIS center.

Examples of Mitigation Measures That May Be Considered to Avoid or Minimize Significant Adverse Impacts to Tribal Cultural Resources:

- Avoidance and preservation of the resources in place, including, but not limited to:
 - Planning and construction to avoid the resources and protect the cultural and natural context.
 - Planning greenspace, parks, or other open space, to incorporate the resources with culturally appropriate protection and management criteria.
- Treating the resource with culturally appropriate dignity, taking into account the tribal cultural values and meaning of the resource, including, but not limited to, the following:
 - Protecting the cultural character and integrity of the resource.
 - Protecting the traditional use of the resource.
 - Protecting the confidentiality of the resource.
- Permanent conservation easements or other interests in real property, with culturally appropriate management criteria for the purposes of preserving or utilizing the resources or places.
- Please note that a federally recognized California Native American tribe or a non-federally recognized California Native American tribe that is on the contact list maintained by the NAHC to protect a California prehistoric, archaeological, cultural, spiritual, or ceremonial place may acquire and hold conservation easements if the conservation easement is voluntarily conveyed.²³
- Please note that it is the policy of the state that Native American remains and associated grave artifacts shall be repatriated.²⁴

The lack of surface evidence of archaeological resources (including tribal cultural resources) does not preclude their subsurface existence.

- Lead agencies should include in their mitigation and monitoring reporting program plan provisions for the identification and evaluation of inadvertently discovered archaeological resources.²⁵ In areas of identified

²⁰ pursuant to Gov. Code section 65040.2,

²¹ (Gov. Code § 65352.3 (b)).

²² (Tribal Consultation Guidelines, Governor's Office of Planning and Research (2005) at p. 18).

²³ (Civ. Code § 815.3 (c)).

²⁴ (Pub. Resources Code § 5097.991).

²⁵ per Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, section 15064.5(f) (CEQA Guidelines section 15064.5(f)).

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archaeological sensitivity, a certified archaeologist and a culturally affiliated Native American with knowledge of cultural resources should monitor all ground-disturbing activities.

- Lead agencies should include in their mitigation and monitoring reporting program plans provisions for the disposition of recovered cultural items that are not burial associated in consultation with culturally affiliated Native Americans.
- Lead agencies should include in their mitigation and monitoring reporting program plans provisions for the treatment and disposition of inadvertently discovered Native American human remains. Health and Safety Code section 7050.5, Public Resources Code section 5097.98, and Cal. Code Regs., tit. 14, section 15064.5, subdivisions (d) and (e) (CEQA Guidelines section 15064.5, subds. (d) and (e)) address the processes to be followed in the event of an inadvertent discovery of any Native American human remains and associated grave goods in a location other than a dedicated cemetery.

Response to Comment 1, Native American Heritage Commission

1-1

Caltrans contacted the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) on August 7, 2017, requesting a search of their sacred lands file and a list of interested Native American parties. Individuals and tribes provided by the NAHC were contacted on August 14, 2017. A field visit was conducted with representatives from the Ohlone tribe on December 7, 2017. Subsurface fieldwork was performed in February 2018, to confirm the presence or absence of archaeological resources, and all fieldwork was conducted in the presence of a Native American monitor. Consultation is ongoing.

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Comment 2, City of Berkeley



Department of Parks, Recreation & Waterfront
Department of Public Works

December 18, 2018

Rebecca De Pont
Associate Environmental Planner
California Department of Transportation, District 4
PO Box 23660, MS 8B
Oakland, CA 94623

Subject: - University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project – Initial Study with Proposed Negative Declaration
- Comments from City of Berkeley

Dear Ms. De Pont,

City of Berkeley's Public Works Department, and Parks, Recreation & Waterfront Department (City) have reviewed the subject document and are submitting our comments in this letter.

As stated in the Initial Study with Proposed Negative Declaration, the University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance (Project) proposes to increase the vertical clearance above Interstate 80 (I-80) at the University Avenue Overcrossing in the City of Berkeley from the current height to a new height of 16 feet 6 inches to allow for more efficient travel of oversized vehicles. Four alternatives are presented in the subject document: 1) Raise Existing Structure; 2) Replace Existing Structure (Signalization of EB Intersection); 3) Replace Existing Structure with Roundabouts; 4) Replace Existing Structure with Roundabout at West side, Signal at East side; and a No-Build alternative.

General Comments on Alternatives

- 2-1 **Opposition to Alternatives 1 and 2:** The City is strongly opposed to Alternatives 1 and 2 because they will severely impact the City and the Project Area users without bringing about meaningful benefits to the affected groups (comprised of the City, Berkeley residents, the Berkeley workforce, Berkeley Waterfront users, Waterfront tenants, shoreline visitors, and recreational users of the Berkeley Waterfront, and daily commuters along University Avenue and Frontage Road).

The most impacted users and neighbors of the Project Area are already burdened by challenging existing conditions at the project site:

1. the dangerous and poorly functioning University Avenue and West Frontage Road intersection,
2. the visual and physical barriers between the Berkeley Waterfront and the rest of the City to the east,
3. the poorly functioning or non-existing on and off ramp access between I-80 and the adjacent Waterfront,
4. the poor maintenance of the clover leaves at the interchange.

- 2-2 **Preference for Alternative 3:** Alternative 3 rectifies problems that exist due to the location of I-80 freeway between the Waterfront to the west and the City to the east. It solves many of the current challenges affecting the Project Area and the places it is intended to connect. The City suggests doing this project once, and doing it in a way that addresses all stakeholders needs and rectifies existing deficiencies.

The Berkeley Waterfront: An Important Asset to the East Bay Region

- 2-3 It is important that Caltrans understand that the project area is adjacent to the Berkeley Waterfront, which is comprised of 200 acres of public trust lands held by the City of Berkeley that attracts users from throughout the region. A map is provided here

2180 Milvia Street, 3rd Floor, Berkeley, CA 94704 -1122 Tel: 510.981.6700 TDD: 510.981.6903 Fax: 510.981.6710
E-mail: parks@CityofBerkeley.info <http://www.cityofberkeley.info/PRW>

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to offer a visual overview of the numerous highly popular amenities offered at the Berkeley Waterfront:
https://www.cityofberkeley.info/Parks_Rec_Waterfront/Marina/Berkeley_Waterfront_Facility_Map.aspx.

Existing Conditions: Extreme Traffic Congestion from I-80 Traffic at University Avenue and West Frontage Road Intersection, and lack of access from I-80 Eastbound onto westbound University Avenue.

Level-of-services (LOS) at the current West Frontage Road and University Avenue intersection during AM and PM peaks are at level "F", defined as operations with extreme congestion, with very high delays and long queues unacceptable to most drivers.

The LOS "F" is confirmed by the Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Draft Environmental Impact Report, prepared by the Water Emergency Transportation for Berkeley/Albany/Ferry Terminal Study, dated 10/22/08. It is also confirmed by the traffic assessment from the Feasibility Study on Mitigation of Undulating Pavement at University Avenue, dated January 2018, commissioned by the City, which found that the weekday peak hour level-of-service (LOS) would remain at "F" at Year 2030, which would be an unacceptable condition and far exceeds the City's LOS "D" standard per City of Berkeley Guidelines for Development of Traffic Impact Reports (2005).

Both assessments also identified that the LOS is significantly impacted by the commuters passing through the University Avenue and West Frontage Road intersection who are using West Frontage Road as an alternate roadway to avoid congestion on I-80 during peak hours. The stop signs can slow traffic significantly, but they create confusion among drivers where 15 lanes converge in one place. Providing a continuous flow for traffic, as provided in Alternative 3, would be a meaningful improvement.

The lack of westbound turning movement at eastbound University Avenue at I-80, and the I-80/Ashby Ave interchanges significantly increase traffic load on local streets. The primary local access to the Berkeley Waterfront is from University Avenue and Gilman and Ashby Streets via West Frontage Road. The regional access to the Berkeley Waterfront from I-80 is at three interchanges: Gilman Street; University Avenue; and Ashby Avenue. Although all three interchanges provide direct access for traffic approaching from the north, only Gilman Street provides direct access for vehicles approaching from the south, whereas vehicles exiting at Ashby or University must reverse direction by looping through local streets to gain access to the Berkeley Waterfront.

2-4

These limitations are particularly problematic for boaters that tow boats, who often end up making circuitous routes to get to the Berkeley Waterfront. This creates a safety hazard for all drivers when a confused boater with a boat trailer ends up on the eastern section of University Avenue looking for a place to turn around. We sincerely hope that the alternative selected will provide for direct access from both directions of I-80 to the western portion of University Avenue, resulting in an efficient, logical, and intuitively linked Berkeley Waterfront. This will help not just boaters, but the general public looking for the recreational amenities along our shoreline, the many businesses at the Waterfront, and the customers who patronize those businesses.

These limitations also affect the regional draw of McLaughlin Eastshore State Park at the Berkeley Waterfront, which contains the Berkeley Meadow and the Brickyard, which are both accessed directly at West Frontage Road and University Avenue.

Applicable City Goals & Policies, and Land Use Planning

The City is currently beginning the planning process for a new Specific Plan, called the Berkeley Marina Area Specific Plan (BMASP), which will be an implementation document to guide future improvements at the Berkeley Waterfront. Project approvals in this area should be coordinated with planned development and infrastructure improvements and approval processes that will be identified in the BMASP. Through the BMASP, we hope to better link the Berkeley Waterfront to the rest of the City, both economically, visually, and physically, and create a prominent gateway and a strong sense of place. The timing of the proposed Project provides an opportunity for the City and Caltrans to work in concert to remedy a longstanding challenges to access at the Waterfront – access. This is the perfect opportunity to take the freeway and onramp infrastructure that currently cuts the Waterfront off from the rest of the City, and leverage it to reconnect this amenity to the city, residents, and visitors who serve to benefit from it.

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- 2-5 | The Project should also comply with the adopted goals and policies identified in the existing land use planning documents that govern the project area within the City, listed and linked below.

- (1) Berkeley Marina Master Plan of 2003:
https://www.cityofberkeley.info/Parks_Rec_Waterfront/Marina/Marina_Master_Plan.aspx
- (2) the Berkeley Waterfront Specific Plan of 1986:
https://www.cityofberkeley.info/uploadedFiles/Parks_Rec_Waterfront/Marina/1986%20-%20Waterfront%20Specific%20Plan.pdf
- (3) City of Berkeley General Plan:
https://www.cityofberkeley.info/Planning_and_Development/Home/General_Plan_A_Guide_for_Public_Decision-Making.aspx

SUMMARY OF APPLICABLE CITY OF BERKELEY GOALS AND POLICIES

Alternative 3 appears to be preferable in terms of complying with the City's three existing land use planning documents, as follows:

1. *Visual Connection:*
Waterfront Master Plan (1986) Policy W-5: Create an environment, which enhances the unique qualities of Berkeley's waterfront and its special meaning to the city and region.

Waterfront Master Plan (1986) Policy W-83: Overcome the barrier created by the freeway, which visually and physically separates Berkeley from its waterfront, through new crossings for pedestrian/bicycle/wheelchair access.

Waterfront Master Plan (1986) Policy W-88: The Berkeley waterfront should have a pleasing connection to other areas on the east bay shoreline.

Waterfront Master Plan (1986) Policy W-77: Reinforce and reflect Berkeley's history, character, and diversity of lifestyles in the design of structures on the waterfront
2. *Physical Connection:*
Waterfront Master Plan (1986) Policy W-30: Provide convenient, usable east-west pedestrian, bicycle and automobile links between West Berkeley and the waterfront.

Waterfront Master Plan (1986) Policy W-32: Require innovative transit facilities connecting different parts of the waterfront with each other and with other areas of Berkeley.
3. *Safety:*
Berkeley Marina Master Plan of 2003, Goal 2: The Health, Safety, and security of Marina Users and employees shall be a primary objective.

Waterfront Master Plan (1986) Policy W-29: Provide for safe, efficient on-site circulation.
4. *Coordination:*
Principal 7: In a spirit of cooperation and in attempt to avoid duplication in developing public facilities in the marina, the City will coordinate with other agencies.

Adjacent Construction Projects

- 2-6 | a. Please be advised that the City has scheduled the University Avenue Lane Reconfiguration project for construction within the Project boundaries. The timeline for construction of the University Avenue Lane Reconfiguration project is

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anticipated to take place between the months of early 2020 and end of 2020, but could occur at an earlier or later date contingent upon various factors such as regulatory permitting processes, etc.

- b. Please also be advised that the City has been informed by the East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD) that EBRPD will be performing park improvements at the Brickyard at McLaughlin Eastshore State Park at the south-west corner of West Frontage Road and University Avenue intersection. This project involves the installation of a parking lot (up to 142-cars at full built-out). EBRPD should respond via separate correspondence.

The City's University Ave Lane Reconfiguration project is currently in the design phase, with completion of construction anticipated ahead of the Project. The final Project design will need to match up with the University Ave/West Frontage Road intersection, and should tie in with the adjacent projects to optimize efforts, in collaboration with the City and EBRPD.

Underlying Drainage Infrastructure

2-7 On November 20, 2018, Caltrans met with City staff and expressed concern for the condition of the 8-feet, 6-inch x 9-feet storm drain pipeline which allows stormwater to cross underneath the barrier created when I-80 was constructed. The meeting included discussions regarding the condition of the storm drain and Caltrans staff acknowledged that the storm drain could potentially be in poor condition. The Initial Study Proposed Negative Declaration for the Project was prepared before any inspection or effort was made to assess the condition of the existing storm drain. The Initial Study Proposed Negative Declaration does not mention the 8'-6" x 9' storm drain in Chapter 2.1.9 - Hydrology and Water Quality, nor in Chapter 2.1.18 - Utilities and Service Systems. Caltrans must not certify the environmental review process until the condition and mitigations for addressing the condition of the 8'-6" x 9' storm drain line. Failure to do so may result in segmenting the Project in order to address associated drainage issues.

Specific City Comments to the Initial Study with Proposed Negative Declaration

Based on the above background, the alternatives shown do not provide sufficient detail to formulate complete comments and identify a complete list of mitigations needed to satisfy the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The Initial Study Proposed Negative Declaration should consider additional impacts as described below:

AESTHETICS

2-8 Comment No. 1 (DA). IS Chapter 2.1.1.c. The checklist asks if the Project would "...Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?" The image below is captured from Google showing the NE area of the existing elevated structures and the issue of non-permitted encampments under the elevated structure in Caltrans' right-of-way. The proposed pedestrian bridge and the expanded footprint of the elevated structure needed for the roundabout in Alternative #3 will increase the sheltered area created by elevated structures and be attractive to non-permitted encampments, especially in the area shown below. Caltrans needs to address how these conditions will be mitigated.

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- 2-9 | Comment No. 2 (NL). IS Chapter 2.1.1., Caltrans should consider the proposed roundabout(s) in Alternative 3 & 4 as a beneficial mitigation to improve aesthetics since the interior of the roundabout offers street beautification benefits.
- 2-10 | Comment No. 3 (AE). IS Chapter 2.1.1., states that the affected environment "... has multiple overhead structures (shown in Figure 2.1.1-1 and Figure 2.1.1-2) that are the most visually dominant elements in the area." These existing structures impede the visual (and physical) connection between the City of Berkeley, I-80 drivers, and the City of Berkeley's Waterfront. The proposed project presents an opportunity to transform a current blockage into a visual and experiential link between the eastern side of the I-80 corridor, and the recreational, environmental, and commercial amenities and views that lie to the West.
- 2-11 | Comment No. 4 (AE). Caltrans should consider the proposed roundabouts in Alternative 3 as beneficial mitigation to rectify the poor existing connectivity of the Waterfront to the rest of the city, and provide drivers and pedestrians with a grand gateway into the Berkeley Waterfront. The landscaping, lighting, signage, and overall aesthetic of the new overpass and roundabouts in Alternative 3 should be integrated with the landscaping, lighting, and signage at the Waterfront to create a visual cue to visitors that they are about to enter a significant recreational waterfront destination on the San Francisco Bay.
- 2-12 | Comment No. 5 (NL). Figure 2.1.1-5., a proposed pedestrian "switchback" ramp is shown. The current CEQA document does not contain sufficient detail to demonstrate how this ramp is connected to the City's sidewalk. Caltrans needs to address how these conditions will be mitigated.
- 2-13 | Comment No. 6 (AE). Currently, the freeway and ramps at University Avenue provide a physical and visual blockage between the Berkeley Waterfront to the west, and the rest of the City, to the east. This proposed sidewalk provides an opportunity to more directly connect pedestrians to the Waterfront, and will enhance the visual experience, physical path of travel, and in turn, quality of life for the future users of this infrastructure.
- 2-14 | Comment No. 7 (AE). Project Description: A chain link fence, as specified in the project description, would not be an appropriate treatment for the overcrossing, as it is visually unappealing, does not match the beauty of the vistas that lie ahead, and has a tendency to collect garbage and propensity to create blight.

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- 2-15 | Comment No. 8 (AE). Maintenance of Landscaping and Debris Accumulation: Currently, the University Interchange and bridge accumulate garbage and debris, and the landscaping is not well maintained. A plan for maintenance of landscaping, and avoidance or removal of debris accumulation should be incorporated into the project.

GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

- 2-16 | Comment No. 9 (NL). IS Chapter 2.1.7, Operation Emission, *"The purpose of the proposed project is to allow safer, more efficient travel for oversized vehicles on I-80 by increasing the vertical clearance of the University Avenue Overcrossing in Berkeley, California. Raising or replacing the existing structure would not increase the capacity of I-80 or University Avenue, and would not change vehicle miles traveled. Accordingly, no increase in operational GHG emissions is anticipated."* The improved level-of-service of the roundabout(s) as shown in Alternative 3 & 4 will result in decreased vehicle idle time, which could yield a net reduction in greenhouse gas emissions. Caltrans should evaluate this potential benefit.
- 2-17 | Comment No. 10 (FJ). In addition, bus and HOV priority should be incorporated into the design. A direct connection from the new structure into the existing I-80 HOV lanes is preferable to the current design, which has HOVs using the loop ramps. Improving HOV travel time can support a shift away from single occupant vehicles and contribute to a reduction of greenhouse gas emissions over the life of the project.

HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

- 2-18 | Comment No. 11 (DA). IS Chapter 2.1.9.f, *"... Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?"* The non-permitted encampment issue identified above for IS Chapter 2.1.1.c will generate additional trash in the area. The City of Berkeley is required to control trash through provisions of stormwater NPDES Permit No. CAS612008, also known as the Municipal Regional Permit (MRP). The additional trash load will impact the City's ability to comply with the requirements of the trash control provisions in the MRP. The trash generation impacts of this project must be investigated and mitigations identified and applied.
- 2-19 | Comment No. 12 (DA). IS Chapter 2.1.9.h, *"... Place within a 100-year flood hazard area structures which would impede or redirect flood flows?"* The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) published a new Flood Insurance Rate Map (FIRM) Map Number 06001C0056H, effective December 21, 2018. This map covers the area of the project and shows the Project area is within a flood hazard area. There is insufficient information on the details of the design to assess whether the Project creates an impact related to the flood hazard. The potential for creating a flood related impact must be analyzed and mitigations provided.
- 2-20 | Comment No. 13 (NL). IS Chapter 2.1.9.j, *"... Inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow"*. Caltrans attention is requested to respond to the City's 2014 Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP) that identifies the University Avenue/I-80 interchange as vulnerable to hazards associated with earthquake and tsunami. The western boundary of University Avenue/I-80 interchange intersection is the only access for emergency response and evacuation of the Berkeley Marina, and is located in a known hazard materials transportation route.

For the 2014 Local Hazard Mitigation Plan, please see the following link:
https://www.cityofberkeley.info/uploadedFiles/Fire/Level_3_-_General/2014%20LHMP.pdf

- 2-21 | Comment No. 14 (NL). Alternatives 3 & 4 with the roundabout(s) offer the potential for the Project to reduce impervious pavement surface, particularly at the western location. The interior of the roundabout(s) have the potential for green infrastructure, such as, but not limited to stormwater runoff bio-infiltration measures. Please be advised that improvements made on City Right-of-Way must comply with the City's NPDES Municipal Regional Stormwater Permit such as, but not limited to Provision C.3, and C.12.

NOISE

- Comment No. 15 (DA). IS Chapter 2.1.12.c, *"... A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?"* The new off ramp leading up to the elevated east side of the overpass

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from eastbound I-80 appears to remove the existing earth ramp. Compare the off ramp in the images captured from the IS Proposed Negative Declaration below:



- 2-22 | The existing earth ramp blocks sound generated by the freeway traffic, shielding the Dona Spring Animal Shelter and other businesses and recreational uses in the area of the SE quadrant of the proposed vertical clearance project. The potential for increasing the noise needs to be analyzed and mitigations provided.

RECREATION

- 2-23 | Comment No. 16 (NL). "... The proposed project would improve facilities which would provide better connectivity to McLaughlin Eastshore State Park, including areas known as Berkeley Meadow and Brickyard Cove. The project would improve connectivity from University Overcrossing to the San Francisco Bay Trail, as well as the Berkeley Pedestrian Overcrossing. The improvements would include an ADA compliant ramp from the University Avenue Overcrossing and areas for pedestrians to cross the Eastbound on and off-ramps safely." The proposed Project not only provides better connectivity to McLaughlin Eastshore State Park, but to the Berkeley Marina as well.
- Comment No. 17 (AE). The Berkeley Waterfront provides the public with critical access to the San Francisco Bay Shoreline. It offers 7 miles of pedestrian trails, including the San Francisco Bay Trail, the nationally recognized Adventure Playground frequented by thousands of children per year, an educational nature center that operates year round, the Cesar Chavez Park (100 acres of park upland, 17 acres of off leash dog area, habitat for wildlife, and public art), as well as the largest marina in northern California. This resource is held in public trust for the people of the state of California by the City of Berkeley, yet the Waterfront's recreational amenities are effectively cut off from the rest of the City, and even from I-80 itself due to the poor on/off ramp access that exists currently. We strongly urge

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- 2-24 | Caltrans to evaluate the opportunities to better connect the Waterfront to the City and the freeway for vehicles, boaters, pedestrians, cyclists, both physically and visually. Alternative 3 is the most promising, as the roundabouts effectively eliminate the blockage by allowing vehicles to continue in motion to the Waterfront, with clear place making and gateway signage and visual cues alerting the user to the Waterfront that lies ahead.

TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC

Comment No. 18 (HM). Alternative 1 is the least desirable option from City's point of view for many reasons, most important of which is that it does not address the current lack of access from I-80 Eastbound to Berkeley Marina and Cezar Chavez Park.

Alternative 3 is the preferred solution from a traffic engineering and management point of view for the following reasons:

- 2-25 |
- a. Roundabouts on both sides help with a more orderly and efficient flow of traffic into and out of the intersections.
 - b. A signal on the east side would probably negatively impact the operation of the existing traffic signal at University/6th St., one of City's higher traffic volume intersections. Long queues as a result of the new signal would exacerbate existing peak hour congestion east of the interchange.
 - c. A signal on the east side would have to contend with the existing ramp metering signal on the on-ramp to I-80 East.
 - d. From a cost/benefit point of view, considering the life cycle of the various alternatives, Alternative 3 is superior to the other alternatives.

All alternatives would need to consider the provision of flashing beacons for pedestrians crossing the new proposed at-grade crossings at the I-80 WB off ramp and I-80 WB on ramp, especially when crossing two adjacent lanes of traffic. Once the pedestrian connection across the bridge is complete, the City expects there will be an increase in pedestrians wanting to use the crossing to access the extremely popular recreational destinations west of the interchange.

- 2-26 | Comment No. 19 (FJ). Alternative 3 should be modified to provide for direct access connector ramps for HOVs using the University Avenue overcrossing.

UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS

- 2-27 | Comment No. 20 (DA). *IS Chapter 2.1.18.c, "Require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?"* There is insufficient information on the details of the Project design to assess if the project creates an impact to the very old 8'-6" by 9' storm drain running through the Project site. The potential for damaging or increasing loads on the aged storm drain must be analyzed and mitigations provided.

Lead Agency

- 2-28 | As the Lead Agency and owner of the Project, the State of California Department of Transportation is responsible for all project mitigation, including any needed improvements to the City Right-of-Way. The project's fair share contribution, financing, scheduling, implementation responsibilities, easement/right-of-way acquisition, and lead agency monitoring should be fully discussed for all proposed mitigation measures.

This project will require permit(s) from the City and will be subject to permitting reviews. To obtain City permit(s), please contact the City Engineer, Nisha Patel, at (510)981-6406 or NPatel@cityofberkeley.info.

Thank you for including City of Berkeley in the environmental review process. Should you have any questions regarding this letter or further coordination, please contact Nelson Lam at (510)981-6395, or NeLam@cityofberkeley.info.

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Sincerely,



Scott Ferris
Director of Parks, Recreation & Waterfront

Phil Harrington
Director of Public Works

Cc: Andrew Brozyna – City
Nisha Patel – City
Farid Javandel – City
Danny Akagi – City
Ali Endress – City
Hamid Mostowfi – City
Beth Thomas - City
Laurie Lau – Caltrans
Matt Graul – EBRPD
Robert Doyle - EBRPD

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*University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project
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Response to Comment 2, City of Berkeley

2-1

Thank you for your comments. Caltrans has identified Alternative 3 as the preferred alternative for the University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project.

2-2

Caltrans appreciates your interest in the University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project. The preference to Alternative 3 has been acknowledged and Caltrans has selected this alternative as the preferred alternative..

2-3

Caltrans is aware of the environmental setting of the University Avenue Overcrossing and the adjacent recreational and urban land uses.

2-4

The roundabouts under Alternative 3, the preferred alternative, will allow direct access from both directions of Interstate 80 (I-80) to the western portion of University Avenue.

2-5

The project will not conflict with any of the City of Berkeley's (City) goals, policies, and plans.

2-7

Caltrans will assess the condition of the existing storm drain pipe during the design phase of the project. The project will increase runoff due to additional impervious surfaces; however, the project design will also incorporate permanent stormwater treatment measures. Therefore, the project will not impact the existing storm drain pipe capacity.

2-8

The project design will include elements of encampment abatement. At this location, Caltrans maintenance conducts bi-monthly cleanups. The project will be designed with the corridor aesthetics plan and there will be a landscaping project following the construction of the Overcrossing.

2-9

Caltrans has identified Alternative 3 as the preferred alternative. Landscaping and other project features will be developed during the PS/E phase of the project.

2-10

Caltrans is aware of the environmental setting of the University Avenue Overcrossing and the adjacent recreational and urban land uses. The visual simulation that is presented in Figure 2.1.1-6 of the Initial Study shows the active recreational and pedestrian access that lead to the amenities referenced in the letter.

2-11

Caltrans will work with the City to come up with roundabout designs that are both easy to maintain and visually sensitive to the setting. Highway planting and the design of the roundabouts will take into account the Marina and City environments to come up with a design that is visually cohesive to both. Masses of plantings within the roundabout are not considered feasible due to maintenance requirements and safety/sight distance concerns.

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The design and locations of signage would need to be worked out with Caltrans and the City to avoid blocking views to the Bay or safety sight lines for motorists. Lighting similar to that which is depicted in the Initial Study, Figure 2.1.1-6, will be provided.

2-12

The project will include pedestrian ramp structures on both sides of the overcrossing that will comply with the Americans with Disability Act (ADA) and conform to existing sidewalks. No mitigation will be required.

2-13

See response to Comment 2-10.

2-14

Chain-link fence is a requirement for safety on Pedestrian Overcrossings (POCs). The use of chain-link fence would be consistent with what is being used along the corridor, including on the current POC south of University Avenue. The use of black-vinyl clad chain-link fence would help to blend the fencing into the background, making it less visible, and reduce reflectiveness and glare.

At this location, Caltrans maintenance conducts bi-monthly cleanups. The project will be designed with the corridor aesthetics plan and there will be a landscaping project following the construction of the Overcrossing.

2-15

See response to Comment 2-8.

2-16

The traffic operational benefits of the roundabouts have been studied in the Project's Traffic Operation Analysis Report (9/19/2018). While improved traffic operations improve air quality due to less idling and lower speeds than occur under existing conditions, it is beyond the scope of this project to study these parameters.

2-17

The purpose of this project is to raise the vertical clearance of the University Avenue Overcrossing to allow more goods movement through the corridor. By raising the clearance of the University Avenue Overcrossing, freight trucks that currently must detour around the interchange on surface streets will be able to remain on I-80. The installation of roundabouts on University Avenue at the I-80 on and off-ramps will improve the flow of traffic along University Avenue over I-80, which will also benefit public transit. In addition, raising the clearance of the overcrossing reduces the risk of an oversize truck hitting the structure and causing the freeway to be closed. The increased clearance will also better accommodate double-decker buses, such as those AC Transit may use.

2-18

Please refer to response to Comment 2-8. Trash capture devices and Best Management Practices (BMPs) will be designed for this project.

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2-19

The project will not change the existing land-use pattern at the project site and will not create additional flooding hazards. Caltrans does not anticipate any impacts from the project involving wave action, coastal hazards, tsunamis, mudflow, or Sea Level Rise (SLR). Please refer to Figure 2.1.7-3, which depicts SLR projected to year 2050. The project falls outside of the SLR impact area. Therefore, no mitigation is required.

2-20

The Project will be designed to current engineering standards to reduce risk from earthquake. Also, see the response to Comment 2-19.

2-21

The project will comply with Caltrans' National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit (Order 2012-0011-DWQ, NPDES No. CAS000003).

2-22

The existing ramp is not earthen but on structural supports and shielded by vegetation, which does not provide any sound attenuation. Therefore, there will be no increase in traffic noise as a result of the project. No mitigation is required.

2-23

Thank you for your comment on the merits of the project.

2-24

If feasible, Caltrans may be able to consider a wave pattern on the concrete surfaces of the roundabouts during the design process. The design and locations of signage would need to be worked out with Caltrans and the City to avoid blocking views to the Bay or safety sight lines for motorists.

2-25

The project team is currently studying ways to improve pedestrian and bicycle access as part of this project, and to better integrate the facilities into the existing network, in complement to the existing University Avenue POC, 800 feet to the south. Modifications to the pedestrian and bicycle facilities will bring walkways into compliance with the ADA and will attempt to improve the existing facilities within the project area as much as is feasible within the scope of the project.

2-26

The purpose of this project is to raise the vertical clearance of the University Avenue Overcrossing to allow more goods movement through the corridor. By raising the clearance of the University Avenue Overcrossing, freight trucks that currently must detour around the interchange on surface streets will be able to remain on I-80. The installation of roundabouts on University Avenue at the I-80 on and off-ramps will improve the flow of traffic along University Avenue over I-80, which will also benefit public transit. Providing direct connector ramps for HOV preferential lanes from University Avenue to the HOV lanes on mainline I-80 is beyond the scope of this project.

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2-27

Caltrans will assess the condition of the existing storm drain culvert. The project will increase runoff due to additional impervious surfaces; however, the project will also incorporate permanent stormwater treatment measures. No relocation or modification to the existing storm drain culvert is anticipated. The existing storm drain culvert will be protected in place during construction. Detailed plans and specifications will be submitted to the City for review and approval before construction begins.

2-28

This project is being designed to avoid environmental impacts and mitigation will not be required. Caltrans is and will continue to comply with CEQA and applicable requirements.

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Comment 3, AC Transit



Alameda-Contra Costa Transit District

Michael Hursh, General Manager

December 18, 2018

Rebecca De Pont
Associate Environmental Planner
California Department of Transportation, District 4
PO Box 23660, MS 88
Oakland, CA 94623

Subject: Notice of Intent to Adopt a Negative Declaration for the University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project

Dear Ms. De Pont,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Initial Study for the University Avenue Vertical Clearance Project. The University Avenue interchange is one of the most important access points along Interstate 80 for high occupancy vehicles and AC Transit's Transbay buses. AC Transit recognizes the need for the project to facilitate freight movement and improve safety but has concerns about the exclusive focus on single occupant vehicles and lack of transit facilities incorporated into the design.

Importance of University Avenue/I-80 Interchange to Public Transit

University is an important access point for AC Transit's Transbay express buses and has been identified as an important future regional bus connection. AC Transit currently operates two Transbay bus lines that use the University Avenue interchange, Line G and Line FS. These two lines together carry 1,000 daily passengers, up 13 percent from last year. In addition, AC Transit operates Line 51B across the overpass to serve the Berkeley Marina; this is one of our busiest lines.

To carry the growing number of Transbay bus riders, AC Transit has deployed double decker buses and will increase the service on Line FS by a third. AC Transit, as part of its Transbay Tomorrow plan, intends to increase the amount of bus service that will use University Avenue to access I-80 and the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge.

AC Transit is not the only agency affected by this project. WestCat, the transit agency serving western Contra Costa County, is currently investigating new express bus routes to northern Alameda County. University Avenue is one possible access point under evaluation. Similarly, Contra Costa County's 2017 Express Bus Study designates University Avenue as a major access point for buses travelling the I-80 corridor. The Express Bus Study points out that there are 25,000 jobs in West Berkeley and Emeryville that could be served by regional express buses using University Avenue, potentially reducing the region's dependence on single occupant autos. It should also be noted that besides public transit buses, University Avenue is today the primary I-80 access route for large numbers of casual and organized

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Alameda-Contra Costa Transit District

Michael Hursh, General Manager

project. The design should include sufficient span to accommodate the horizontal space needed for the direct HOV connector ramps and the merge and transition areas in the median of the freeway.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments and we look forward to further coordination

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Michael A. Hursh', is written over a faint, larger version of the AC Transit logo.

Michael A. Hursh
General Manager

CC: Farid Javandel, City of Berkeley
Charlie Anderson, General Manager of WestCAT
Robert Thompson, Director of Planning, WestCAT

Response to Comment 3, AC Transit

The purpose of this project is to raise the vertical clearance of the University Avenue Overcrossing to facilitate the movement of oversize freight vehicles through the corridor. Freight trucks do not qualify to use High-Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes, and the project will not change nor add capacity to the Interstate 80 (I-80) mainline. The existing HOV lanes on the mainline, as well as the westbound and eastbound I-80 loop on-ramps from University Avenue will remain unchanged.

By raising the clearance of the University Avenue Overcrossing, freight trucks that currently must detour around the interchange on surface streets will be able to remain on I-80. The installation of roundabouts on University Avenue at the I-80 on and off-ramps will improve the flow of traffic along University Avenue over I-80, which will also benefit public transit. In addition, raising the clearance of the overcrossing reduces the risk of an oversize truck hitting the structure and causing the freeway to be closed. The increased clearance will also better accommodate double-decker buses, such as those AC Transit may use. Providing direct connector ramps for HOV preferential lanes from University Avenue to the HOV lanes on mainline I-80 is beyond the scope of this project.

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Comment 4, Bay Trail



December 17, 2018

Rebecca De Pont
California Department of Transportation, District 4
P.O. Box 23660, MS 8B
Oakland, CA 94623

**Subject: Comments on the Initial Study/Negative Declaration for the University
 Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project**

Dear Ms. De Pont:

On behalf of the San Francisco Bay Trail Project, I am writing to submit comments on the Initial Study/Negative Declaration for the University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project (University Avenue Project). The Bay Trail Project is a nonprofit organization administered by the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) that plans, promotes, and advocates for the implementation of the Bay Trail. The Bay Trail is a planned 500-mile continuous network of multi-use bicycling and walking paths that, when complete, will encircle San Francisco and San Pablo Bays in their entirety. It will link the shoreline of all nine Bay Area counties, as well as 47 cities. To date, over 350 miles of the proposed Bay Trail system has been developed.

