DRAFT INITIAL STUDY / MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

RTA USE OF COUNTY YARD FOR BUS PARKING FACILITY IN PASO ROBLES

Lead Agency:
San Luis Obispo Regional Transit Authority
179 Cross Street, Suite A
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401

July 13, 2016

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SECTION 1.0 – INTRODUCTION

1.1 PURPOSE OF THE IS/MND

This draft Initial Study/ Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) document has been prepared to identify and assess the anticipated environmental impacts for the *RTA Use of County Yard Project* (Project). RTA will construct the Project to provide sufficient current and future vehicle parking and staff operations space to meet the regional and local public transportation needs in the northern portion of San Luis Obispo County.

The Initial Study (IS) is a public document used by the decision-making lead agency to determine whether a project may have a significant effect on the environment. In the case of the proposed Project, RTA is the Lead Agency and will use the IS to determine whether the project has a significant effect on the environment.

If a Lead Agency finds substantial evidence that any aspect of the project, either alone or in combination with other projects, may have a significant effect on the environment, that agency is required to prepare an Environmental Impact Report (EIR), a supplement to a previously prepared EIR, or a subsequent EIR to analyze the project. A Responsible Agency is a public agency that proposes to carry out or approve a project, for which a Lead Agency is preparing or has prepared an Environmental Impact Report or Negative Declaration. The term "Responsible Agency" includes all public agencies other than the Lead Agency that have discretionary approval power over the project.

If a Lead Agency finds no substantial evidence that the project or any of its aspects may cause a significant impact on the environment, a Negative Declaration shall be prepared. If, over the course of the analysis, the project is found to have a significant impact on the environment that, with specific mitigation measures, can be reduced to a less than significant level, a Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) shall be prepared.

1.2 IS/MND FORMAT AND CONTENTS

In addition to **Section 1.0 – Purpose of the IS/MND** above, this document is organized into the following sections:

- **Section 2.0 – Project Description**: Includes a detailed description of the Project.

- **Section 3.0 – Environmental Checklist and Discussion**: Contains the Environmental Checklist Form together with an environmental setting and an impact discussion for each of the checklist questions. The Checklist Form is used to determine the following for the Project:

1. "Potentially Significant Impacts" that may not be mitigated even with the inclusion of mitigation measures;

2. "Less Than Significant Mitigation Incorporated" which could be mitigated with incorporation of mitigation measures; and,

3. "Less Than Significant Impacts" which would be less than significant and do not require the implementation of mitigation measures.

4. "No Impact" would be realized from the proposed Project.

- **Section 4.0 – Determination**: Identifies the determination of whether impacts associated with development of the Project are significant, and what, if any, additional environmental documentation may be required.

- **Section 5.0 – Summary List of Mitigation Measures**: Lists all mitigation measures that will be undertaken by RTA as part of the proposed Project.

- **Section 6.0 – References**: Identifies the documents consulted in preparing this IS/MND.

SECTION 2.0 – PROJECT DESCRIPTION

2.1 PROJECT PURPOSE, OBJECTIVES AND NEED

RTA operates regional fixed route public transportation services throughout San Luis Obispo County and into the City of Santa Maria in Santa Barbara County. In addition, RTA operates Runabout paratransit services within ¾-mile of all fixed routes in the county, including those fixed routes operated by other transit agencies. Finally, RTA provides direct operation of local fixed route and Dial-A-Ride services operated within the City of Paso Robles.

The purpose of the proposed Project would be to provide storage for up to fourteen 40-foot and 45-foot fixed route coaches, five 25-foot cutaway vans, and 26 employee parking spaces, as well as placement of a 25-foot by 50-foot modular office building. It would replace one existing vehicle storage-only parking lot, as well as another parking lot and administrative offices facility located in Paso Robles. These two separate facilities are located at 4th/Pine Streets (parking of RTA large buses) and at 8th/Pine Streets (parking of Paso Express small buses and vans, as well as office space) in downtown Paso Robles, respectively. Both of these existing City of Paso Robles-provided properties have recently been sold and/or are currently under development review.

An important objective that must be considered when selecting a bus storage yard site is the distance of the site from the starting/ending points of RTA's and Paso Express' bus routes at the North County Transit Center at 8th and Pine Street in Paso Robles. It is important that the bus storage yard be located as close as possible in order to conserve resources (such as fuel), to reduce emissions from both buses and employees' personal vehicles, and to minimize "deadhead" costs (employee wages, wear/tear on vehicles, etc.). Other important factors include: minimizing or avoiding impacts to surrounding uses; complying with nearby land use designations; minimizing impacts to nearby traffic; and providing a safe and secure facility to protect RTA assets and enhance employees' personal security. Other sites were considered as part of a screening process – including moving all North County operations to RTA's primary site in San Luis Obispo (31 miles away) or to City-owned land near the Paso Robles Airport, but those sites were deemed infeasible due to expected significant impacts to the environment or safety concerns.