The University Avenue Project is located at a critical junction point of the Bay Trail near the University Avenue and W. Frontage Road intersection. The Bay Trail in this area runs along the shoreline adjacent to W. Frontage Road and towards the Berkeley Marina. The nearby Berkeley bicycle/pedestrian bridge just south of the project area is the main connection to the Bay Trail for the communities in this part of the East Bay. With the soon to be completed Bay Trail segment at Golden Gate Fields, the Bay Trail in this area will provide a continuous recreational and transportation corridor stretching from Point Pinole in Richmond to the Port of Oakland and Yerba Buena Island.

As such, the Bay Trail near the University Avenue Project is a highly-used and popular part of the Bay Trail, and the connectivity, usability, and safety of the Bay Trail must be protected and preserved. Based on the alternatives described in the IS/MND for this project, we are very concerned by the University Avenue Project's impacts on the existing crossing for the Bay Trail

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*Ms. Rebecca De Pont
December 17, 2018*

- 4-1 at University Avenue especially under Alternative 3 where the crossing is identified for relocation and as a pedestrian-only facility. Any alternative chosen for the University Avenue Project must maintain and improve the safety and directness of the Bay Trail crossing for both pedestrians and bicyclists at the University and W. Frontage Road intersection. Intersection stop controls must be maintained to allow for a safe pedestrian and bicyclist crossing at this intersection along with an additional green painted bicycle crosswalk to facilitate bicycle crossings similar to what Caltrans recently installed at Central Avenue and Rydin Road in the City of Richmond. The pedestrian only crossing proposed under Alternative 3 which also
- 4-2 relocates the crosswalk to the west of the intersection resulting in an awkward and indirect connection between the Bay Trail to the north and south of University Avenue is an unacceptable design for creating a useable and direct trail facility for accommodating both pedestrians and bicyclists.

- 4-3 The University Avenue Project should also implement infrastructure improvements that create better bicycle and pedestrian connections to the eastern landing of the existing Berkeley bicycle/pedestrian bridge since this facility is the main crossing for bicyclists and pedestrians across Interstate 80. It is highly used because it creates a safe, useable, low-stress, dedicated facility separated from motor vehicle traffic. The bicycle and pedestrian facilities connecting to the eastern landing of the bicycle/pedestrian bridge from the north, south, and east should be improved to provide a low-stress experience in order to further encourage use by a broader spectrum of pedestrians and bicyclists with different ability levels.

The Bay Trail Project appreciates the opportunity to comment on the IS/ND for the University Avenue Project and looks forward to our continued partnership with Caltrans to improve the Bay Trail and bicycle/pedestrian access throughout the Bay Area. Please do not hesitate to call me at (415) 820-7915 if you have any questions regarding the above comments or the Bay Trail.

Sincerely,



Lee Chien Huo
Bay Trail Planner

Response to Comment 4, Bay Trail

4-1

Thank you for your comments regarding safety and accessibility improvements for bicycles and pedestrians. The project team is currently studying ways to improve pedestrian and bicycle access as part of this project and to better integrate the facilities into the existing network, including the existing University Avenue Pedestrian Overcrossing, 800 feet to the south. Modifications to the pedestrian and bicycle facilities will include bringing walkways into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and will attempt to improve the existing bicycle and pedestrian facilities within the project area as much as is feasible within the scope. However, there are no dedicated pedestrian or bicycle facilities on the portion of the University Avenue structure over the railroad tracks between the Interstate 80 (I-80) interchange and the Sixth Street intersection. That approach and structure is owned by the City of Berkeley and the City has no near-term plans to provide pedestrian and bicycle facilities on that portion of the structure, so providing Class II bike lanes along University Avenue within the project area may incorrectly give bicyclists the impression that the facility is continuous. Proposed improvements will focus on how to transition pedestrians and bicyclists across University Avenue between the San Francisco Bay Trail and the interchange, so that they are able to access the existing street network.

4-2

Please see response to Comment 4-1.

4-3

Please see response to Comment 4-1.

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*University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project
Initial Study with Negative Declaration*

Comment 5, Walk Bike Berkeley

Depont, Rebecca@DOT

From: Lau, Laurie@DOT
Sent: Thursday, December 20, 2018 7:05 AM
To: Depont, Rebecca@DOT; Hallissy, Cristin@DOT; Jones, Larry A@DOT; Perez, Richelle P@DOT; Nguyen, An@DOT; Masroor, Tariq@DOT; Greg. Mix; Baskerville, Andrew@DOT; Strykers, Peter@DOT
Cc: Ruiz, Sergio@DOT; Khanum, Taslima@DOT
Subject: Fwd: Walk Bike Berkeley requests for Caltrans' University Ave Overcrossing Project

Please see comments below from the Walk Bike Berkeley group.

Also, now the public comment period has ended, it would be helpful to see a list of all the comments so the team could help address them.

Thanks.

Laurie

Begin forwarded message:

From: Ben Gerhardstein <ben.gerhardstein@gmail.com>
Date: December 19, 2018 at 9:31:41 PM PST
To: "McElhinney, Dan@DOT" <dan.mcelhinney@dot.ca.gov>, "Harrington, Phillip" <PHarrington@cityofberkeley.info>
Cc: "Arreguin, Jesse L." <jarreguin@cityofberkeley.info>, rkesarwani@cityofberkeley.info, "Davila, Cheryl" <cdavila@cityofberkeley.info>, Nisha Patel <npatel@cityofberkeley.info>, "Thomas, Beth A." <bathomas@cityofberkeley.info>, "Anderson, Eric" <EAnderson@cityofberkeley.info>, laurie.lau@dot.ca.gov, "Ruiz, Sergio@DOT" <sergio.ruiz@dot.ca.gov>, Liza Lutzker <liza.lutzker@gmail.com>, Jacqueline Erbe <jmerbe@gmail.com>, Charles Siegel <preserve@preservenet.com>
Subject: Walk Bike Berkeley requests for Caltrans' University Ave Overcrossing Project

Dan McElhinney
Chief Deputy District Director
California Department of Transportation
District 4
Oakland, CA 94623

Phil Harrington
Director, Public Works Department
City of Berkeley
2180 Milvia Street
Berkeley, CA 94704

December 19, 2018

Dear Mr. McElhinney and Mr. Harrington,

*University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project
Initial Study with Negative Declaration*

Walk Bike Berkeley urges Caltrans to design the I-80 University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project to promote the safety of people walking and biking. Further, we ask the City of Berkeley and Caltrans to coordinate the City's University Avenue Lane Reconfiguration Project with the Caltrans overcrossing project. We have several requests.

- 5-1 | **First, make the intersection of the Bay Trail, University Ave, and West Frontage Road safe and low-stress for people walking and biking.**
- Add signal controls for the Bay Trail crossing.
 - Create tighter turning radii and add sidewalk bulb-outs (curb extensions) to slow traffic and shorten the crossing distances.
 - Make University Ave west of Frontage Road two lanes rather than four lanes. Consider using movable barriers to open up four vehicle lanes for special events at the Marina.
- 5-2 | **Second, provide pedestrian access across the overpass on a sidewalk that connects directly to existing sidewalks on University Avenue/West Frontage Road and 6th Street.** A pedestrian currently must travel about 2500 feet to cross I-80 via the bicycle-pedestrian bridge. A pedestrian crossing on the overpass would only require about 1000 feet travel distance.
- The sidewalk must have ADA-compliant slopes (no stairs, no spirals, no diversions).
 - Ensure that pedestrians can use the overpass sidewalk without unsafe or stressful vehicle lane crossings on either side of the overpass.
- 5-3 | **Third, promote the safety and enjoyment of Bay Trail users by reducing vehicle miles traveled on West Frontage Road.** Currently, West Frontage carries a high volume of cut-through traffic. Motorists exit I-80 at Gilman and drive at high speed to Ashby. This traffic reduces the safety, comfort, and enjoyment of people on the Bay Trail. The proposed overpass designs for the intersection of West Frontage Road and University Ave may make cut-through traffic worse by facilitating increased vehicle traffic across University. Consider signage, design, and/or singalization options for reducing through-traffic on West Frontage Road.
- 5-4 | **Finally, design the overpass to allow people who feel confident cycling in traffic (e.g. "vehicular cyclists") to travel across the overpass.**

Walk Bike Berkeley, a group of founded by Berkeley residents, advocates to make walking and biking in Berkeley safe, low-stress, and fun for people of all ages and abilities. We want a healthy, just, and sustainable transportation system in Berkeley.

Sincerely,

Ben Gerhardstein
2320 Acton St.
Berkeley, CA 94702

Charles Siegel
Bonita Ave.
Berkeley, CA 94709

Jacqueline Erbe
1614 9th Street
Berkeley, CA 94710

Liza Lutzker
2596 Milvia St.
Berkeley, CA 94704

Dan Leaverton

*University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project
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1910 Sacramento St.
Berkeley, CA 94702

Steve Solnit
2905 Deakin St.
Berkeley, CA 94705

Igor Tregub
1043 Virginia St.
Berkeley, CA 94710

Kathy Dervin
1909 San Antonio
Berkeley, Ca 94707

Jed Waldman
2528 Milvia St.
Berkeley, CA 94704

Karl Wanaselja
Cate Leger
2320 McGee Ave
Berkeley, CA 94703

Jason Popko
1647 Cornell Ave
Berkeley, CA 94702

Michael Hyatt
815 Ramona Ave
Albany, CA 94706

Melanie Curry
1601 Woolsey St
Berkeley CA 94703

Alex Sharenko
1011 Bancroft Way
Berkeley, CA 94710

Philip Morton
1334 1/2 Parker St
Berkeley, CA 94702

Monika Mann
2217 Browning St
Berkeley, CA 94702

Janet Byron
1435 Allston Way
Berkeley, CA 94702

Jeff Vincent
1134 Bancroft Way
Berkeley, CA 94702

*University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project
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Joe Walton
2126 Bonar Street
Berkeley, CA 94702

Jonathan Walden
2230 California
Berkeley, CA 94703

Nick Swanson-Hysell
943 Bancroft Way
Berkeley, CA 94710

Cc:
Mayor Jesse Arreguin
Councilmember Rashi Kesarwani
Councilmember Cheryl Davila
Farid Javandel, City of Berkeley
Nisha Patel, City of Berkeley
Beth Thomas, City of Berkeley
Eric Anderson, City of Berkeley
Laurie Lau, Caltrans
Sergio Ruiz, CalTrans

Response to Comment 5, Walk Bike Berkeley

5-1

Thank you for your comments regarding safety and accessibility improvements for bicycles and pedestrians. The project team is currently studying ways to improve pedestrian and bicycle access as part of this project, and to better integrate the facilities into the existing network, including the existing University Avenue Pedestrian Overcrossing, 800 feet to the south. Modifications to the pedestrian and bicycle facilities will include bringing walkways into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and will attempt to improve the existing facilities within the Project Area as much as is feasible within the scope. However, there are no dedicated pedestrian or bicycle facilities on the portion of the University Avenue structure over the railroad tracks between the Interstate 80 (I-80) interchange and the Sixth Street intersection. That approach and structure is owned by the City of Berkeley and the City has no near-term plans to provide pedestrian and bicycle facilities on that portion of the structure, so providing Class II bike lanes along University Avenue within the project area may incorrectly give bicyclists the impression that the facility is continuous. Proposed improvements will focus on how to transition pedestrians and bicyclists across University Avenue between the San Francisco Bay Trail and the interchange, so that they are able to access the existing street network.

Undersignees have been added to the project mailing/distribution list.

5-2

Please see response to Comment 5-1.

5-3

This project would keep freight on I-80 instead of funneling the freight vehicles onto local roads to avoid the overcrossing.

5-4

Please see response to Comment 5-1.

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University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project
Initial Study with Negative Declaration

Comment 6, W. J. Lotkonheuse (?)

COMMENT CARD

Name (Please Print) **W J Lotkonheuse**

Address (Home) **1057 Chestnut #311** State **CA** Zip **94131**

Authorized Representative: (Name of organization or person) **(510) 841 8723**

Address (Business) _____ city _____ state _____ zip code _____

Comments:

**Coming east from the
overcrossing after dark,
once down the ramp, the
alley is a dangerous
construction, the confined
Condition Confined**

For additional comments use reverse side.

Response to Comment 6, W. J. Lotkonheuse (?)

The east side alley that you refer to is not part of Caltrans right-of-way and falls outside the scope of the project, but lighting will be provided on the overcrossing itself. The adoption of the squared-up intersections and roundabouts would increase safety.

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University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project
Initial Study with Negative Declaration

Comment 7, Chris Walker

COMMENT CARD

Name (Please Print) CHRIS WALKER


Address (Home) 931 SANTA BARBARA RD. BERKELEY, CA. 94707
city state zip code

Authorized Representative: (Name of organization or agency) _____

Address (Business) _____ city _____ state _____ zip code _____

Comments: I WOULD URGE THE DESIGNERS TO LOOK
AT CONNECTIONS FROM THE ADA RAMP TO
AQUATIC PARK, I AM ALSO INTERESTED IN
SEEING MORE BIKE + PEDESTRIAN ACCESS TO
THE MARINA (COORDINATE WITH CITY ON THE APPROACH)

THANK YOU
-CHRIS

 For additional comments use reverse side.

Response to Comment 7, Chris Walker

The project will include pedestrian ramp structures on both sides of the overcrossing that will comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and conform to existing City sidewalks.

The project team is currently studying ways to improve pedestrian and bicycle access as part of this project, and to better integrate the facilities into the existing network, in complement to the existing University Avenue Pedestrian Overcrossing, 800 feet to the south. Modifications to the pedestrian and bicycle facilities will bring walkways into compliance with ADA and will attempt to improve the existing facilities within the project area as much as is feasible within the scope.

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University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project
Initial Study with Negative Declaration

Comment 8, Dede Dewey

COMMENT CARD

Name (Please Print) DEDE DEWEY 1/2

Address (Home) _____ city _____ state _____ zip code _____

Authorized Representative: (Name of organization or agency) _____

Address (Business) _____ city _____ state _____ zip code _____

Comments: ① MAKE ADA RAMP WIDE
ENOUGH TO ALLOW WHEELCHAIRS
& STROUTERS TO PASS.

510 653 6063

For additional comments use reverse side.

Caltrans

② MECHANICAL DEVICES OPERATED
REMAINER BLOWING RAMP
& SIDEWALKS: PASS WAY TO
NOT ALLOW ROBOTS TO BLOCK
SIDEWALKS

- WHEELCHAIR USER

③ MAKE SOME FINISHED SIDEWALKS ^{ON BRIDGE}
WIDE ENOUGH W/ NO OBSTRUCTIONS

④ PREFER "WALK / DON'T WALK" SIGNALS
INSTEAD OF FLASHING BEACONS

Response to Comment 8, Dede Dewey

The project will include pedestrian ramp structures on both sides of the overcrossing that will comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and conform to existing City sidewalks.

*University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project
Initial Study with Negative Declaration*

The project team is currently studying ways to improve pedestrian and bicycle access as part of this project, and to better integrate the facilities into the existing network, in complement to the existing University Avenue Pedestrian Overcrossing, 800 feet to the south. Modifications to the pedestrian and bicycle facilities will bring walkways into compliance with ADA and will attempt to improve the existing facilities within the project area as much as is feasible within the scope. The ADA ramps will be free of permanent obstructions.

*University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project
Initial Study with Negative Declaration*

Comment 9, Jim Cunradi

COMMENT CARD

Name (Please Print) Jim Cunradi


Address (Home) _____ city _____ state _____ zip code _____

Authorized Representative: (Name of organization or agency) AC Transit

Address (Business) 1600 Franklin St city Oakland state CA zip code 94612

Comments: This project needs to incorporate direct HOV connectors. As designed, this is an SOV project

For additional comments use reverse side.



Response to Comment 9, Jim Cunradi

The purpose of this project is to raise the vertical clearance of the University Avenue Overcrossing to allow more goods movement through the corridor. Freight trucks do not qualify to use High-Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes, and the project will not change nor add capacity to the Interstate 80 (I-80) mainline. The existing HOV lanes on the mainline, as well as the westbound and eastbound I-80 loop on-ramps from University Avenue will remain unchanged.

The installation of roundabouts on University Avenue at the I-80 on and off-ramps will improve the flow of traffic along University Avenue over I-80, which will also benefit public transit. In addition, raising the clearance of the overcrossing reduces the risk of an oversize truck hitting the structure and causing the freeway to be closed. The increased clearance will also better accommodate double-decker buses, such as those AC Transit may use. Providing direct connector ramps for HOV preferential lanes from University Avenue to the HOV lanes on mainline I-80 is beyond the scope of this project.

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*University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project
Initial Study with Negative Declaration*

Comment 10, Mark Bell

From: mmarkbell@yahoo.com
Sent: Wednesday, December 12, 2018 9:49 AM
To: University Overcrossing@DOT; Hallissy, Cristin@DOT; Weingarten, Carl@DOT
Subject: I-80 University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project Comments

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by mmarkbell@yahoo.com on December 12th, 2018 at 09:49AM (PST).

name: mark bell
email: mmarkbell@yahoo.com
telephone: 5103813740
comment: I strongly prefer alternative 1. Caltrans and all public agencies - with needs far outstripping available funds, please choose the least expensive alternatives so that more projects can be addressed. I live in Berkeley.
Mark Bell

Response to Comment 10, Mark Bell

Your preference for Alternative 1 is noted.

*University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project
Initial Study with Negative Declaration*

Comment 11, Alex Bixler

From: Alex Bixler <ajbixler@berkeley.edu>
Sent: Wednesday, December 12, 2018 1:32 PM
To: University Overcrossing@DOT
Subject: University crossing - questions

I'm writing with regard to the proposed university/HWY80 interchange project. I have three questions/comments:

I find any of the options acceptable, and would find the traffic throughput improvements well worth paying for. However, I would urge that the traffic benefit of the roundabouts be weighed against the increased likelihood of collisions. I regularly navigate roundabouts in Berkeley (Marin circle and Piedmont/Channing) and find them chaotic and dangerous, particularly with respect to car/bike or car/pedestrian collisions. Are these factors being considered?