The proposed Project would be implemented at the existing SLO County Corp Yard property in Paso Robles. The County Corp Yard currently includes storage of SLO County Public Works Roads Division medium- and heavy-duty construction and road maintenance equipment, as well as a SLO County Fleet Services vehicle maintenance shop for light- and medium-duty vehicles. The site also includes one office trailer and a Seatrain storage container used by the SLO County Agricultural Commissioner. Finally, another Seatrain storage container is used by the UC Cooperative Extension Farm Advisor Office. RTA's proposed Project would be constructed on a portion of the property that was formerly used to store roadway materials, including sand, gravel, decomposed granite and crushed bark, but this area is currently not being used for County operations.

As explained above, the two sites currently used for bus parking and related office needs have been sold and/or are proposed for uses more appropriate with nearby land use designations. There is an urgent need to develop a long-term bus storage yard so that public transit services in the North County are not interrupted and so that vital public transportation services can continue to be provided to persons who rely on bus services. The proposed Project would meet this important need.

2.2 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed Project will accommodate RTA's current and future planned North County-based fleet of buses and vans, as well as employee parking and office space for RTA drivers and staff. The site is located sufficiently near the starting point of North County bus routes to minimize what RTA refers to as "dead-head" costs (and related emissions) of transporting vehicles to and from their routes.

Stakeholder interviews and site visits were a key part of the process that informed the initial feasibility assessment and initial planning effort for the proposed Project. With stakeholder input during the initial on-site meeting, it was determined that the vehicular path of travel should be along the easterly side of the open southern area of the SLO County Corp Yard property, and that the proposed bus and vehicle parking should be located along the westerly or highway side of the project site south of the existing County operations area. This configuration concept would minimize potential conflicts with ongoing County operations as well as any potential for runoff into the Salinas River corridor by pushing the parking area away from the river area and towards the existing highway.

The existing Seatrain containers and trailer used by the Agriculture Departments of the UC Extension and the County would be left at or near their existing location, so as to minimize impact on these users. Per the City of Paso Robles request, a ten-foot landscape buffer area along the US-101 perimeter is assumed along the highway fence line for the entire length of the project site. The existing entry gate to the property would be moved to the south, and a section of new fencing would be added along the river side of the entry driveway area and on the south end of the site where it does not already exist. These modifications are intended to create a site that is completely enclosed by fences and gates for site security. An additional fence and gate would be added to serve as a separation between RTA's site and the County Fleet Maintenance site, per the request of County Fleet Services.

The bus parking would be placed at the northernmost and widest part of the available site area, south of but abutting the Seatrain containers and trailer. Bus parking stalls would be 12.5' wide x 56' long spaces delineated at a 60-degree angle for ease of bus parking and to maximize the available space. The parking spaces for the cutaway vans and minivans are adjacent to the large bus parking area, accommodating the site as it narrows. A 50' x 25' modular office space would be placed just to the south of the diagonal van parking, and will include the required storage space (12' x 14'), driver break area with kitchen (14' x 20'), and supervisor office (12' x 14'), accessible by an outdoor breezeway. Utilities would be placed underground along the western

corridor (near the US-101) boundary; no other significant trenching would be required. The employee parking spaces (10' x 20'), increased in number from 20 to 26 after the initial kickoff meeting, would be at a 90-degree angle along the highway fence at the southernmost end of the site where the site is the narrowest.

Perimeter lighting for the parking areas at the new entryway, continuing along the highway side of the site, and around the new building will be considered for security purposes during final design. Any new lighting would be shielded to illuminate downward and to minimize "light pollution," and no new lighting would be installed along the river side of the site in order to minimize disruption to the natural habitat corridor.

A structural section will provide a Class II base and a Hot Mix Asphalt (HMA) overlay. The structural section would be calculated with the high volume and turning movement of heavy vehicles in mind. The existing site is partially paved with an unknown depth of HMA and base. For estimating purposes, it is assumed that this area would suffice for future use with a minimal overlay while an HMA and base section would be needed in areas that are not currently paved.

The site would require post-construction water quality site design features to treat water quality and provide runoff retention. The Project assumes that existing asphalt areas will not be removed but rather remain in place with an overlay and no substantial change to line and grade.

The landscape planting would be designed to provide screening of the facility building and stored vehicles when viewed from outside of the property (primarily from the adjacent US-101 corridor). The facility would appear to nestle into the environment, blurring the boundary between the built environment and the natural habitat to the east.

2.3 PROPOSED PROJECT OPERATIONS

As noted above, RTA currently operates out of two facilities in Paso Robles: a parking yard for large bus parking at 4th and Pine Streets, and a small-bus parking yard/offices at 8th and Pine Streets. Below is a table depicting employee arrival/departure activity at the site. As is typical at a public transit bus yard, the vast majority of activity is "on the road" – and very few persons are at the site during the day. As shown, a maximum of seven 40-foot vehicles using California Air Resources Board-designated "Urban Bus" diesel engines and two 30-foot vehicles using "Transit Fleet Vehicle" diesel engines start-up on weekdays, and another four Urban Bus and two Transit Fleet Vehicle buses depart during the mid-day.

RTA provided this table of hour-by-hour employee arrival-departure data, as well as hour-by-hour bus departure-arrivals data, to public works and planning staff at both the County and the City; neither identified these vehicles movements as needing further review. Note that the table depicts weekday activity; it is significantly curtailed during weekends and holidays. No private vehicle parking would be eliminated as a result of the Project, nor would it seriously impact traffic patterns in and around the City of Paso Robles.

	Weekday Paso Yard Traffic Activity					
	Run	Signon	Pullout	Pullin	Signoff	Vehicle
1	Supervisor	5:00a			2:00p	Car
2	91	5:05a	5:25a	12:15p	12:20p	40 footer
3	92	5:36a	5:56a	1:15p	1:20p	40 footer
4	203	5:45a	6:00a	2:45p	3:00p	minivan
5	701	5:45a	6:00a	12:45p	1:00p	minivan
6	93	5:46a	6:06a	12:00p	12:00p	40 footer
7	81	6:22a	6:48a	2:05p	2:10p	30 footer
8	94	6:25a	6:45a	5:17p	5:27p	40 footer
9	71	6:30a	6:45a	1:40p	1:45p	30 footer
10	915	6:30a	6:50a	12:00p	12:00p	40 footer
11	95	6:36a	6:56a	5:07p	5:42p	40 footer
12	220	6:45a	7:00a	3:45p	4:00p	minivan
13	Supervisor	10:30a			7:30p	car
14	96	7:25a	7:45a	3:05p	3:15p	40 footer
15	73	9:35a	9:35a	12:10p	12:10p	30 footer
16	219	11:45a	12:00p	8:45p	9:00p	minivan
17	72	1:30p	1:35p	7:18p	7:30p	30 footer
18	97	12:40p	1:00p	7:14p	7:24p	40 footer
19	98	1:30p	1:50p	8:45p	8:55p	40 footer
20	99	2:26p	2:46p	10:55p	10:55p	40 footer
21	913	2:30p	2:50p	11:00p	11:00p	40 footer
22	507 XB	varies	varies	varies	varies	varies
23	82	2:00p	2:05p	7:30p	7:40p	30 footer

A total of 18 mitigation measures (one repeated in three separate subsections) is discussed in Section 3.0 that will minimize to less-than-significant or completely avoid on-going/long-term environmental impacts that would occur as a result of RTA consolidating its two operating facilities into the proposed Project site. It should be noted, however, that each potential impact is analyzed as if the existing RTA operations were not already in place. All of these mitigation measures are also listed separately in Section 5.0 near the end of the IS/MND document.

2.4 PROJECT LOCATION

The proposed Project lies within the Paso Robles city limits in northern San Luis Obispo County. According to the US Census Bureau, the City had a population of over 29,793 in 2010 – the second most populous city in the County. San Luis Obispo County is bordered by Monterey County to the north and Santa Barbara County to the south. U.S. Highway 101 (US-101), the main freeway through the County, bisects it on a north-south route. State Highway 46 provides east-west connections.

The County's Corp Yard property is located at 1735 Paso Robles Street, and is bordered by US-101 to the west, the Salinas River (typically dry except during rain events) to the east, a privately owned equipment storage yard to the north, and the northbound 13th Street on-ramp to US-101 to the south. It is comprised of four parcels totaling 8.59 acres, as follows:

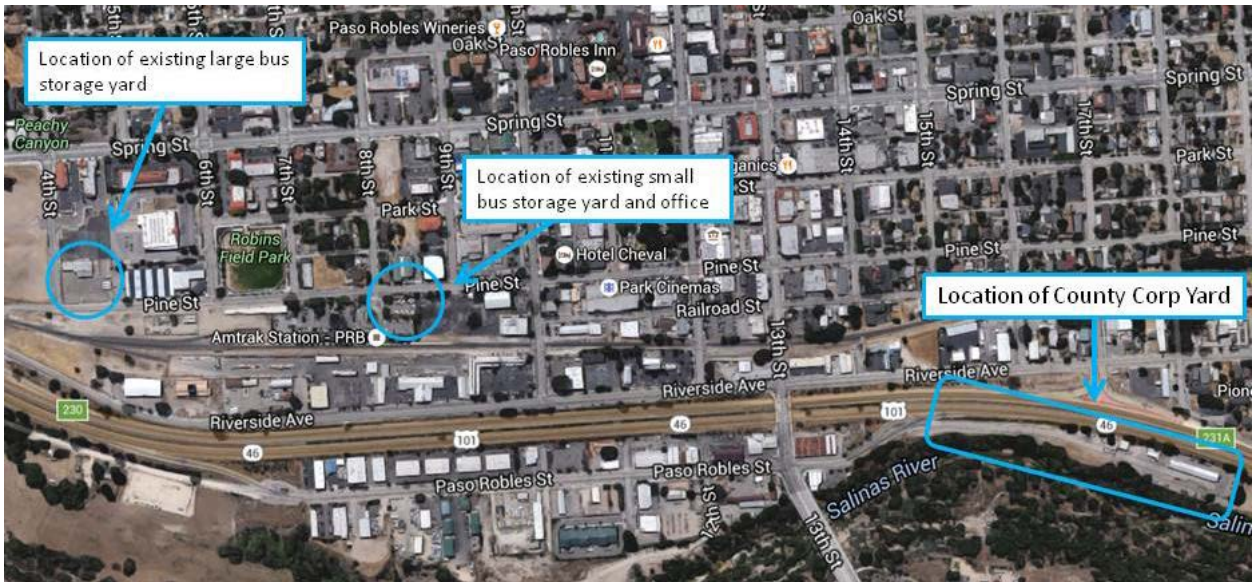
1. APN 008-262-006 (3.34 acres)
2. APN 008-297-005 (3.82 acres)
3. APN 008-297-006 (1.00 acres)
4. APN 009-054-003 (0.43 acres)

RTA worked with The Wallace Group to develop a concept plan for the proposed Project. The resulting *Feasibility and Findings Report* identified the southern portion of the County's Corp Yard as the preferred Project site, which will use approximately 1.5 acres of the County's 8.59-acre lot.