Will there be any change made to the pedestrian bridge south of the freeway overpass? If this remains in place, the roundabouts would make me less nervous.

Will there be any change to the half of the Northbound offramp that continues North toward the 4th St. shopping complex and Frontage Rd (East)? This offramp is very helpful to those of us who live in North Berkeley - PLEASE KEEP THIS!

Sincerely,
Alex Bixler

Response to Comment 11, Alex Bixler

Research has shown that roundabouts have lower crash rates than traffic signal intersections and stop sign-controlled intersections. Based on the "Roundabouts: An Informational Guide Second Edition," published by the Federal Highway Administration, roundabouts reduce the speed of traffic going through an intersection, provide safer traffic movement, improve traffic flow, and enhance safety for non-motorized traffic.

No changes are proposed for the pedestrian bridge south of the freeway overpass. The connection to the east frontage road from the Eastbound Interstate 80 (I-80) off-ramp will be retained.

*University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project
Initial Study with Negative Declaration*

Comment 12, Elwood Blues

From: eblues@safetymail.info
Sent: Monday, December 17, 2018 4:51 PM
To: University Overcrossing@DOT; Hallissy, Cristin@DOT; Weingarten, Carl@DOT
Subject: I-80 University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project Comments

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by eblues@safetymail.info on December 17th, 2018 at 04:50PM (PST).

name: Elwood Blues

email: eblues@safetymail.info

comment: I love a good traffic circle, however alternatives 3 and 4 appear to be attempts to maximize the number of times a pedestrian has to cross traffic, thus maximizing the risk of injury or death. The crosswalk across the curved exit ramp looks exceptionally precarious. How many pedestrians are you hoping to injury with these designs?

Response to Comment 12, Elwood Blues

Research has shown that roundabouts have lower crash rates than traffic signal intersections and stop sign-controlled intersections. Based on the "Roundabouts: An Informational Guide Second Edition," published by the Federal Highway Administration, roundabouts reduce the speed of traffic going through an intersection, provide safer traffic movement, improve traffic flow, and enhance safety for non-motorized traffic.

The project team is currently studying ways to improve pedestrian and bicycle access as part of this project, and to better integrate the facilities into the existing bicycle/pedestrian network, including the existing University Avenue Pedestrian Overcrossing, 800 feet to the south. Modifications to the pedestrian and bicycle facilities will bring walkways into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and will attempt to improve the existing facilities within the project area as much as is feasible within the scope.

*University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project
Initial Study with Negative Declaration*

Comment 13, Francie Brady (Christina)

From: franciebrady1@aol.com
Sent: Wednesday, December 12, 2018 10:19 AM
To: University Overcrossing@DOT
Subject: University Avenue I-80 overcrossing

Please no roundabouts! Too many people don't know how these work. I drive through the very small and very easily manageable roundabout by the UC Berkeley campus on Piedmont Ave and it is apparently clear that people just don't know how to use roundabouts. I think one where you are suggesting by the freeway on University Ave will end up being a nightmare and very dangerous.

-Christina

Response to Comment 13, Francie Brady (Christina)

Thank you for sharing your concerns regarding roundabouts. Research has shown that roundabouts have lower crash rates than traffic signal intersections and stop sign controlled intersections. Based on the "Roundabouts: An Informational Guide Second Edition," published by the Federal Highway Administration, roundabouts reduce the speed of traffic going through an intersection, provide safer traffic movement, improve traffic flow, and enhance safety for non-motorized traffic.

*University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project
Initial Study with Negative Declaration*

Comment 14, Summer Brenner

From: summerbrenner@gmail.com
Sent: Wednesday, December 19, 2018 7:37 AM
To: University Overcrossing@DOT; Hallissy, Cristin@DOT; Weingarten, Carl@DOT
Subject: I-80 University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project Comments

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by summerbrenner@gmail.com on December 19th, 2018 at 07:37AM (PST).

name: Summer Brenner
email: summerbrenner@gmail.com
telephone: 5106443099
comment: Please give FULL consideration to designing and financing passage for pedestrians and bicyclists.
Thank you. Summer Brenner

Response to Comment 14, Summer Brenner

The project team is currently studying ways to improve pedestrian and bicycle access as part of this project, and to better integrate the facilities into the existing bicycle/pedestrian network, including the existing University Avenue Pedestrian Overcrossing, 800 feet to the south. Modifications to the pedestrian and bicycle facilities will bring walkways into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and will attempt to improve the existing facilities within the project area as much as is feasible within the scope of the project.

*University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project
Initial Study with Negative Declaration*

Comment 15, Shirley Carrie Brewin

From: 2232.MLK.Jr.Way@svctwww1.dot.ca.gov
Sent: Tuesday, December 18, 2018 9:09 AM
To: University Overcrossing@DOT; Hallissy, Cristin@DOT; Weingarten, Carl@DOT
Subject: I-80 University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project Comments

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by
2232 MLK Jr Way, Berkeley 94704 on December 18th, 2018 at 09:08AM (PST).

name: Shirley Carrie Brewin
email: 2232 MLK Jr Way, Berkeley 94704
telephone: 510 527 9257

comment: Please consider adding a bike/ped path center lane to the overpass. It's imperative that we (Caltrans included) begin to address climate change on every possible level. Thanks.

Response to Comment 15, Shirley Carrie Brewin

The project team is currently studying ways to improve pedestrian and bicycle access as part of this project, and to better integrate the facilities into the existing bicycle/pedestrian network, including the existing University Avenue Pedestrian Overcrossing, 800 feet to the south. Modifications to the pedestrian and bicycle facilities will bring walkways into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and will attempt to improve the existing facilities within the project area as much as is feasible within the scope of the project.

Please refer to Section 2.1.7 of the University Avenue Overcrossing Vehicle Clearance Project Initial Study for further discussion regarding greenhouse gas (GHG) as it pertains to this project.

This project would keep freight on Interstate 80 (I-80) instead of funneling the freight vehicles onto local roads to avoid the overcrossing. Keeping the freight vehicles on I-80 in free-flowing traffic and not idling on local streets will overall reduce the amount of GHG emissions within the extended project area. The ability to fit larger freight vehicles through the area may result in less overall smaller freight vehicles within the area, thus reducing the GHG emissions as well.

*University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project
Initial Study with Negative Declaration*

Comment 16, Dave Campbell

From: Dave Campbell <dave.campbell62@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, December 6, 2018 12:45 PM
To: Ruiz, Sergio@DOT <sergio.ruiz@dot.ca.gov>
Subject: Bike East Bay shared a link with you

Sergio

Are you looking at the University Ave project in Berkeley? Is this project even necessary? Any insights you have, thanks.
dot.ca.gov/d4/80universit...

Dave Campbell
(c) 510.701.5971
sent from my iPhone

Response to Comment 16, Dave Campbell

The University Ave Overcrossing currently has nonstandard vertical clearances above Interstate 80 (I-80) of 14 feet -4 inches in the westbound direction, and 14 feet 5 inches in the eastbound direction. The current vertical clearance standard is 16 feet 6 inches. The clearance deficiencies at the University Ave Overcrossing impedes safe and efficient movement of oversized vehicles and freight on I-80, and requires oversized vehicles to take lengthy detours to avoid the overcrossing. The University Ave Overcrossing also has structural deficiencies that necessitate repair. An impact to the bridge from an oversized vehicle could also result in closure of the overcrossing for a lengthy period and necessitate costly repairs. It is highly critical that the University Ave Overcrossing vertical clearance be increased to 16 feet 6 inches. In addition, this project is included in the Accelerated Bridge Delivery – Freight Corridor Improvement program (Program), which has been developed to strategically identify bridges where truck load and/or vertical clearance restrictions constrain freight movement. I-80 is identified as one of the most critical highway portions of the U.S. freight system under the National Highway Freight Network, with traffic volume reaching 275,000 vehicles per day and an average of 7,500 hours of daily traffic delays. The Program will retire several high-volume corridor bridges and restore extended service lives, resulting in lower maintenance costs. After these bridges have been fixed, it is expected that these corridors will result in significant freight movement time savings, which will have economic benefits.

*University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project
Initial Study with Negative Declaration*

Comment 17, Paul Canin

From: Paul Canin <phcanin@earthlink.net>
Sent: Saturday, December 15, 2018 5:29 PM
To: University Overcrossing@DOT
Subject: OPINION

Having a trafficlight at the east end of the overpass as indicated in two of the proposals makes no sense. It would cause delays and more aggravation than necessary.

Proposal plan # 3 with roundabouts at the east and west ends seems to be the most sensible solution for smooth traffic.

Paul Canin (architect) 201 University Avenue, Berkeley, Ca. 94710

510-847-0914 phcanin@earthlink.net

Response to Comment 17, Paul Canin

Your support of Alternative 3 is noted.

*University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project
Initial Study with Negative Declaration*

Comment 18, Jeanne Clinton

From: jeanne.clinton@earthlink.net
Sent: Saturday, December 15, 2018 4:17 PM
To: University Overcrossing@DOT; Hallissy, Cristin@DOT; Weingarten, Carl@DOT
Subject: I-80 University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project Comments

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by jeanne.clinton@earthlink.net on December 15th, 2018 at 04:16PM (PST).

name: Jeanne Clinton
email: jeanne.clinton@earthlink.net
telephone: 5102772250
comment: Alternative 3 looks like it would permit the smoothest flow of traffic, without having traffic pile up at a traffic light on the east side of the freeway under Option 4. My experience at other nearby freeway intersections with a traffic light, such as at Central avenue in Albany/ El Cerrito is that traffic congestion is horrendous, with little room for the cars to pile up at lights. Then only a few cars get through when a light turns green. I think the round-about will allow a smoother flow of traffic.

Response to Comment 18, Jeanne Clinton

Your support of Alternative 3 is noted.

*University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project
Initial Study with Negative Declaration*

Comment 19, John Danielson

From: johncd@jps.net
Sent: Thursday, December 13, 2018 7:47 AM
To: University Overcrossing@DOT; Hallissy, Cristin@DOT; Weingarten, Carl@DOT
Subject: I-80 University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project Comments

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by johncd@jps.net on December 13th, 2018 at 07:47AM (PST).

name: John C Danielson
email: johncd@jps.net
telephone: 15103344198

comment: I like the third option with the fourth as second choice.

My drive into the Berkeley Marina is from the north and usually exit the freeway one exit early at Gilman to avoid having to make a left turn across three lanes of traffic (two east bound and the dedicated left turn lane for the south bound frontage road). And I'm forced to use the Gilman on-ramp when I return home due to the existing lack of a usable north bound on-ramp from University for marina traffic.

The round-about is a great design for improved traffic flow.

Response to Comment 19, John Danielson

Your support of Alternative 3 is noted.

*University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project
Initial Study with Negative Declaration*

Comment 20, Justin Davis

From: Justin Davis <birdfish@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, December 18, 2018 9:27 AM
To: University Overcrossing@DOT
Subject: Roundabouts are great.

Strong vote for the double-roundabout solution.
Efficient, fits city character, smart.

Yes please.
Justin Davis
Berkeley

Response to Comment 20, Justin Davis

Your support of Alternative 3 is noted.

*University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project
Initial Study with Negative Declaration*

Comment 21, Amber Dean

From: adean@aquaticresidences.com
Sent: Thursday, December 13, 2018 10:00 AM
To: University Overcrossing@DOT; Hallissy, Cristin@DOT; Weingarten, Carl@DOT
Subject: I-80 University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project Comments

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by adean@aquaticresidences.com on December 13th, 2018 at 10:00AM (PST).

name: Amber Dean
email: adean@aquaticresidences.com
telephone: 15102502404
comment: What will the alternative traffic routes be during construction? What will the new transbay bus route be? As a community manager of nearby apartments, I am a fan of the double roundabout design. It eliminates or reduces the potential for cars to be at a standstill in front of apartments, which feels very much like a lack of privacy & can frankly allow ne'er-do-wells to scout out homes to rob. Thanks very much for your time.

Best,

Amber

Response to Comment 21, Amber Dean

Thank you for your comment and questions. Alternative 3 with the two roundabouts has been identified as the preferred alternative.

Traffic detours will be determined during the design phase of the project. The construction of the new overcrossing, including realigned ramps, a new bicycle-pedestrian ramp, roadway realignments, and the Interstate 80 (I-80) pavement replacement work will require multiple stages of construction. Lane closures for this project will take place during off-peak travel periods. Nighttime full closures of eastbound and westbound I-80 are anticipated to allow for the demolition of the existing overcrossing superstructure and various construction activities for constructing the new overcrossing.

A Traffic Management Plan (TMP) will be developed in detail during the design phase of the project to indicate how construction can be accomplished using conventional traffic control measures to minimize and prevent traffic delay and inconvenience to the travelling public. The Traffic Management Plan will involve coordination with the City of Berkeley, the Alameda County Transportation Commission, the California Highway Patrol, AC Transit, emergency services, and local businesses/neighborhood.

*University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project
Initial Study with Negative Declaration*

Comment 22, Paul Deuter

From: pdeuter@outlook.com
Sent: Tuesday, December 18, 2018 2:53 PM
To: University Overcrossing@DOT; Hallissy, Cristin@DOT; Weingarten, Carl@DOT
Subject: I-80 University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project Comments

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by pdeuter@outlook.com on December 18th, 2018 at 02:52PM (PST).

name: Paul Deuter
email: pdeuter@outlook.com
telephone: 5106665960
comment: In my opinion, it makes sense to include bike and ped improvements since the entire overcrossing will be renovated anyway. The roundabouts also seem like a good idea, because currently traffic backs up quite a bit at peak periods due to the stop signs.

Response to Comment 22, Paul Deuter

Your comments are noted.

*University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project
Initial Study with Negative Declaration*

Comment 23, Lucy Flood

From: Lucy Flood <lucytheflood@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, December 10, 2018 9:33 AM
To: University Overcrossing@DOT
Subject: We vote "No" on the university overpass clearance project

Dear Ms. De Pont,

I am a homeowner on Addison St. and I am strongly opposed to the University overpass being lifted to make room for more oversized freight for the following reasons:

A. Berkeley and Alameda County have high levels of asthma, thanks to exhaust from I-580. It doesn't make financial, public health, or community-wide sense to subsidize enormous diesel trucks emitting air-polluting exhaust at the expense of our own children's health.

B. This strip of I-580 is already seriously congested. This will only make it more congested, drive down real estate values, and decrease quality of life for Berkeley and bay area residents. Let's not compromise our quality of life and our community member's pocket books in exchange for more traffic.

C. Our community would benefit much more in terms of quality of life and real estate values by spending our DOT tax money on promoting public transportation projects, tree planting projects, and other community resiliency projects that will make it easier for us to enjoy our homes in the bay area and that will help Berkeley be more prepared for climate change.

D. Berkeley, Richmond and Oakland have all declared a Climate Emergency and this project does not move us in that desired direction. In climate change scenarios, our homes in West Berkeley may be under water, so for many reasons, we should be doing all we can to protect West Berkeley's real estate values and quality of life and not continue contributing to the problem.

I would very much appreciate a reply addressing my community's concerns. Thank you for reviewing my concerns.

My very best,

Lucy Flood

Response to Comment 23, Lucy Flood

The University Ave Overcrossing (UAOC) currently has nonstandard vertical clearances above Interstate 80 (I-80), of 14 feet 4 inches in the westbound direction, and 14 feet 5 inches in the eastbound direction. The current vertical clearance standard is 16 feet 6 inches. The clearance deficiencies at UAOC impedes safe and efficient movement of oversized vehicles and freight on I-80, and requires oversized vehicles to take lengthy detours to avoid the overcrossing. The UAOC also has structural deficiencies that necessitate repair. An impact to the bridge from an oversized vehicle could also result in closure of the overcrossing for a lengthy period and necessitate costly repairs. It is highly critical that the UAOC vertical clearance be increased to 16 feet 6 inches. In addition, this project is included in the Accelerated Bridge Delivery – Freight Corridor Improvement program (Program), which has been developed to strategically identify bridges where truck load and/or vertical clearance restrictions constrain freight movement. I-80 is identified as one of the most critical highway portions of the U.S. freight system under the National Highway Freight Network, with traffic volume reaching 275,000 vehicles per day and an average of 7,500 hours of daily traffic delays. The Program will retire several high-volume corridor bridges and restore extended service lives, resulting in lower maintenance costs. After these bridges have been fixed, it is expected that these corridors will result in significant freight movement time savings, which will have economic benefits.

The traffic operational benefits of the roundabouts have been studied in the Project's Traffic Operation Analysis Report (9/19/2018). While improved traffic operations improve air quality due to less idling and lower speeds than occur under existing conditions, it is beyond the scope of this project to study these parameters.

Please refer to Figure 2.1.7-3, which depicts SLR projected to year 2050. As you can see, the project falls outside of the SLR impact area.

*University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project
Initial Study with Negative Declaration*

Comment 24, Steven Frank

From: Steven Frank <smfesp@comcast.net>
Sent: Wednesday, December 12, 2018 10:52 AM
To: University Overcrossing@DOT
Subject: University Ave overpass

I suggest that Cal Trans do an underpass instead, run University Ave. under the freeway, with roundabout ramps. Aesthetically Barring that solution, replacing and adding roundabout ramps for the best traffic flow and control.

Steven Frank

Response to Comment 24, Steven Frank

Your suggestion is noted.

The Project Design Team considered lowering the mainline but needed to withdraw it from consideration. Please see "Alternatives Considered but Eliminated from Further Discussion Prior to the Initial Study" (page 25).

*University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project
Initial Study with Negative Declaration*

Comment 25, Steven Friedland

From: Steven Friedland <fifthstfarms@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, December 04, 2018 10:50 AM
To: University Overcrossing@DOT
Subject: Comments on project

Dear Rebecca de Pont--

My only comment on the University Overcrossing project is that the budget and timing should await implementation of changes at the Gilman Street interchange. That intersection seems to me a much higher priority than raising the University overcrossing.

Thank you.