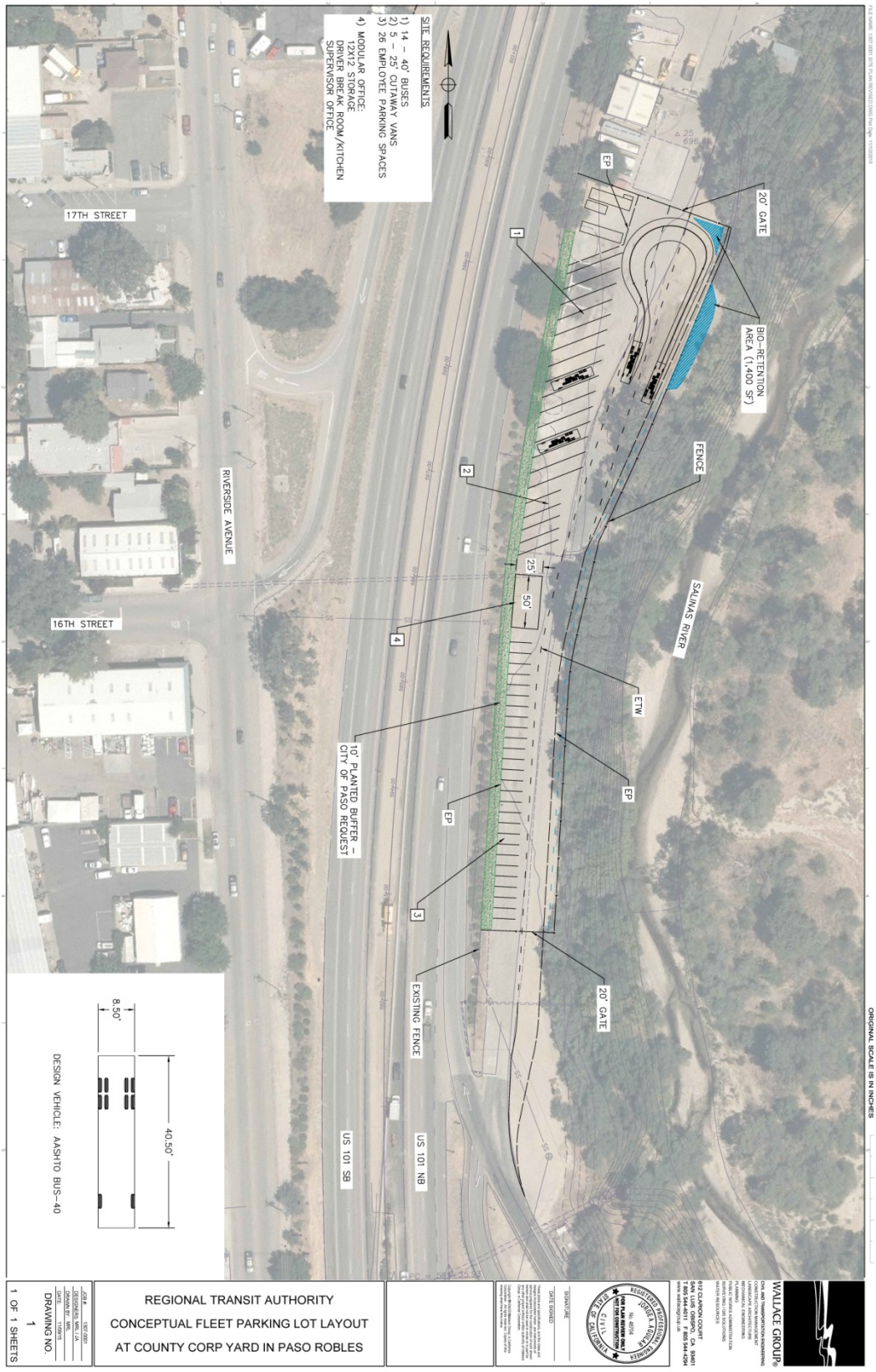
The location can also be expressed in terms of latitude/longitude as approximately 35°37'54.7" North 120°41'10.3" West.

The first map below depicts the City of Paso Robles in relation to the State of California. The next map shows the location of the two existing RTA bus storage yards, as well as the County's Corp Yard. The third map depicts the portion the County Corp Yard on which RTA's proposed project improvements would be implemented. The fourth graphic depicts the conceptual layout of the RTA Bus Parking Facility.


Location of Paso Robles, CA
Wellsona
101
46
Paso Robles
101
101
Templeton
DEL NORTE
SISKIYOU
MODOC
HUMBOLDT
TRINITY
SHASTA
LASSEN
TEHAMA
PLUMAS
MENDOCINO
GLENN
BUTTE
SIERRA
NEVADA
LAKE
COLUSA
SUTTER
YUBA
PLACER
YOLO
EL DORADO
Sacramento
SONOMA
NAPA
SACRA-MENTO
AMA-DOR
ALPINE
SOLANO
CALAVERAS
SAN FRANCISCO
MARIN
CONTRA COSTA
SAN JOAQUIN
TUOLUMNE
MONO
ALAMEDA
STANISLAUS
MARIPOSA
SAN MATEO
SANTA CLARA
MERCED
MADERA
SANTA CRUZ
SAN BENITO
INYO
MONTEREY
TULARE
SAN LUIS OBISPO
KERN
SAN BERNARDINO
SANTA BARBARA
VENTURA
LOS ANGELES
Los Angeles
ORANGE
RIVERSIDE
SAN DIEGO
IMPERIAL


Location of existing large bus storage yard
Location of existing small bus storage yard and office
Location of County Corp Yard
Paso Robles Wineries
Paso Robles Inn
Oak St
Spring St
Peachy Canyon
4th St
6th St
7th St
8th St
9th St
14th St
15th St
17th St
Park St
Pine St
Robins Field Park
Hotel Cheval
Park Cinemas
Railroad St
13th St
Amtrak Station - PRB
Riverside Ave
230
46
101
231A
Paso Robles St
12th St
Salinas River


Railroad St
Portion being considered by RTA
18th St
Riverside
Paso Robles St
231A
Salinas River


SITE REQUIREMENTS
1) 14 – 40' BUSES
2) 5 – 25' CUTAWAY VANS
3) 26 EMPLOYEE PARKING SPACES
4) MODULAR OFFICE:
12X12' STORAGE
DRIVER BREAK ROOM/KITCHEN
SUPERVISOR OFFICE
17TH STREET
16TH STREET
RIVERSIDE AVENUE
20' GATE
BIO-RETENTION AREA (1,400 SF)
FENCE
SALINAS RIVER
ETW
EP
25'
50'
10' PLANTED BUFFER – CITY OF PASO REQUEST
EXISTING FENCE
US 101 SB
US 101 NB
20' GATE
1
2
3
4
8.50'
40.50'
DESIGN VEHICLE: AASHTO BUS-40
REGIONAL TRANSIT AUTHORITY
CONCEPTUAL FLEET PARKING LOT LAYOUT
AT COUNTY CORP YARD IN PASO ROBLES
WALLACE GROUP
612 CLARION COURT
SAN LUIS OBISPO, CA 93401
T 805.544-4011 F 805.544-4294
www.wallacegroup.us
FOR REDUCED PLANS
ORIGINAL SCALE IS IN INCHES
0 1 2 3
JOB # 1307.0001
DESIGNED: MRL / JA
DRAWN BY: MRL
DATE 11/19/13
DRAWING NO.
1
1 OF 1 SHEETS

2.5 PROPOSED PROJECT CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITIES

Construction of the Project will involve minimal site grading, installation of utilities (primarily water, wastewater, electrical and communications), modular building placement, and startup and testing. Construction and staging of the Project will take place at the existing County Corp Yard site. Access to the site will be via the County's existing access road from 13th Street. Principal deliveries to the site will include imported earthwork materials, fencing, a modular office building, and related equipment.

The typical equipment utilized for construction will include track-mounted excavators, backhoes, compaction equipment, end and/or bottom dump trucks, front-end loaders, water trucks, flat-bed delivery trucks, forklifts, pavement equipment, and compressors / jack hammers.

A variety of mitigation measures are discussed in Section 3 that will minimize or completely avoid construction-related environmental impacts.

2.6 SCHEDULE

Construction of the Project is scheduled to commence in late 2016 or early 2017. The overall duration of this relatively simple construction project is expected to be about 30 days.

2.7 LAND USE AND ZONING

The proposed project would be in keeping with existing City of Paso Robles land use and zoning requirements, and would use land already disturbed for transportation uses. The SLO County Corp Yard property is zoned appropriately for Government uses, and it is surrounded by other public uses to the west and west-southwest (US-101, 13th Street and the northbound on-ramp), the Salinas River to the east, a commercial use (Taps Truck Accessories) to the southeast, and heavy equipment storage to the north and south-southeast. The implementation of the project would be compatible with surrounding land uses.

2.8 RESPONSIBLE AGENCIES/REQUIRED PERMITS AND APPROVALS

Additional subsequent approvals and other permits that may be required from local and regional agencies are identified below:

- City of Paso Robles for approval of Conditional Use Permit, Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan permit, and grading/building permits; and

- San Luis Obispo County Air Pollution Control District (APCD) for consultation with air quality mitigation measures and an authority to construct.

Since the County of San Luis Obispo would be the lessor to RTA for this proposed Project, the County has been consulted throughout development of the IS/MND documentation. No other

permits or approvals are required, although RTA will share this IS/MND document with other State agencies through the Governor's Office of Planning and Research *State Clearinghouse* process.