Steven Friedland
1517 5th Street
Berkeley, CA 94710

Response to Comment 25, Steven Friedland

The University Ave Overcrossing (UAOC) currently has nonstandard vertical clearances above Interstate 80 (I-80), of 14 feet 4 inches in the westbound direction, and 14 feet 5 inches in the eastbound direction. The current vertical clearance standard is 16 feet 6 inches. The clearance deficiencies at UAOC impedes safe and efficient movement of oversized vehicles and freight on I-80, and requires oversized vehicles to take lengthy detours to avoid the overcrossing. The UAOC also has structural deficiencies that necessitate repair. An impact to the bridge from an oversized vehicle could also result in closure of the overcrossing for a lengthy period and necessitate costly repairs. It is highly critical that the UAOC vertical clearance be increased to 16 feet 6 inches. In addition, this project is included in the Accelerated Bridge Delivery – Freight Corridor Improvement program (Program), which has been developed to strategically identify bridges where truck load and/or vertical clearance restrictions constrain freight movement. I-80 is identified as one of the most critical highway portions of the U.S. freight system under the National Highway Freight Network, with traffic volume reaching 275,000 vehicles per day and an average of 7,500 hours of daily traffic delays. The Program will retire several high-volume corridor bridges and restore extended service lives, resulting in lower maintenance costs. After these bridges have been fixed, it is expected that these corridors will result in significant freight movement time savings, which will have economic benefits.

*University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project
Initial Study with Negative Declaration*

Comment 26, Eric D. Friedman

From: eric@spottedsnake.net
Sent: Thursday, December 13, 2018 3:36 AM
To: University Overcrossing@DOT; Hallissy, Cristin@DOT; Weingarten, Carl@DOT
Subject: I-80 University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project Comments

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by eric@spottedsnake.net on December 13th, 2018 at 03:35AM (PST).

name: Eric D. Friedman
email: eric@spottedsnake.net
telephone: 5109842575
comment: Definitely do the two roundabouts but only if they can be designed so that no homeless camps emerge.

Response to Comment 26, Eric D. Friedman

The project design will include elements of encampment abatement. At this location Caltrans maintenance conducts bi-monthly cleanups.

*University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project
Initial Study with Negative Declaration*

Comment 27, Pat Hill

From: patlhill@juno.com
Sent: Tuesday, December 18, 2018 2:57 PM
To: University Overcrossing@DOT; Hallissy, Cristin@DOT; Weingarten, Carl@DOT
Subject: I-80 University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project Comments

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by patlhill@juno.com on December 18th, 2018 at 02:57PM (PST).

name: pat hill
email: patlhill@juno.com
telephone: 5105276172
comment: absolutely not
another waste of tax dollars.
repave streets put in lighting
repair infrastructure
quit the waste

Response to Comment 27, Pat Hill

The current clearance height of 14 feet 4 inches in the westbound direction and 14 feet 5 inches in the eastbound (direction must be raised to the current Caltrans standard of 16 feet 6 inches to allow for more efficient travel of oversized vehicles. The existing vertical clearance below the University Avenue Overcrossing does not meet current Caltrans standards. The low vertical clearance impedes safe and efficient movement of oversized vehicles and freight on Interstate 80 (I-80). The Accelerated Freight Corridor Bridge Improvement Program has been developed by Caltrans for strategically identifying aging and obsolete bridges that restrict freight movement due to truck load and/or vertical clearance restrictions. Under this program, the state bridge inventory has been reviewed with specific criteria to expedite the repair of critical bridges. I-80 has been identified and selected as one of the corridors that needs improvement.

*University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project
Initial Study with Negative Declaration*

Comment 28, Jackson Hurst

From: Jackson Hurst <ghostlightmater@yahoo.com>
Sent: Thursday, December 13, 2018 2:44 PM
To: University Overcrossing@DOT
Subject: Be added to the mailing list for the I-80 University Avenue Overcrossing Project

Hi I would like to be added to the mailing list for the I-80 University Avenue Overcrossing Project. My mailing address is 4216 Cornell crossing, kennesaw, Georgia, 30144. Please respond saying that you got this email

Sent from ghostlightmater@yahoo.com

Response to Comment 28, Jackson Hurst

You will be added to the distribution list for the project.

*University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project
Initial Study with Negative Declaration*

Comment 29, Jeff Ingram

From: jeffingram@gmail.com <jeffingram@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, December 17, 2018 4:11 PM
To: University Overcrossing@DOT; Hallissy, Cristin@DOT; Weingarten, Carl@DOT
Subject: I-80 University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project Comments

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by jeffingram@gmail.com on December 17th, 2018 at 04:11PM (PST).

name: jeff ingram
email: jeffingram@gmail.com
comment: why not just a single giant roundabout (i.e., 300' diameter) that can serve all the various entry and exit points? topologically it is no different than the 'dual roundabout' but you have much less sharp turns for trucks and buses to deal with, and it would look kinda cool. The roundabout can have 2 lanes (the outer lane for right turns, the inner lane for left turns and straight movements). And get rid of the pedestrian access, there's already a pedestrian bridge only a few hundred feet south of this location.

Response to Comment 29, Jeff Ingram

Caltrans will work with the City of Berkeley to come up with roundabout designs that are both easy to maintain, as well as sensitive to the environment nearby. The project team is currently studying ways to improve pedestrian and bicycle access as part of this project, and to better integrate the facilities into the existing network, including to the existing University Avenue Pedestrian Overcrossing, 800 feet to the south. Modifications to the pedestrian and bicycle facilities will bring walkways into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and will attempt to improve the existing facilities within the project area as much as is feasible within the project scope.

*University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project
Initial Study with Negative Declaration*

Comment 30, Ethan Jacobs

From: ethanjacobs42@gmail.com <ethanjacobs42@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, December 13, 2018 7:06 PM
To: University Overcrossing@DOT <UniversityOvercrossing@dot.ca.gov>; Hallissy, Cristin@DOT <cristin.hallissy@dot.ca.gov>; Weingarten, Carl@DOT <carl.weingarten@dot.ca.gov>
Subject: I-80 University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project Comments

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by ethanjacobs42@gmail.com on December 13th, 2018 at 07:06PM (PST).

name: Ethan Jacobs
email: ethanjacobs42@gmail.com
comment: Please do Alternative 3. It's the most efficient and effective solution. Drivers will quickly learn the new roundabouts and appreciate the improved flow.

Response to Comment 30, Ethan Jacobs

Your support of Alternative 3 is noted.

*University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project
Initial Study with Negative Declaration*

Comment 31, Allen Kanady

From: Crapbag1@yahoo.com
Sent: Wednesday, December 12, 2018 11:03 AM
To: University Overcrossing@DOT; Hallissy, Cristin@DOT; Weingarten, Carl@DOT
Subject: I-80 University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project Comments

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Crapbag1@yahoo.com on December 12th, 2018 at 11:02AM (PST).

name: Allen Kanady

email: Crapbag1@yahoo.com

telephone: 5105214149

comment: I live in Berkeley and take this on-ramp and exit every single day to work. I have never experienced high traffic or a long backlog of automobiles. I believe the best solution is the simplest one. Alternative 1, raising the current structure two feet, would accomplish your goals in an efficient and effective manner. That is the best solution.

Allen Kanady

Response to Comment 31, Allen Kanady

Your support of Alternative 1 is noted.

*University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project
Initial Study with Negative Declaration*

Comment 32, Nathaniel Kane

From: nathaniel.kane@gmail.com <nathaniel.kane@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, December 12, 2018 8:12 AM
To: University Overcrossing@DOT <UniversityOvercrossing@dot.ca.gov>; Hallissy, Cristin@DOT <cristin.hallissy@dot.ca.gov>; Weingarten, Carl@DOT <carl.weingarten@dot.ca.gov>
Subject: I-80 University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project Comments

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by nathaniel.kane@gmail.com on December 12th, 2018 at 08:12AM (PST).

name: Nathaniel Kane
email: nathaniel.kane@gmail.com
telephone: 9785050090
comment: Any design needs to accommodate bike lanes. None of these options appear to include bikes. Please redesign to include bike lanes.

Response to Comment 32, Nathaniel Kane

Thank you for your comment.

The project team is currently studying ways to improve pedestrian and bicycle access as part of this project, and to better integrate the facilities into the existing pedestrian/bicycle network, including to the existing University Avenue Pedestrian Overcrossing, 800 feet to the south. Modifications to the pedestrian and bicycle facilities will bring walkways into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and will attempt to improve the existing facilities within the Project Area as much as is feasible within the scope. However, there are no dedicated pedestrian or bicycle facilities on the portion of the University Avenue structure between the interchange and the Sixth Street intersection. That approach and structure is owned by the City of Berkeley and the City has no near-term plans to provide pedestrian and bicycle facilities on that portion of the structure. Providing Class II bike lanes along University Avenue within the project area may incorrectly give bicyclists the impression that the facility is continuous. Proposed improvements will focus on how to transition pedestrians and bicyclists across University Avenue between the San Francisco Bay Trail and the interchange, so that they are able to access the existing street network.

*University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project
Initial Study with Negative Declaration*

Comment 33, Forest Kaser

From: forestkaser@gmail.com <forestkaser@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, December 12, 2018 9:00 PM
To: University Overcrossing@DOT; Hallissy, Cristin@DOT; Weingarten, Carl@DOT
Subject: I-80 University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project Comments

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by forestkaser@gmail.com on December 12th, 2018 at 09:00PM (PST).

name: Forest Kaser
email: forestkaser@gmail.com
telephone: 916-390-8679
comment: Option 4 seems like the best option. The current west intersection is horrible, and a roundabout there seems like it would be a big improvement. Given the extra expense, a second roundabout does not seem worthwhile.

Keep up the good work, transportation planners!

Response to Comment 33, Forest Kaser

Your support for Alternative 4 is noted.

*University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project
Initial Study with Negative Declaration*

Comment 34, Fred Krieger

From: Fred Krieger <fkrieger@msn.com>
Sent: Monday, December 17, 2018 12:32 PM
To: University Overcrossing@DOT
Subject: I-80 University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project

Please select Option 3 with the two roundabouts. Thanks for the opportunity to comment.

Fred Krieger

Sent from Mail for Windows 10

Response to Comment 34, Fred Krieger

Your support for Alternative 3 is noted.

*University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project
Initial Study with Negative Declaration*

Comment 35, Bill Kristy

From: billkristy2@gmail.com
Sent: Tuesday, December 18, 2018 3:53 PM
To: University Overcrossing@DOT; Hallissy, Cristin@DOT; Weingarten, Carl@DOT
Subject: I-80 University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project Comments

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by billkristy2@gmail.com on December 18th, 2018 at 03:53PM (PST).

name: Bill Kristy
email: billkristy2@gmail.com
telephone: 510-843-7410
comment: It would be a shame not to take this rare opportunity to provide for pedestrian overcrossing.

Because University Avenue is the worst local street I'd like to see 3 lanes each way both on the overcrossing and the length of University Avenue; I don't have a concrete plan, but the Avenue's median and sidewalks are pretty wide; maybe even eliminating parking on one side of the street and creating off-street parking structures would provide the width for the needed third lanes.

Response to Comment 35, Bill Kristy

The project team is currently studying ways to improve pedestrian and bicycle access as part of this project, and to better integrate the facilities into the existing bicycle/pedestrian network, including to the existing University Avenue Pedestrian Overcrossing, 800 feet to the south. Modifications to the pedestrian and bicycle facilities will bring walkways into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and will attempt to improve the existing facilities within the project area as much as is feasible within the project scope.

Regarding three lanes for University Avenue the portion of the overcrossing structure between the freeway interchange and the Sixth Street intersection, as well as the length of University Avenue leading into Downtown Berkeley, is owned by the City of Berkeley. The City has no near-term plans to add a third lane on that portion of the structure.

*University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project
Initial Study with Negative Declaration*

Comment 36, Peter Kuhn

From: Peter Kuhn <petekuhn@comcast.net>
Sent: Thursday, December 13, 2018 9:51 AM
To: University Overcrossing@DOT
Subject: University Overcrossing

Thank you for the riveting animation concerning the alternatives proposed for the University Overcrossing.

However, it may have slipped your collective attentions that:

- 1) no more roundabouts will be allowed in Berkeley unless each includes an animatronic Yes playing their song of the same name at 160 db, 24x7
- 2) any development in this area will be on sacred land, and therefore must include a casino
- 3) any development must address the existing homeless encampment by the overpass by including a) free meth dispensers and b) opaque walls that will keep techie commuters from seeing poors
- 4) sidewalks and pedestrian ramps must include a navigable channel, minimum 15 feet wide and 6 foot depth, to allow sailing a 1963 Pearson Commander equipped with hydrofoils to the marina

Thanks again, and keep up the great work,

--

Peter

Response to Comment 36, Peter Kuhn

We are glad you found the animations riveting.

*University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project
Initial Study with Negative Declaration*

Comment 37, Tammy Kylo, AC Transit

From: tkyllo@actransit.org
Sent: Tuesday, December 18, 2018 12:03 PM
To: University Overcrossing@DOT; Hallissy, Cristin@DOT; Weingarten, Carl@DOT
Subject: I-80 University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project Comments

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by tkyllo@actransit.org on December 18th, 2018 at 12:02PM (PST).

name: Tammy Kylo
email: tkyllo@actransit.org
comment: December 18, 2018

Rebecca De Pont
Associate Environmental Planner
California Department of Transportation, District 4 PO Box 23660, MS 8B Oakland, CA 94623

Subject: Notice of Intent to Adopt a Negative Declaration for the University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project

Dear Ms. De Pont,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Initial Study for the University Avenue Vertical Clearance Project. The University Avenue interchange is one of the most important access points along Interstate 80 for high occupancy vehicles and AC Transit's Transbay buses. AC Transit recognizes the need for the project to facilitate freight movement and improve safety but has concerns about the exclusive focus on single occupant vehicles and lack of transit facilities incorporated into the design.

Importance of University Avenue/I-80 Interchange to Public Transit University is an important access point for AC Transit's Transbay express buses and has been identified as an important future regional bus connection. AC Transit currently operates two Transbay bus lines that use the University Avenue interchange, Line G and Line FS. These two lines together carry 1,000 daily passengers, up 13 percent from last year. In addition, AC Transit operates Line 51B across the overpass to serve the Berkeley Marina; this is one of our busiest lines.

To carry the growing number of Transbay bus riders, AC Transit has deployed double decker buses and will increase the service on Line FS by a third. AC Transit, as part of its Transbay Tomorrow plan, intends to increase the amount of bus service that will use University Avenue to access I-80 and the San Francisco-Oakland Bay Bridge.

AC Transit is not the only agency affected by this project. WestCat, the transit agency serving western Contra Costa County, is currently investigating new express bus routes to northern Alameda County. University Avenue is one possible access point under evaluation. Similarly, Contra Costa County's 2017 Express Bus Study designates University Avenue as a major access point for buses travelling the I-80 corridor. The Express Bus Study points out that there are 25,000 jobs in West Berkeley and Emeryville that could be served by regional express buses using University Avenue, potentially reducing the region's dependence on single occupant autos. It should also be noted that besides public transit buses, University Avenue is today the primary I-80 access route for large numbers of casual and organized carpools, van pools, inter-campus shuttles and tech buses. Transbay bus ridership in general is expected to grow spurred by a \$2 billion investment in the Salesforce Transit Center.

Center.
<https://na01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.wcctac.org%2Ffiles%2Fmanaged%2FDocument%2F662%2FCCCTA%2520Express%2520Bus%2520Final%2520Report%25201%2520June%25202017.pdf&data=02%7C01%7Cuniversityovercrossing%40dot.ca.gov%7Cf7ce085ef76c44aba70708d66523c412%7C621b0a64174043cc8d8>

*University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project
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84540d3487556%7C0%7C0%7C636807601623901460&data=0aNr9MUVUi6K25zhIXemGf0TkUETInplo2OcbGkcU2k%3D&reserved=0

Greenhouse Gases and Climate Change

The Initial Study asserts that estimates of greenhouse gases cannot be made at the project alternative level. By considering construction impacts alone, the IS asserts that all the alternatives would have similar GHG impacts. However, there can be a significant difference in GHG emissions between different designs during a lifetime of operations. For example, a design that results in time savings to transit or HOV travel time can promote a mode shift toward more sustainable means of transportation. This can be modeled and the GHG emission reductions calculated. Neglecting to include designs that support the mode shift is a significant oversight that must be remedied before a final project alternative is selected.

The section on "State Efforts" for GHG reduction, while noteworthy is not relevant to this project.

Use of ADT

The IS uses average daily traffic to inform and justify the design alternatives but does not mention alternative modes such as transit. The mode-neutral practice of using person-throughput is preferable to vehicle counts in determining suitable alternatives.

<http://www.dot.ca.gov/design/idd/cmhc/projects/ala80-580-880/04-2K830-PIR-PDS.pdf>

Support Complementary Investments

The project should be designed in a way that supports other investments that have already been made in the I-80 corridor. For example, AC Transit will be testing and activating traffic signals installed as part of the I-80 Integrated Corridor Management Project, other parts of which are operated by Caltrans. This project will benefit motorists as well as bus passengers. In addition, AC Transit operates transit signal priority systems on University Avenue and on San Pablo Avenue (SR 123), that would be impacted by this project.

Accommodation of Buses and Carpools

The lack of transit and HOV accommodation in these design alternatives is a major oversight. Currently, buses and carpools must use loop ramps that position vehicles in the outside lane, forcing a merge across the entire width of the freeway to access the HOV lane. Enshrining this situation for the 40 year life of the project is not acceptable and under no circumstances should this project be undertaken in a manner that precludes needed improvements to the transit and HOV network.

AC Transit requests development of a new bridge replacement alternative that can accommodate future direct HOV connectors. The direct connectors would benefit AC Transit Transbay Bus service, potential future regional express buses and the large number of current HOVs using University Avenue. To preserve future capacity, include direct connector stub ramps in the overcrossing structure. The final construction of the direct connector ramps and merge lanes could be completed as part of a future project. The design should include sufficient span to accommodate the horizontal space needed for the direct HOV connector ramps and the merge and transition areas in the median of the freeway.