2.9 PROJECT CONTACT PERSON

Mr. Geoff Straw, Executive Director
San Luis Obispo Regional Transit Authority
179 Cross Street, Suite A
San Luis Obispo, CA 93401
805-781-4472

SECTION 3.0 ENVIRONMENTAL CHECKLIST AND DISCUSSION

Below is a series of 17 sections that analyze the environmental impacts of the proposed Project. Each section begins with the presentation of a checklist, followed by presentation of back-up information addressing each matrix question and findings/mitigation measures. Where applicable, a discussion of the environmental setting and/or of the regulatory setting is also provided.

3.1 AESTHETICS

Evaluation Area	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
I. AESTHETICS: Would the project:				
a. Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?	☐	☐	☐	■
b. Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	☐	☐	☐	■
c. Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?	☐	☐	☐	■
d. Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	☐	■	☐	☐

3.1.1 Environmental Setting

Much of the language below was taken from the City of Paso Robles Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration report for the Water Treatment Plant project, which is located approximately 1.4 miles to the north. That project site is similarly nestled between US-101 and the Salinas River. The visual character of the Project vicinity is a combination of natural and built environments. Topography varies from relatively flat low-lying flood plain areas to rolling hills to steeply sloping foothills of the Santa Lucia Range. The Project site is currently developed as a County Roads Department yard, including vehicle parking, storage and maintenance facilities, and a small office building. Views of the Project site from public roads are mostly obstructed by trees, landscaping and chain-link fencing.

3.1.2 Regulatory Setting

The City of Paso Robles regulates community design and aesthetics of buildings and public spaces through implementation of adopted General Plan policies and zoning regulations. The General Plan prescribes visual resource policies. The Zoning Ordinance, in some cases, requires development review of Projects. The Land Use Element, Open Space Element, and Conservation Element of the General Plan contain policy statements that serve as a framework for evaluating proposed projects in regard to their potential to affect the atmosphere of the City. The proposed Project will require review for aesthetic considerations by the City Planning Commission.

3.1.3 Answers to Checklist Questions

Questions A and B:

The proposed Project would not have a significant impact on a scenic vista or view corridor. The site does not provide a vantage point to a scenic vista, nor are there any rock outcroppings, or historic buildings at the site. Short-term changes in the visual character of the streets around the Project area would occur as a result of the placement and use of construction equipment; however, this impact would be temporary and minor, given the context of the surrounding urban environment.

Question C and D:

The Project Site is not readily visible from nearby public viewing areas. The proposed Project site is currently developed for public facility uses. Project Plans include a landscaping plan which will reduce the visual impact of the facility. Nighttime facility lighting would be required at the proposed Project site for employee safety and security purposes, and it would be designed and implemented to minimize night-sky impacts and glare for surrounding users. This is considered a significant, but mitigable, impact.

3.1.4 Mitigation Measure

Mitigation Measure AES-1 – Exterior Lighting Controls: An exterior lighting plan will be developed, which will include the height, location, and intensity of all exterior lighting. All light poles, fixtures, and hoods shall be dark (non-reflective) colored. Lighting shall be designed to eliminate any off site glare. All exterior site lights shall utilize full cut-off, “hooded” lighting fixtures to prevent offsite light spillage and glare.

3.1.5 Finding

With the incorporation of this mitigation measure, impacts to aesthetics would be less than significant.

3.2 AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES

Evaluation Area	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
II. AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY RESOURCES: Would the project:				
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?	☐	☐	☐	■
b. Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?	☐	☐	☐	■
c. Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in PRC Section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by PRC Section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))?	☐	☐	☐	■
d. Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?	☐	☐	☐	■
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?	☐	☐	☐	■

3.2.1 Answers to Checklist Questions

Questions A through E:

The proposed Project will not have a significant impact to agricultural or forestry resources. As the Project is proposed, it should not convert any Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance or conflict with existing zoning for agricultural or forestry use. No land within the proposed Project site is under a Williamson Act contract. No significant impact to agricultural or forestry resources will occur.

The Project should not involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of farmland to non-agricultural use. There would be no significant impact to agricultural resources resulting from the proposed Project.

3.2.2 Finding

No mitigation is required.

3.3 AIR QUALITY

Evaluation Area	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
III. AIR QUALITY: Would the project:				
a. Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	☐	■	☐	☐
b. Violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?	☐	■	☐	☐
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)?	☐	■	☐	☐
d. Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	☐	■	☐	☐

e. Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?	☐	☐	☐	■

3.3.1 Environmental Setting

The proposed RTA Bus Parking Facility Project is located in the South Central Coast Air Basin (SCCAB), which includes San Luis Obispo, Ventura, and Santa Barbara Counties, and is under the jurisdiction of the San Luis Obispo County Air Pollution Control District (APCD). Much of the language and analysis completed in this section was derived from the *SLO County APCD CEQA Air Quality Handbook*, which was last revised in September 2015.

3.3.2 Existing Conditions

Air quality in San Luis Obispo County is currently monitored at ten public agency and private sector monitoring stations located throughout the County. The nearest air quality monitoring station to the proposed Project site is at 235 Santa Fe Avenue in the City of Paso Robles, which is approximately 2.0 linear miles to the southeast of the proposed Project site. This California Air Resources Board-operated station has been in operation since 1974, and it measures ozone (O_3), respirable particulate matter 10 microns or smaller (PM_{10}) wind speed and direction, and ambient temperature.