Thank you for your consideration of our comments and we look forward to further coordination Respectfully,

Michael A. Hursh
General Manager

CC: Farid Javandel, City of Berkeley
Charlie Anderson, General Manager of WestCAT
Robert Thompson, Director of Planning, WestCAT

Response to Comment 37, Tammy Kylo, AC Transit

The purpose of this project is to increase the vertical clearance over Interstate 80 (I-80) at the University Avenue Overcrossing to the current standard clearance of 16 feet 6 inches to allow for more efficient and uninterrupted travel of oversized vehicles without having to detour and eliminate the possibility that trucks might impact the overcrossing. The University Ave Overcrossing currently has nonstandard vertical clearances above I-80 of 14 feet 4 inches in the westbound direction, and 14 feet 5 inches in the eastbound direction. In addition, this project is included in the Accelerated Bridge Delivery – Freight Corridor Improvement Program (Program), which has been developed to strategically identify bridges where truck load and/or vertical clearance restrictions constrain freight movement. I-80 is identified as one of the most critical highway portions of the U.S. freight system under the National Highway Freight Network, with traffic volume reaching 275,000 vehicles per day and an average of 7,500 hours of daily traffic delays. The Program will retire several high-volume corridor bridges and restore extended service lives, resulting in lower maintenance costs. After these bridges have been fixed, it is expected that these corridors will result in significant freight movement time savings, which will have economic benefits.

The existing High-Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes for the mainline I-80, the Westbound I-80 loop on-ramp, and Eastbound I 80 on-ramp from University Avenue, remain unchanged. Providing direct connector ramps for HOV preferential lanes from University Avenue to the HOV lanes on mainline I-80 is beyond the scope of this project.

*University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project
Initial Study with Negative Declaration*

Comment 38, Larry Mandella

From: larry.mandella@comcast.net
Sent: Tuesday, December 18, 2018 6:38 PM
To: University Overcrossing@DOT; Hallissy, Cristin@DOT; Weingarten, Carl@DOT
Subject: I-80 University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project Comments

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by larry.mandella@comcast.net on December 18th, 2018 at 06:37PM (PST).

name: Larry Mandella
email: larry.mandella@comcast.net
telephone: 5109131201
comment: I am a resident of Berkeley since 1968.
Thank you for the animations of the different possible plans.
I support Alternative #3 as the best version of this roadway alteration.
I would also appreciate it if some accommodation could be made for a bicycle lane in the renovation.
Thank you for the opportunity to submit input.

Response to Comment 38, Larry Mandella

Your support for Alternative 3 is noted.

The project team is currently studying ways to improve pedestrian and bicycle access as part of this project, and to better integrate the facilities into the existing pedestrian/bicycle network, including to the existing University Avenue Pedestrian Overcrossing, 800 feet to the south. Modifications to the pedestrian and bicycle facilities will bring walkways into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and will attempt to improve the existing facilities within the project area as much as is feasible within the project scope. However, there are no dedicated pedestrian or bicycle facilities on the portion of the University Avenue structure between the interchange and the Sixth Street intersection. That approach and structure is owned by the City of Berkeley and the City has no near-term plans to provide pedestrian and bicycle facilities on that portion of the structure, so providing Class II bike lanes along University Avenue within the project area may incorrectly give bicyclists the impression that the facility is continuous. Proposed improvements will focus on how to transition pedestrians and bicyclists across University Avenue between the San Francisco Bay Trail and the interchange, so that they are able to access the existing street network.

*University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project
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Comment 39, Adrian Merry

From: Merry, Adrian <AMerry@cityofberkeley.info>
Sent: Wednesday, December 12, 2018 3:15 PM
To: University Overcrossing@DOT
Subject: University Overpass

I am expressing my desire for alternative 3, double roundabout.
Coming from Europe where this design is standard I'm fully behind it. Why have a signal if one is not needed? Traffic flow is self-regulating.
Hope to see this soon!!!!
Rgds
Adrian Merry

Response to Comment 39, Adrian Merry

Your support for Alternative 3 is noted.

*University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project
Initial Study with Negative Declaration*

Comment 40, Ryan McCann

From: McCann, Ryan <RMcCann@cityofberkeley.info>
Sent: Thursday, December 13, 2018 9:17 AM
To: University Overcrossing@DOT
Subject: Input on plan to replace University Avenue I-80 overcrossing

My choice: Alternative 3, double roundabouts.

If there is a stop light on the east side as with option 4, this will lead to the back up of traffic on Univ and effect the 6th St. intersection/light. This westbound area of Univ Ave already has significant heavy traffic for the evening commute heading to 80.

I have been commuting on 80 to University for over 10 years.
Thank you for asking for feedback.
Ryan

Response to Comment 40, Ryan McCann

Your support for Alternative 3 is noted.

*University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project
Initial Study with Negative Declaration*

Comment 41, Ashley E. McClure

From: Practicing Lifestyle medicine <ashennessy@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, December 09, 2018 11:30 PM
To: University Overcrossing@DOT
Subject: We vote "No" on the university overpass clearance project

Hello,

We are homeowners on seventh street and see 3key reasons why the university overpass should not be lifted to make room for more oversized freight.

1- we live here and breathe the air polluted by I-580 exhaust. We don't need more enormous diesel trucks emitting air polluting exhaust for our children to grow up breathing.

2- this strip of I-580 is already horribly congested, we don't need any more traffic coming through.

3-We want our DOT tax money spent on promoting public transportation projects that will help move Berkeley toward fossil free and to mitigate climate change, NoT investing in more infrastructure for single driver vehicles. Berkeley, Richmond and Oakland have all declared a Climate Emergency and this project does not move us in the direction we need to be heading.

4-the construction period would be a disaster.

Please confirm documentation of these remarks and consider them seriously.

Thank you for your time.

Ashley E. McClure

Response to Comment 41, Ashley E. McClure

The University Ave Overcrossing (UAOC) currently has nonstandard vertical clearances above Interstate 80 (I-80), of 14 feet 4 inches in the westbound direction, and 14 feet 5 inches in the eastbound direction. The current vertical clearance standard is 16 feet 6 inches. The clearance deficiencies at UAOC impedes safe and efficient movement of oversized vehicles and freight on I-80, and requires oversized vehicles to take lengthy detours to avoid the overcrossing. In addition, raising the clearance of the overcrossing reduces the risk of an oversize truck hitting the structure and causing the freeway to be closed. The increased clearance will also better accommodate double-decker buses, such as those AC Transit may use. The installation of roundabouts on University Avenue at the I-80 on and off-ramps will improve the flow of traffic along University Avenue over I-80, which will also benefit public transit. The traffic operational benefits of the roundabouts have been studied in the Project's Traffic Operation Analysis Report (9/19/2018). While improved traffic operations improve air quality due to less idling and lower speeds than occur under existing conditions, it is beyond the scope of this project to study these parameters.

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Comment 42, CC Miksza

From: ccmiksza@berkeley.net
Sent: Friday, December 14, 2018 2:08 PM
To: University Overcrossing@DOT; Hallissy, Cristin@DOT; Weingarten, Carl@DOT
Subject: I-80 University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project Comments

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by ccmiksza@berkeley.net on December 14th, 2018 at 02:07PM (PST).

name: CC Miksza

email: ccmiksza@berkeley.net

comment: I would prefer raising the existing structure or adding in the roundabout feature. Please do not add traffic lights, as there is already back up onto the overpass from poorly timed lights nearby, as is. We do not need a new traffic light at that location.

Response to Comment 42, CC Miksza

Your support for an alternative that does not include traffic lights is noted.

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Comment 43, Bryce Nesbitt

From: bryce2@obviously.com
Sent: Tuesday, December 18, 2018 11:20 AM
To: University Overcrossing@DOT; Hallissy, Cristin@DOT; Weingarten, Carl@DOT
Subject: I-80 University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project Comments

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by bryce2@obviously.com on December 18th, 2018 at 11:19AM (PST).

name: Bryce Nesbitt

email: bryce2@obviously.com

telephone: 510-558-8770

comment: It's really impossible to evaluate the alternatives, when the underside of the overpasses are not shown. It's all about the homeless. The proposed stairs and ramp will be useless or worse, if the homeless camps rebuild.

Please address the homeless issues in your plans.

Also please rebuild the seabreeze market parking lot driveways, to reduce conflicts with bay trail / bike ped bridge traffic.

And please consider "place making". There should be an open viewing platform for bay, hill and (yes) freeway views.

Response to Comment 43, Bryce Nesbitt

The project design will include elements of encampment abatement. At this location, Caltrans maintenance conducts bi-monthly cleanups. The project will be designed to integrate with the aesthetics of the Interstate 80 (I-80) corridor as a whole, and there will be a landscaping project to follow the construction of the project.

The visual simulation that is presented in Figure 2.1.1-6 of the Initial Study shows the active recreational and pedestrian access, and views of the bay.

Work beyond the overcrossing and the University Avenue/West Frontage Road intersection is outside the scope of this project.

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Comment 44, Mark Numainville

From: mnumain@hotmail.com <mnumain@hotmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, December 12, 2018 1:30 PM
To: University Overcrossing@DOT <UniversityOvercrossing@dot.ca.gov>; Hallissy, Cristin@DOT <cristin.hallissy@dot.ca.gov>; Weingarten, Carl@DOT <carl.weingarten@dot.ca.gov>
Subject: I-80 University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project Comments

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by mnumain@hotmail.com on December 12th, 2018 at 01:29PM (PST).

name: Mark Numainville

email: mnumain@hotmail.com

telephone: 5102953949

comment: The traffic circles are a gamble. They could either be great or a total disaster. There should not be a traffic circle on the eastern side. Traffic can back all the way up the ramp at times in the evening and that would completely clog the entire eastern traffic circle.

Simply raising the existing structure is short sighted.

I would support a traffic light on the eastern side. However, in order for this to work I think you will need to have a right turn lane, or protected right turn, or enough shoulder to make the right on red onto the onramp. With the right lane striped for straight or right turn, cars that want to turn right will get stuck behind a car at the red light that is going straight. This will back up traffic back towards Sixth Street. Please allow for a right turn on red. Also the onramp to eastbound should be a two lane onramp similar to the current configuration to prevent it backing up into the intersection. The two lanes at entry will allow for the right turn on red.

If there is just one lane going west on the overpass, how will a car turn left on to the east bound onramp? I did not see a left turn lane. Do they just hang out in no man's land waiting for a break in the westbound traffic? How will the other cars navigate around the cars turning left? Will westbound cars turning left have a green arrow? Concerned that cars turning left will get stacked up in an undefined area of the intersection.

I commute 5 days a week from San Rafael to Berkeley and use this over pass every day - both AM and PM.

Thank you.

Response to Comment 44, Mark Numainville

Research has shown that roundabouts have lower crash rates than traffic signal intersections and stop sign controlled intersections. Based on the "Roundabouts: An Informational Guide Second Edition," published by the Federal Highway Administration, roundabouts reduce the speed of traffic going through an intersection, provide safer traffic movement, improve traffic flow, and enhance safety for non-motorized traffic. Alternative 3 has been selected, which does not include a traffic light, however the Traffic Operations Analysis Report (9/19/2018) sites notable improvement with the proposed roundabouts. Please see Section 2.1.16 Traffic and Transportation for further information.

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Comment 45, James Nybakken

From: jnybakken@sbcglobal.net <jnybakken@sbcglobal.net>
Sent: Friday, December 14, 2018 5:15 PM
To: University Overcrossing@DOT <UniversityOvercrossing@dot.ca.gov>; Hallissy, Cristin@DOT <cristin.hallissy@dot.ca.gov>; Weingarten, Carl@DOT <carl.weingarten@dot.ca.gov>
Subject: I-80 University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project Comments

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by jnybakken@sbcglobal.net on December 14th, 2018 at 05:14PM (PST).

name: James Nybakken
email: jnybakken@sbcglobal.net
telephone: 5105470189
comment: We vote for Alternative 3 with the roundabouts!

Response to Comment 45, James Nybakken

Your support for Alternative 3 is noted.

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Comment 46, Jana Olson

From: Jana Olson <janaolson@comcast.net>
Sent: Friday, December 21, 2018 9:57 PM
To: University Overcrossing@DOT
Subject: same as above

Do it the cheapest and fastest way.

And how about cleaning up the weeds and watering the landscaping, for a change. It's positively embarrassing to bring out of town people along this stretch of the freeway. What a pigsty.

Response to Comment 46, Jana Olson

Your preference is noted.

The project design will include elements of encampment abatement. At this location, Caltrans maintenance conducts bi-monthly cleanups. Interstate 80 (I-80) corridor as a whole, and there will be a landscaping project following the construction of the overcrossing.

Highway planting and the roundabouts design will take into account the Marina and City environments to come up with something that is cohesive to both. Caltrans will work with the City of Berkeley to come up with roundabout designs that are both easy to maintain, as well as sensitive to the environment nearby. Masses of plantings within the roundabout are not considered feasible due to maintenance requirements and safety/sight distance concerns.

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Comment 47, Ben Paulos

From: bcpaulos@yahoo.com
Sent: Wednesday, December 12, 2018 5:33 PM
To: University Overcrossing@DOT; Hallissy, Cristin@DOT; Weingarten, Carl@DOT
Subject: I-80 University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project Comments

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by bcpaulos@yahoo.com on December 12th, 2018 at 05:33PM (PST).

name: Ben Paulos
email: bcpaulos@yahoo.com
telephone: 5109123001
comment:
Dear CalTrans,

The four options do not solve the problem of non-motorized use of the overpass. There is a pedestrian sidewalk for part of it, with a new ramp that seems to lead to nowhere. It would be better if the sidewalk could become wide enough for both bicycle and pedestrian use, and deliver the person all the way down the road to the Sixth Street intersection in the east, and the far side of the Frontage Road in the west, out of harm's way.

And while I generally prefer roundabouts, the western roundabout in options 3 and 4 will replace a four-way stop sign, encouraging drivers to cut across the Bay Trail at high speed, resulting in bicycle and pedestrian conflict. The Bay Trail is very heavily used here by cyclists and joggers.

Overall, I believe option 2 could be best modified to include non-car traffic. The sidewalk on the south side of the overpass could be extended all the way to Sixth Street, and stoplights with a pedestrian-priority button (instant response) could be added at the Frontage Road intersection and at the top of the I-80 exit ramp on the west side. The pedestrian ramp to nowhere should be discarded.

Thanks,

Ben Paulos
Berkeley

Response to Comment 47, Ben Paulos

Your preference for Alternative 2 is noted.

The project team is currently studying ways to improve pedestrian and bicycle access as part of this project, and to better integrate the facilities into the existing pedestrian/bicycle network, including the existing University Avenue Pedestrian Overcrossing, 800 feet to the south. Modifications to the pedestrian and bicycle facilities will bring walkways into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and will attempt to improve the existing facilities within the project area as much as is feasible within the project scope. However, there are no dedicated pedestrian or bicycle facilities on the portion of the University Avenue structure between the interchange and the Sixth Street intersection. That approach and structure is owned by the City of Berkeley and the City has no near-term plans to provide pedestrian and bicycle facilities on

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that portion of the structure, so providing Class II bike lanes along University Avenue within the project area may incorrectly give bicyclists the impression that the facility is continuous. Proposed improvements will focus on how to transition pedestrians and bicyclists across University Avenue between the San Francisco Bay Trail and the interchange, so that they are able to access the existing street network.

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Comment 48, David Pope

From: popedm@comcast.net <popedm@comcast.net>
Sent: Tuesday, December 18, 2018 10:21 AM
To: University Overcrossing@DOT; Hallissy, Cristin@DOT; Weingarten, Carl@DOT
Subject: I-80 University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project Comments

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by popedm@comcast.net on December 18th, 2018 at 10:21AM (PST).

name: David Pope
email: popedm@comcast.net
telephone: 5108493871
comment: I am opposed to a dedicated pet/cycle lane on the University Ave. overpass. There is already a ped bridge, built at great expense, just to the south; a new lane is not necessary.

Response to Comment 48, David Pope

The project team is currently studying ways to improve pedestrian and bicycle access as part of this project, and to better integrate the facilities into the existing pedestrian/bicycle network, including the existing University Avenue Pedestrian Overcrossing, 800 feet to the south. Modifications to the pedestrian and bicycle facilities will bring walkways into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and will attempt to improve the existing facilities within the project area as much as is feasible within the project scope. However, there are no dedicated pedestrian or bicycle facilities on the portion of the University Avenue structure between the interchange and the Sixth Street intersection, nor does this project propose adding dedicated bike lanes. That approach and structure is owned by the City of Berkeley and the City has no near-term plans to provide pedestrian and bicycle facilities on that portion of the structure, so providing Class II bike lanes along University Avenue within the project area may incorrectly give bicyclists the impression that the facility is continuous. Proposed improvements will focus on how to transition pedestrians and bicyclists across University Avenue between the San Francisco Bay Trail and the interchange, so that they are able to access the existing street network.

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Comment 49, Shelby Pope

From: Shelby Pope <shelbypope@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, December 17, 2018 5:29 PM
To: University Overcrossing@DOT
Subject: Comment on overpass

Hi there,

As a resident of West Berkeley, I ask that whatever happens with this project, to please minimize the closure of the overpass bridge. It's a vital part of the commutes for so many--my boyfriend and several of his coworkers use it to commute to their office in Emeryville--and a place for recreation for the commute--just think of all the walkers/runners/cyclists who rely on it!

As someone who uses their bike for my main source of transport, I can say with confidence that biking down University to get to the frontage road is a truly awful experience, with speeding cars, a million different traffic directions and huge potholes. Please think of all the people who use the bridge everyday when you plan this project.

Thank you!