High ozone levels in San Luis Obispo County have occasionally been traced to air pollutants transported from other air basins, such as the South Coast Air Basin, the San Francisco Bay Area, and the San Joaquin Valley. The frequency with which long-range transport of pollutants affects local air quality has not been definitively established. However, most exceedances of the State O_3 standard measured in the County are the result of local emissions and adverse meteorological conditions.

San Luis Obispo County was designated in 1989 as nonattainment with the state health based standard for O_3. Ozone-forming pollutants throughout San Luis Obispo County have been significantly reduced since that time. For the years 2000 through 2002, no violations of the State hourly O_3 standard (0.09 parts per million, or ppm) were measured at any of the ten community-based monitoring stations in SLO County. Based upon that record, the State Air Resources Board re-designated our County as attainment with the state health based O_3 standard in January 2004.

On April 28, 2005, the CARB approved the nation's most health protective O_3 standard with special consideration for children's health. The new 8-hour-average standard at 0.070 ppm will further protect California's most vulnerable population from the adverse health effects associated with ground-level O_3. Based on monitoring data, San Luis Obispo County has been deemed nonattainment for the new state O_3 standard. The County is also nonattainment for federal O_3 standard in the eastern portion of the County.

San Luis Obispo County is also classified as nonattainment with state for PM_{10}. The 24-hour standard is 50 micrograms per cubic meter (or 50 µg/m^3), while the annual arithmetic mean is 20 µg/m^3.

3.3.3 Air Pollutant Sources

The federal and state governments have established ambient air quality standards for seven criteria pollutants: O_3, PM_{10}, $PM_{2.5}$, CO (Carbon Monoxide), NO_2 (nitrogen dioxide), SO_2 (sulfur dioxide), and Pb (lead). O_3 is generally considered a regional pollutant because its precursors affect air quality on a regional scale. Pollutants such as CO, NO_2, SO_2 and Pb are considered to be local pollutants that tend to accumulate in the air locally. PM_{10} is considered both a localized pollutant and a regional pollutant. As the County is designated as nonattainment for O_3 and PM_{10}, these pollutants are of particular concern.

3.3.3.1 Ozone

O_3 is a respiratory irritant and an oxidant that increases susceptibility to respiratory infections, and can cause substantial damage to vegetation and other materials. O_3 is a severe eye, nose, and throat irritant. It also attacks synthetic rubber, textiles, plants, and other materials. O_3 causes extensive damage to plants by leaf discoloration and cell damage.

O_3 is not emitted directly into the air, but is formed by a photochemical reaction in the atmosphere. O_3 precursors – reactive organic gases (ROG) and oxides of nitrogen (NO_x) – react in the atmosphere in the presence of sunlight to form O_3. Because photochemical reaction rates depend on the intensity of ultraviolet light and air temperature, O_3 is primarily a summer air pollution problem. The O_3 precursors ROG and NO_x are emitted by mobile sources and by stationary combustion equipment.

State standards for O_3 have been set for a 1-hour averaging time, whereas federal standards have been set for both a 1-hour averaging time and an 8-hour averaging time. The state 1-hour O_3 standard is not to exceed 0.09 parts per million (180 µg/m^3), while the 8-hour standard is 0.070 ppm (137 µg/m^3). The federal 8-hour O_3 standard is 0.075 ppm (147 µg/m^3).

3.3.3.2 Inhalable Particulate Matter

Particulates can damage human health and retard plant growth. Health concerns associated with suspended particulate matter focus on those particles small enough to reach the lungs when inhaled. Particulates also reduce visibility and corrode materials.

The federal and state ambient air quality standard for particulate matter applies to two classes of particulates: $PM_{2.5}$ and PM_{10}.

The state PM_{10} standards are 50 µg/m^3 as a 24-hour average and 20 µg/m^3 as an annual arithmetic mean, and the federal PM_{10} standard is 150 µg/m^3 as a 24-hour average. The state

$PM_{2.5}$ standard is 12 µg/m^3 as an annual arithmetic mean, and the federal $PM_{2.5}$ standards are 35 µg/m^3 for the 24-hour average and 12 µg/m^3 for the annual arithmetic mean.

3.3.4 Regulatory Setting

3.3.4.1 Federal

The Federal Clean Air Act (CAA), published in 1970 and amended twice thereafter (including the 1990 amendments), establishes the framework for modern air pollution control. The CAA directs the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to establish ambient air standards for six pollutants: O^3, PM, CO, NO_2, SO_2 and Pb. The standards are divided into primary and secondary standards: the former to protect human health within an adequate margin of safety, and the latter to protect environmental values, such as plant and animal life. The EPA develops rules and regulations to preserve and improve air quality, as well as delegating specific responsibilities to state and local agencies.

3.3.4.2 State of California

Responsibility for achieving California's standards, which are more stringent than federal standards, is placed on the CARB and local air pollution control districts. These standards are to be achieved through district-level air quality management plans that will be incorporated into the State Implementation Plan (SIP). In California, the EPA has delegated authority to prepare SIPs to CARB, which, in turn, has delegated that authority to individual air districts.

CARB has traditionally established state air quality standards, maintaining oversight authority in air quality planning, developing programs for reducing emissions from motor vehicles, developing air emission inventories, collecting air quality and meteorological data, and approving SIPs.