Shelby Pope

--

Shelby Pope
Freelance writer
shelbypope@gmail.com
shelbypope.com

Response to Comment 49, Shelby Pope

The construction of the new overcrossing, including realigned ramps, a new bicycle-pedestrian ramp, roadway realignments, and the Interstate 80 (I-80) pavement replacement work will require multiple stages of construction. Lane closures for this project will take place during off-peak travel periods. Nighttime full closures of eastbound and westbound I-80 are anticipated to allow for the demolition of the existing superstructure and various construction activities for constructing the new overcrossing. A Traffic Management Plan (TMP) will be developed in detail during the Design phase of the project to indicate how construction can be accomplished to minimize and prevent traffic delay and inconvenience to the travelling public. The TMP will involve coordination with the City of Berkeley, the Alameda County Transportation Commission, the California Highway Patrol, AC Transit, emergency services, and local businesses/neighborhood.

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Comment 50, Robert Prinz

From: robert@BikeEastBay.org
Sent: Tuesday, December 04, 2018 8:56 PM
To: University Overcrossing@DOT; Hallissy, Cristin@DOT; Weingarten, Carl@DOT
Subject: I-80 University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project Comments

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by robert@BikeEastBay.org on December 4th, 2018 at 08:56PM (PST).

name: Robert Prinz
email: robert@BikeEastBay.org
telephone: 5108457433;2

comment: This overpass is currently banned for use by bike riders. Would this project result in a removal of this prohibition, and if so better on-street bicycle accommodation needs to be provided in both directions. The pedestrian access is also suspicious, as the main problem with the old walking path along the overpass is that it didn't connect east over the train tracks, and instead led pedestrians down to surface level and an uncontrolled crossing of a 580 off ramp. The substitution of a ramp for the stairs doesn't fix this at all. A lot more thought has to be given to making this pedestrian path safe and useful. The Bay Trail crossing of University to the west also needs lots of help. A signalized crossing of that intersection (University/Frontage/Bay Trail) should ideally be included in this project, along with other sight line and street marking improvements for trail users.

Feel free to connect with me via Bike East Bay to discuss the bike/pedestrian aspects of this project so we can get the very most out of this opportunity. Thanks!

Response to Comment 50, Robert Prinz

The project team is currently studying ways to improve pedestrian and bicycle access as part of this project, and to better integrate the facilities into the existing pedestrian/ bicycle network, including to the existing University Avenue Pedestrian Overcrossing, 800 feet to the south. Modifications to the pedestrian and bicycle facilities will bring walkways into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and will attempt to improve the existing facilities within the project area as much as is feasible within the project scope. However, there are no dedicated pedestrian or bicycle facilities on the portion of the University Avenue structure between the interchange and the Sixth Street intersection. That approach and structure is owned by the City of Berkeley and the City has no near-term plans to provide pedestrian and bicycle facilities on that portion of the structure, so providing Class II bike lanes along University Avenue within the project area may incorrectly give bicyclists the impression that the facility is continuous. Proposed improvements will focus on how to transition pedestrians and bicyclists across University Avenue between the San Francisco Bay Trail and the interchange, so that they are able to access the existing street network.

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Comment 51, Marc Rumming

From: marcmal510@yahoo.com
Sent: Sunday, December 16, 2018 8:02 AM
To: University Overcrossing@DOT; Hallissy, Cristin@DOT; Weingarten, Carl@DOT
Subject: I-80 University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project Comments

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by marcmal510@yahoo.com on December 16th, 2018 at 08:02AM (PST).

name: Marc Rumming
email: marcmal510@yahoo.com
telephone: 510-327-5786

comment: As a frequent user of the Bay Trail (mainly by bicycle), I am concerned that the roundabout alternatives for the western interchange will create safety hazards for pedestrians and bicyclists where the Bay Trail crosses University. Currently, there is a four-way stop, which is chaotic but brings all vehicles to a stop, thus giving bicyclists, walkers, runners, and other Bay Trail users a chance to cross University in relative safety.

With a roundabout, the east-west traffic on University will be free-flowing, with cars moving rapidly into and out of the traffic circle -- and drivers focused on navigating the circle instead of watching the road ahead for pedestrians and bicyclists. This will likely cause injuries, as inattentive drivers fail to see crossing pedestrians and bicyclists.

If one of the roundabout alternatives is selected, Caltrans should make significant efforts to mitigate the risks to pedestrian/bicyclist safety at the University crossing of the Bay Trail.

Response to Comment 51, Marc Rumming

Research has shown that roundabouts have lower crash rates than traffic signal intersections and stop sign controlled intersections. Based on the "Roundabouts: An Informational Guide Second Edition," published by the Federal Highway Administration, roundabouts reduce the speed of traffic going through an intersection, provide safer traffic movement, improve traffic flow, and enhance safety for non-motorized traffic.

The project team is currently studying ways to improve pedestrian and bicycle access as part of this project, and to better integrate the facilities into the existing pedestrian/ bicycle network, including to the existing University Avenue Pedestrian Overcrossing, 800 feet to the south. Modifications to the pedestrian and bicycle facilities will bring walkways into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and will attempt to improve the existing facilities within the project area as much as is feasible within the project scope.

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Comment 52, Jack Sawyer

From: Jack Sawyer <jacksawyer@comcast.net>
Sent: Friday, December 14, 2018 4:37 PM
To: University Overcrossing@DOT
Subject: Is Lowering the Roadway Two Feet an Option?

Response to Comment 52, Jack Sawyer

Lowering Interstate 80 (I-80) was one of the alternatives initially considered for this project. Since the vertical profile of I-80 would have been lowered, the ramps connecting to I-80 would also have been lowered to meet the roadway. A storm drain facility, owned and maintained by the City of Berkeley, lies directly beneath I-80. This culvert was constructed in the 1940s by the City of Berkeley and begins on the western slope of the Berkeley Hills, carrying water from Strawberry Creek to the Bay. This alternative was rejected due to the potential damage to the culvert and potential effects caused by Sea-Level Rise.

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Comment 53, Nancy Schimmelman

From: nancy@windwave.com
Sent: Wednesday, December 12, 2018 6:58 PM
To: University Overcrossing@DOT; Hallissy, Cristin@DOT; Weingarten, Carl@DOT
Subject: I-80 University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project Comments

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by nancy@windwave.com on December 12th, 2018 at 06:58PM (PST).

name: Nancy Schimmelman
email: nancy@windwave.com
telephone: 510-601-6239

comment: Strongly prefer Alternative 3 since the roundabouts would give us much more direct routes to/from home in the Marina from either direction on I80, and improve traffic flow at the frontage road W of I80 and University intersection. It's dangerous now since many drivers do not adhere to traffic law in this intersection.

Response to Comment 53, Nancy Schimmelman

Your preference for Alternative 3 is noted.

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Comment 54, Louis Schubert

From: LSCHUBER@CCSF.edu
Sent: Tuesday, December 18, 2018 1:41 PM
To: University Overcrossing@DOT; Hallissy, Cristin@DOT; Weingarten, Carl@DOT
Subject: I-80 University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project Comments

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by LSCHUBER@CCSF.edu on December 18th, 2018 at 01:41PM (PST).

name: Dr. Louis Schubert
email: LSCHUBER@CCSF.edu
telephone: 415-239-3787

comment: The 2-3 year construction time indicates the closure of the primary route into a city of over 100,000 and UC Berkeley. The other two I-80 interchanges are unsuited to increased traffic: Ashby (CA Route 13) has a low-clearance rail bridge and Gilman has a rail crossing and particularly chaotic traffic already. San Pablo Avenue (CA Route 123) is already jammed at peak hours. The environmental document recognizes that University Avenue is "heavily congested" (2.1.1), yet the document states that there is not already developed a plan for traffic, only that a traffic management plan "would be developed and implemented during construction" (p.73 at the bottom of Appendix A). Given the pre-existing traffic issues, it seems strange that an environmental impact study would skip years of horrendous traffic and accompanying increased concentrated pollution (to say nothing of increased accidents with vehicles, bicycles and pedestrians).

While the document does claim that the project itself is exempt from an air quality study due it being a "freight corridor improvement project," any air quality damage experienced during construction is not the project itself but rather the details of the decision on how to go about the project.

Please do not proceed with this process until a realistic plan for traffic management is fully developed. The negative environmental impact of failure to provide such a plan before commencing would be a clear harm to the environment and the people of Berkeley.

Response to Comment 54, Louis Schubert

The construction of the new overcrossing, including realigned ramps, a new bicycle-pedestrian ramp, roadway realignments, and the Interstate 80 (I-80) pavement replacement work will require multiple stages of construction. Lane closures for this project will take place during off-peak travel periods. Nighttime full closures of eastbound and westbound I-80 are anticipated to allow for the demolition of the existing superstructure and various construction activities for constructing the new overcrossing. A Traffic Management Plan (TMP) will be developed in detail during the design phase of the project to indicate how construction can be accomplished to minimize and prevent traffic delay and inconvenience to the travelling public. Caltrans has been coordinating with, and will continue to work with, the City of Berkeley, Alameda County Transportation Authority, AC Transit, California Highway Patrol, emergency service providers and other agencies to develop the Traffic Management Plan during the design phase. Construction impacts are summarized in Table 1.2.4-1, Section 2.1.3, and Section 2.1.7 of this document.

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Comment 55, Betty Seto

From: Betty Seto <setobetty@yahoo.com>
Sent: Friday, December 07, 2018 4:14 PM
To: University Overcrossing@DOT
Subject: Public comment in favor of Alternative 1

Hello, as a long-time Berkeley resident who lives off of University Avenue, I would like to submit my preference for Alternative 1 for the main reason that I don't see much benefit to the other alternatives. Furthermore, given rapid changes in transportation trends and behavior, I think a shorter lifespan of 35 years is fine and we can revisit the project in three decades if the overpass needs replacing then.

At the moment, traffic flows very well onto the I-80 from the east. Putting in a traffic signal (Alternatives 2 and 4) sounds really annoying, and likely to back up traffic toward 6th Street. I don't see much benefit to either of the following situations:

- Northbound I-80 traffic turning left towards the Marina. There is very little demand for this direction of traffic and I don't think warrants putting in a traffic signal for this.
- Eastbound University traffic turning left to Northbound I-80. Again, I don't see much demand for this direction of traffic. If you are coming from Berkeley Marina, taking the frontage road to the Gilman interchange to go north I-80 is basically just as convenient.

Alternative 3 - two roundabouts on each side. Having a double-roundabout seems like an unnecessary infrastructure investment. I prefer the current configuration on the eastern side of the overpass and DO NOT support a roundabout on both sides.

The only potential improvement opportunity I see for the University overpass is possibly putting in a traffic signal (or roundabout) at the intersection of University Avenue and the Frontage Road, where there is currently a 4-way stop sign. The current 4-way stop sign actually supports 8 different directions of traffic, including a lot of left turns which makes the intersection confusing. A traffic signal (or roundabout) would probably help a lot.

In summary, I support Alternative 1 to raise the overpass with NO changes to the I-80 approach from town (6th Street). I would be supportive of Alternative 1 combined with a roundabout replacing the 4-way stop sign at the entrance to the Berkeley Marina.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.
Betty Seto
1355 Berkeley Way, Berkeley

Response to Comment 55, Betty Seto

Your preference for Alternative 1 is noted.

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Comment 56, Jeff Shaddock

From: Jeff Shaddock <digjshaddock@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, December 12, 2018 6:07 PM
To: University Overcrossing@DOT
Subject: Need bicycle access!

The University Overpass redesign needs to include bicycle and pedestrian access.

That is all.

Response to Comment 56, Jeff Shaddock

Thank you for your response. The project team is currently studying ways to improve pedestrian and bicycle access as part of this project, and to better integrate the facilities into the existing pedestrian/bicycle network, including to the existing University Avenue Pedestrian Overcrossing, 800 feet to the south. Modifications to the pedestrian and bicycle facilities will bring walkways into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and will attempt to improve the existing facilities within the project area as much as is feasible within the project scope. There are no dedicated pedestrian or bicycle facilities on the portion of the University Avenue structure between the interchange and the Sixth Street intersection. That approach and structure is owned by the City of Berkeley and the City has no near-term plans to provide pedestrian and bicycle facilities on that portion of the structure, so providing Class II bike lanes along University Avenue within the project area may incorrectly give bicyclists the impression that the facility is continuous. Proposed improvements will focus on how to transition pedestrians and bicyclists across University Avenue between the San Francisco Bay Trail and the interchange, so that they are able to access the existing street network.

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Comment 57, David Skolnick

From: David Skolnick <motorgoobar@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, December 09, 2018 11:56 PM
To: University Overcrossing@DOT
Subject: university overpass clearance project

Dear Ms De Pont,

As homeowners on seventh street 3 blocks from University, we feel the University overpass should not be lifted to make room for more oversized freight.

The air pollution in West Berkeley is already made unhealthy by the existing traffic congestion (already rated as one of the most congested parts of the Bay Area), and as someone with asthma and a child, I worry about compounding this threat to our air and health with even bigger, more polluting trucks. Also, the money that this project would require would be better spent on public transit and climate change preparation, as that section of the highway will most likely be underwater in the not too distant future. I would greatly appreciate a reply addressing my and my neighbors' concerns. Thanks for your time and consideration.

David Skolnick
2239 7th street Berkeley

Response to Comment 57, David Skolnick

The University Ave Overcrossing (UAOC) currently has nonstandard vertical clearances above Interstate 80 (I-80), of 14 feet 4 inches in the westbound direction, and 14 feet 5 inches in the eastbound direction. The current vertical clearance standard is 16 feet 6 inches. The clearance deficiencies at UAOC impedes safe and efficient movement of oversized vehicles and freight on I-80, and requires oversized vehicles to take lengthy detours to avoid the overcrossing. The UAOC also has structural deficiencies that necessitate repair. An impact to the bridge from an oversized vehicle could also result in closure of the overcrossing for a lengthy period and necessitate costly repairs. It is highly critical that the UAOC vertical clearance be increased to 16 feet 6 inches. In addition, this project is included in the Accelerated Bridge Delivery – Freight Corridor Improvement Program (Program), which has been developed to strategically identify bridges where truck load and/or vertical clearance restrictions constrain freight movement. I-80 is identified as one of the most critical highway portions of the U.S. freight system under the National Highway Freight Network, with traffic volume reaching 275,000 vehicles per day and an average of 7,500 hours of daily traffic delays. The Program will retire several high-volume corridor bridges and restore extended service lives, resulting in lower maintenance costs. After these bridges have been fixed, it is expected that these corridors will result in significant freight movement time savings, which will have economic benefits.

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Comment 58, Jerome Solberg

From: jerome@svctwww1.dot.ca.gov <jerome@svctwww1.dot.ca.gov>
Sent: Wednesday, December 12, 2018 6:15 PM
To: University Overcrossing@DOT; Hallissy, Cristin@DOT; Weingarten, Carl@DOT
Subject: I-80 University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project Comments

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by jerome on December 12th, 2018 at 06:15PM (PST).

name: Jerome Solberg

email: jerome

telephone: 510-220-5443

comment: I think the all-Roundabout idea, alternative 3, is the best solution. It will provide for the smoothest traffic, and probably also result in the fewest severe accidents.

One question that occurs to me - will there be an obvious pathway created between University Avenue and the nearby all-pedestrian/bicycle bridge? Bicyclists new to the area may inadvertently use the pedestrian pathway otherwise.

Thank you for the nice website and demonstration.

Response to Comment 58, Jerome Solberg

Your preference for Alternative 3 is noted.

The project team is currently studying ways to improve pedestrian and bicycle access as part of this project, and to better integrate the facilities into the existing pedestrian/bicycle network, including to the existing University Avenue Pedestrian Overcrossing, 800 feet to the south. Modifications to the pedestrian and bicycle facilities will bring walkways into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and will attempt to improve the existing facilities within the project area as much as is feasible within the scope. Proposed improvements will focus on how to transition pedestrians and bicyclists across University Avenue between the San Francisco Bay Trail and the interchange, so that they are able to access the existing street network.

Comment 59, Daniel A Stolzenberg

From: stolzius@gmail.com <stolzius@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, December 18, 2018 12:37 PM
To: University Overcrossing@DOT; Hallissy, Cristin@DOT; Weingarten, Carl@DOT
Subject: I-80 University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project Comments

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by stolzius@gmail.com on December 18th, 2018 at 12:37PM (PST).

name: Daniel A Stolzenberg
email: stolzius@gmail.com
telephone: 5104175266
comment: Please include a protected bike land!

Response to Comment 59, Daniel A Stolzenberg

The project team is currently studying ways to improve pedestrian and bicycle access as part of this project, and to better integrate the facilities into the existing pedestrian/bicycle network, including the existing University Avenue Pedestrian Overcrossing, 800 feet to the south. Modifications to the pedestrian and bicycle facilities will bring walkways into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and will attempt to improve the existing facilities within the Project Area as much as is feasible within the project scope. However, there are no dedicated pedestrian or bicycle facilities on the portion of the University Avenue structure between the interchange and the Sixth Street intersection. That approach and structure is owned by the City of Berkeley and the City has no near-term plans to provide pedestrian and bicycle facilities on that portion of the structure, so providing Class II bike lanes along University Avenue within the project area may incorrectly give bicyclists the impression that the facility is continuous. Proposed improvements will focus on how to transition pedestrians and bicyclists across University Avenue between the San Francisco Bay Trail and the interchange, so that they are able to access the existing street network.

*University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project
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Comment 60, Matthew Taecker

From: taecker@gmail.com <taecker@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, December 12, 2018 10:04 AM
To: University Overcrossing@DOT <UniversityOvercrossing@dot.ca.gov>; Hallissy, Cristin@DOT <cristin.hallissy@dot.ca.gov>; Weingarten, Carl@DOT <carl.weingarten@dot.ca.gov>
Subject: I-80 University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project Comments

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by taecker@gmail.com on December 12th, 2018 at 10:03AM (PST).

name: Matthew Taecker
email: taecker@gmail.com
telephone: 510-333-9231
comment: Like roundabout alternative: much safer and efficient, and can be designed to be aesthentic gateway to Berkeley. Like safer and more accessible pedestrian crossing across freeway. Please give thorough consideration and emphasize bicycle and pedestrian access and freeway crossing.

Response to Comment 60, Matthew Taecker

Your preference for an alternative with the roundabouts is noted.

The project team is currently studying ways to improve pedestrian and bicycle access as part of this project, and to better integrate the facilities into the existing pedestrian/bicycle network, including the existing University Avenue Pedestrian Overcrossing, 800 feet to the south. Modifications to the pedestrian and bicycle facilities will bring walkways into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and will attempt to improve the existing facilities within the Project Area as much as is feasible within the project scope. However, there are no dedicated pedestrian or bicycle facilities on the portion of the University Avenue structure between the interchange and the Sixth Street intersection. That approach and structure is owned by the City of Berkeley and the City has no near-term plans to provide pedestrian and bicycle facilities on that portion of the structure, so providing Class II bike lanes along University Avenue within the project area may incorrectly give bicyclists the impression that the facility is continuous. Proposed improvements will focus on how to transition pedestrians and bicyclists across University Avenue between the San Francisco Bay Trail and the interchange, so that they are able to access the existing street network.

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Comment 61, Chris Tasik

From: Chris Tasik <ctasik@icloud.com>
Sent: Wednesday, December 12, 2018 1:57 PM
To: University Overcrossing@DOT
Subject: Yes for "option 4"

Replacing the structure and adding roundabouts would be the best choice.

Sent from my iPhone

Response to Comment 61, Chris Tasik

Your preferences are noted.

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Comment 62, Russ Tilleman

From: Russ Tilleman <russ.tilleman@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, December 13, 2018 12:50 PM
To: University Overcrossing@DOT
Subject: Climate change impact of replacing the overpass

In addition to the direct emissions of carbon dioxide indicated in the Initial Study, there is another very significant effect.

Any money spent on this project could instead be used to purchase carbon offset credits, which would reduce carbon dioxide emissions. With an estimated carbon offset credit cost of \$20 per ton of CO₂, the money for the 4 alternatives could prevent emission of:

Alternative 1, \$30,200,000: 1,510,000 tons of CO₂.
Alternative 2, \$53,500,000: 2,675,000 tons of CO₂.
Alternative 3, \$73,300,000: 3,665,000 tons of CO₂.
Alternative 4: \$54,500,000: 2,725,000 tons of CO₂.

Since our government has limited funds to spend on transportation improvements and climate change, any money spent on raising this overpass may result in a similar amount of money not being spent on fighting climate change.

Therefore, raising this overpass may indirectly result in the emission of these amounts of CO₂, which are nearly 1000 times more than the direct CO₂ emissions of construction.

Since this project is not expected to reduce the CO₂ produced by vehicles, it will never reach carbon breakeven and from a climate change point of view, should be avoided if possible.

Regards,

Russ Tilleman
2670 Parker St
Berkeley, CA 94704
510-485-6044
russ.tilleman@gmail.com

Response to Comment 62, Russ Tilleman

The University Ave Overcrossing (UAOC) currently has nonstandard vertical clearances above Interstate 80 (I-80), of 14'-4" in the westbound direction, and 14'-5" in the eastbound direction. The current vertical clearance standard is 16'-6". The clearance deficiencies at UAOC impedes safe and efficient movement of oversized vehicles and freight on I-80, and requires oversized vehicles to take lengthy detours to avoid the overcrossing. The increased vertical clearance will allow oversized vehicles unimpeded travel without having to detour to city streets or long circuitous routes, thus reducing vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and emissions.

The UAOC also has structural deficiencies that necessitate repair. An impact to the bridge from an oversized vehicle could result in closure of the overcrossing for a lengthy period and necessitate costly repairs. Increased vertical clearance will mean longer intervals between maintenance and rehabilitation activities, reducing construction emissions. The CO₂ emissions that you include represent construction emissions. Raising or replacing the University Overcrossing structure would not change vehicle miles traveled. Accordingly, no increase in operational GHG emissions is anticipated.

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Comment 63, Alfred Twu

From: firstcultural@gmail.com <firstcultural@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, December 13, 2018 1:09 AM
To: University Overcrossing@DOT <UniversityOvercrossing@dot.ca.gov>; Hallissy, Cristin@DOT <cristin.hallissy@dot.ca.gov>; Weingarten, Carl@DOT <carl.weingarten@dot.ca.gov>
Subject: I-80 University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project Comments

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by firstcultural@gmail.com on December 13th, 2018 at 01:09AM (PST).

name: Alfred Twu
email: firstcultural@gmail.com
telephone: 7328501013
comment: I prefer Option 1 - raising the existing overpass.
It gets the job done at lower cost and less time. in 35 years our transportation system will likely look very different.

Response to Comment 63, Alfred Twu

Your preference for Alternative 1 is noted.

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Comment 64, Stephen Walsh

From: buxwal@gmail.com <buxwal@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, December 16, 2018 2:51 PM
To: University Overcrossing@DOT <UniversityOvercrossing@dot.ca.gov>; Hallissy, Cristin@DOT <cristin.hallissy@dot.ca.gov>; Weingarten, Carl@DOT <carl.weingarten@dot.ca.gov>
Subject: I-80 University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project Comments

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by buxwal@gmail.com on December 16th, 2018 at 02:50PM (PST).

name: Stephen Walsh
email: buxwal@gmail.com
telephone: 5103015952
comment: Hi, Caltrans folks:

I live nearby and use this intersection a lot. I also frequently walk or ride a bike over the nearby bicycle bridge.

I would encourage you to select alternative 3, the two roundabouts. There will be a learning curve for drivers but I am more concerned about traffic delays on both the freeway and the University if you put in a new traffic light.

I am a little baffled about the purpose of the pedestrian ramp. Right now it seems like it would primarily serve the homeless camps on either side of the overpass. I'm not even sure how a pedestrian would access the ramp from the east. If there is a life/safety issue or a requirement to replace it then, sure, but we've got a much better, safer, and more accessible means of crossing the freeway just a few steps away and I'm sure that will continue to draw the vast majority of pedestrian traffic.

Thanks for asking,

SW

Response to Comment 64, Stephen Walsh

Your preference for Alternative 3 is noted.

Modifications to the pedestrian facilities are being made to bring walkways into compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and provide a connection along University Avenue between the San Francisco Bay Trail and the interchange, so pedestrians are able to access the existing street network.

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Comment 65, Suzanne Weakley

From: slw@att.net <slw@att.net>
Sent: Wednesday, December 12, 2018 7:20 PM
To: University Overcrossing@DOT; Hallissy, Cristin@DOT; Weingarten, Carl@DOT
Subject: I-80 University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project Comments

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by
slw@att.net on December 12th, 2018 at 07:20PM (PST).

name: Suzanne Weakley
email: slw@att.net
telephone: 510-540-0854

comment: Re the University Avenue Overcrossing proposals, I'm afraid that Californians just don't know how to deal with roundabouts, and that the roundabouts will cause many accidents!!! I've driven in Europe a lot where they are common, and I like them, but whenever I encounter them here during busy drive times, inevitably there are people who don't understand that they have to yield to drivers who are already in the roundabout. If you do go with roundabouts, then please please install big signs explaining to drivers that they must yield!!

Response to Comment 65, Suzanne Weakley

Research has shown that roundabouts have lower crash rates than traffic signal intersections and stop sign-controlled intersections. Based on the "Roundabouts: An Informational Guide Second Edition," published by the Federal Highway Administration, roundabouts reduce the speed of traffic going through an intersection, provide safer traffic movement, improve traffic flow, and enhance safety for non-motorized traffic.

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Comment 66, Mark Wegner

From: wegorn@sbcglobal.net <wegorn@sbcglobal.net>
Sent: Wednesday, December 12, 2018 11:32 PM
To: University Overcrossing@DOT <UniversityOvercrossing@dot.ca.gov>; Hallissy, Cristin@DOT <cristin.hallissy@dot.ca.gov>; Weingarten, Carl@DOT <carl.weingarten@dot.ca.gov>
Subject: I-80 University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project Comments

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by wegorn@sbcglobal.net on December 12th, 2018 at 11:31PM (PST).

name: Mark Wegner
email: wegorn@sbcglobal.net
telephone: 510-289-0800
comment: I advise Alternative 3 (two roundabouts), finance permitting. Roundabouts have been shown to be a very efficient way to handle traffic going in multiple directions.

Response to Comment 66, Mark Wegner

Your preference for Alternative 3 is noted.

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Comment 67, Fred Werner

From: Fred Werner <sustainablefred@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, December 17, 2018 11:17 AM
To: University Overcrossing@DOT
Cc: frances@berkeleyside.com
Subject: No roundabouts, keep it cost effective, more public explanation and input

Hello, please do not put roundabouts or traffic circle on the University Blvd. overpass over I-80. In fact, please do NOT spend ANY of our public funds (let alone millions of \$) on this project at ALL until you do a MUCH better job of:

- 1) explaining why this project is needed now, given:
 - a) this overpass has existed at its current 14' 4" height for how many decades and what problems has it caused? and
 - b) how chronically overcrowded I-80 is now, so why would we want even more, taller trucks on it, causing more traffic, greater wear-and-tear, etc.;
 - c) this stretch of I-80 is very close to sea level. Given sea level rise, there will be an increased risk of flooding and closures. Please release a detailed stretch to deal with that before you do any project like this whose benefits might be negated or need retrofitting if you were to build this now and then do a sea-level-rise-mitigation project later.

and

- 2) Having a legit public input process that actually encourages public input. Just the fact that you have an "online public meeting" website (<http://www.dot.ca.gov/d4/80universityclearance/>) suggests a well-intentioned attempt at public involvement. But it's totally insufficient. For starters: there is zero (NO) opportunity for input on that page. No "click here to comment" link, no instructions on who to email nothing. I only knew to email this address because of Ms. Dinkelspiel's article on Berkeleyside. And your website says the deadline for comments, but no date on when this was released/published/announced? Ms. Dinkelspiel's article came out Dec 12, just 6 days before the deadline for comments, was this announced before then? Why wasn't it better publicized? Why isn't this in every media?

- Fred Werner

Berkeley, CA

Response to Comment 67, Fred Werner

Research has shown that roundabouts have lower crash rates than traffic signal intersections and stop sign-controlled intersections. Based on the "Roundabouts: An Informational Guide Second Edition," published by the Federal Highway Administration, roundabouts reduce the speed of traffic going through an intersection, provide safer traffic movement, improve traffic flow, and enhance safety for non-motorized traffic.

Caltrans analyzed the potential impacts of Sea-Level Rise (SLR) inundation on the proposed project based upon the 2018 update of the State of California Sea-Level Rise Guidance. Based upon this analysis, the project has no anticipated risk of future damage from SLR.

This project would keep freight on Interstate 80 (I-80) instead of funneling the freight vehicles onto local roads to avoid the overcrossing. Keeping the freight vehicles on I-80 in free-flowing traffic and not idling on local streets will overall reduce the amount of greenhouse gas (GHG)

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emissions within the extended project area. The ability to fit larger freight vehicles through the area may result in less overall smaller freight vehicles within the area, thus reducing the GHG emissions as well.

Please refer to Section 2.1.7 of the University Avenue Overcrossing Vehicle Clearance Project Initial Study for further discussion regarding GHG as it pertains to this project.

The Draft Initial Study with Proposed Negative Declaration (IS) for the University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project was released on November 16, 2018. Caltrans' published a Notice of Availability for this project on November 23, 2018, via a quarter-page ad run in the East Bay Times. On November 30, 2018, a quarter-page ad was run in the Berkeley Voice/El Cerrito Journal. Between November 25, 2018, and November 31, 2018, there were 75,000 digital banner ads run on eastbaytimes.com announcing the availability of the IS. The notices also contained an invitation to upcoming informational meetings and the deadline for public comments. On November 27, 2018, the Notice of Availability was email blasted by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission. On November 29, 2018, the Notice of Availability was posted on the Alameda CTC's Twitter and Facebook. In addition to standard releases of public information to media news outlets, social media postings were published by Caltrans on Facebook and Twitter.

A public meeting was held near the project area at the Berkeley Public Library branch at 2090 Kittredge Street, in Berkeley, an Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)-compliant facility. This meeting occurred during the public review period, on December 4, 2018, from 5–7 p.m. There was an online public meeting at <http://www.dot.ca.gov/d4/80universityclearance>, from December 5–18, 2018. The purpose of these meetings was to give the public an opportunity to view informational exhibits and ask questions of project team members. The number of attendees at the meeting was 10.

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Comment 68, Raymond Wheeler

From: Raymond Wheeler <rwheel@soe.ucsc.edu>
Sent: Thursday, December 13, 2018 3:09 PM
To: University Overcrossing@DOT
Subject: University Avenue I-80 overcrossing

I'd like to voice support for options 1 & 3 of the proposed options for replacing the University Avenue I-80 overcrossing.

Thank you,
R Wheeler

Response to Comment 68, Raymond Wheeler

Your preference for Alternatives 1 and 3 is noted.

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Comment 69, Craig Yates

From: Craig Yates <craig.yates@sbcglobal.net>
Sent: Tuesday, November 27, 2018 2:04 PM
To: University Overcrossing@DOT
Subject: 2001

<https://www.latimes.com/projects/la-me-mexico-housing/?fbclid=IwAR0TP7Tww4t3N4GJsKwaJkt-2AoJuMU8YXa3MJvYZaCKDW23AQpaTcgL29o#nws=mcnewsletter>

Response to Comment 69, Craig Yates

Your comment is noted.

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Chapter 4 – List of Preparers

The following Caltrans staff and consultants contributed to the preparation of this Initial Study.

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Chapter 5 – Distribution List

This Initial Study was distributed to the following federal, state, and regional responsible trustee agencies and elected officials. Agencies with an asterisk (*) will receive notification via the California State Clearinghouse.

Federal Agencies

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Sacramento Fish and Wildlife Office
2800 Cottage Way, Room W-2605
Sacramento, CA 95825-1846

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NOAA Fisheries
San Francisco Bay Branch
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Santa Rosa, CA 95404

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Appendix A

Avoidance and Minimization Measures

Avoidance and minimization measures (AMMs) are methods utilized to avoid or reduce potential environmental effects which otherwise are not significant under CEQA. The AMMs for this project are listed below.

Aesthetics

The design, color, and aesthetic treatment for the new overcrossing, support columns and support walls shall be similar in design to the existing adjacent structures. This treatment would ensure that columns would be visually compatible and consistent with the existing structures along the corridor.

Areas disturbed by the construction of this project would be landscaped.

Biological Sciences

A qualified biologist will perform preconstruction surveys for sensitive biological resources prior to vegetation removal, ground disturbing work, or construction related activities in unpaved areas.

Prior to construction, a qualified biologist will survey potential nesting and roosting sites within the BSA for the presence of bat species.

Staging and access areas will be confined to previously disturbed areas or areas with existing pavement.

A qualified biologist will remain onsite during the initial construction activities of each phase (preparation, demolition, bridge building, non-bridge work, etc.). The monitor will actively assess whether construction activities cause impacts to special status species, and will immediately notify the Resident Engineer (RE) to cease all construction activities if impacts are observed. Construction will resume at the discretion of the biologist. Agencies may need to be consulted in the meantime.

Cultural Resources

If cultural materials are discovered during construction, all earth-moving activity within and around the immediate discovery area will be diverted until a qualified archaeologist can assess the nature and significance of the find. Unintentional impacts upon archaeological resources will be avoided by implementing the Monitoring and Post-Review Discovery Plan prepared for the project, to include the following:

If Caltrans professional qualified specialist determines that cultural materials includes human remains, State Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5 states that further disturbances and activities shall stop in any area or nearby area suspected to overlie remains. Caltrans Cultural Resources Studies Office will contact Alameda County Coroner. Pursuant to CA PRC section 5097.98, if the remains are thought by the coroner to be Native American, the coroner will notify

*University Avenue Overcrossing Vertical Clearance Project
Initial Study with Negative Declaration*

the Native American Heritage Commission, which will then notify the Most Likely Descendent. Caltrans, District 4, Cultural Resources Studies Office will work with the Most Likely Descendent on the respectful treatment and disposition of the remains. Further provisions of PRC 5097.98 are to be followed as applicable.

Per the Environmentally Sensitive Area (ESA) Action Plan, unintentional impacts on archaeological resources will be avoided by establishing ESAs around the known archaeological site boundaries within the Area of Potential Effect (APE). Caltrans shall inform interested Native Americans about the proposed project activities and the ESA Action Plan prior to construction.

Geology and Soils

This project would involve a soil treatment that includes the injection of cement grout into the ground to reduce the risk of liquefaction in the event of a seismic event. This work would employ techniques that inject a range of materials into soil or rock formations, via boreholes (drilled holes), to alter the physical characteristics of the formation when the materials set. The use of grouting would reduce liquefaction by increasing soil strength of the site. The grouting would be injected into the ground and would have no effect on the environmental setting and would in general improve the geology and soil conditions.

Noise

All construction equipment should conform to Section 14-8.02, Noise Control, of the latest Caltrans Standard Specifications.

Population and Housing

Caltrans would follow its Illegal Encampment Removal Policy and present and post a 72-hour "Notice to Vacate" for all occupants within the project area to vacate the premises with their personal property. The notice would state that abandoned personal property would be disposed of after the date indicated on it. Items of some apparent value would be collected and stored for no less than ninety days. The "Notice to Vacate" would have information where social services and shelter may be obtained in the community in the form of a list of service providers with addresses and telephone number contacts. No work would be done while encampment occupants are still present within the project area.

Traffic

A Traffic Management Plan (TMP) would be developed and implemented for traffic during construction. TMP encompasses activities that are implemented to minimize traffic delays that may result from lane restrictions or closures in a work zone. TMP strategies are designed to improve mobility, as well as safety for the traveling public and highway workers.

Tribal Cultural Resources

A Native American monitor will be present during ground-disturbing construction activities in culturally sensitive areas and as determined through continuing consultation with tribal representatives.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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*Making Conservation
a California Way of Life.*

April 2018

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A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Laurie Berman".

LAURIE BERMAN
Director