Responsibilities of air districts include overseeing stationary source emissions, approving permits, maintaining emissions inventories, maintaining air quality stations, overseeing agricultural burning permits, and reviewing air quality-related sections of environmental documents required by CEQA.

The California Clean Air Act of 1988 (CCAA) substantially added to the authority and responsibilities of air districts. The CCAA designates air districts as lead air quality planning agencies, requires air districts to prepare air quality plans, and grants air districts authority to implement traffic control measures (TCMs). The CCAA focuses on attainment of the California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS), which, for certain pollutants and averaging periods, are more stringent than the comparable federal standards.

The CCAA requires designation of attainment and nonattainment areas with respect to state ambient air quality standards. The CCAA also requires that local and regional air districts expeditiously prepare and adopt an air quality attainment plan if the district violates state air

quality standards for O_3, CO, SO_2, NO_2, or P_b. These clean air plans are specifically designed to attain these standards and must be designed to achieve an annual 5% reduction in district-wide emissions of each nonattainment pollutant or its precursors. No locally prepared attainment plans are required for areas that violate the state PM_{10} standards.

The CCAA requires that the CAAQS be met as expeditiously as practicable but, unlike the federal CAA, does not set precise attainment deadlines. Instead, the CCAA established increasingly stringent requirements for areas that will require more time to achieve the standards.

The CCAA emphasizes the control of "indirect and area-wide sources" of air pollutant emissions. It gives local air pollution control districts explicit authority to regulate indirect sources of air pollution and to establish TCMs. The CCAA does not define indirect and area-wide sources. However, Section 110 of the federal CAA defines an indirect source as:

> *A facility, building, structure, installation, real property, road, or highway which attracts, or may attract, mobile sources of pollution. Such terms include parking lots, parking garages, and other facilities subject to any measure for management of parking supply.*

TCMs are defined in the CCAA as "any strategy to reduce trips, vehicle use, vehicle miles traveled, vehicle idling, or traffic congestion for the purpose of reducing vehicle emissions." Recently enacted amendments to the CCAA impose additional requirements designed to ensure an improvement in air quality within the next five years. More specifically, local districts with moderate air pollution that did not achieve "transitional nonattainment" status by December 31, 1997, must implement the more stringent measures applicable to districts with serious air pollution.

3.3.4.3. Greenhouse Gas Emissions and Global Climate Change

Global climate change (GCC) is a change in the average weather of the earth, which can be measured by wind patterns, storms, precipitation, and temperature. Although the issue of GCC is a widely accepted theory, the extent of the change from anthropogenic (human activity related) sources remains in debate.

Gases that trap heat in the atmosphere are often called greenhouse gases (GHG), analogous to the way in which a greenhouse retains heat. Common GHG include water vapor, CO_2, methane (CH_4), NO_x, chlorofluorocarbons (CFC), hydrofluorocarbons, perfluorocarbons, sulfur hexafluoride, O_3, and aerosols. GHG are emitted by both natural processes and human activities. The accumulation of GHG in the atmosphere regulates the earth's temperature. Without the natural heat trapping effect of GHG, the earth's surface would be about 34 degrees Centigrade (°C) cooler. However, it is believed that emissions from human activities, such as electricity production and vehicle use, have elevated the concentration of these gases in the atmosphere beyond the level of naturally occurring concentrations.

In 2006, the California State Legislature adopted Assembly Bill 32 (AB32), the *California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006* and the Governor signed it into law. AB32 focuses on reducing GHG emissions in California. AB32 requires CARB to adopt rules and regulations that would achieve GHG emissions equivalent to statewide levels in 1990 by 2020. In addition, two State-level Executive Orders have been enacted by the Governor (Executive Order S-3-05, signed June 1, 2005, and Executive Order S-01-07, signed January 18, 2007) that mandate reductions in GHG emissions. SB375, signed in September 2008, aligns regional transportation planning efforts, regional GHG reduction targets, and land use and housing allocation.

Operation of the proposed Project would involve no greater consumption of motor vehicle fuels or increased electrical demand which would generate GHG emissions in comparison to the existing levels. However, implementation of the Project would preclude the increase in motor vehicle fuels that would be required if the all bus parking were to instead occur at RTA's primary facility in San Luis Obispo. The San Luis Obispo APCD has an operational phase GHG CEQA significance threshold for commercial projects of 1,150 MT/yr. The project impacts will be evaluated with *California Emissions Estimator Model* software package (CalEEMod version 2013.2.2) and compared to the threshold. Due to a lack of significance thresholds, a determination of the Project's impact on regional, statewide, or continental resources of concern affected by global climate change (i.e., regional water supply and hydrology, plant and wildlife species range expansions or contractions, Sierra snowpack, extent of polar ice caps, sea level rise, etc.) would be speculative. However, the project impacts will be evaluated with the CalEEMod program herein.

To reduce GHG emissions, RTA would landscape the Project site to reduce energy consumption due to daily heating/cooling needs, and install water efficient faucets and toilets to reduce the energy needed to transport water/wastewater. Water conservation is mandatory throughout the State of California due to on-going drought conditions and through the City of Paso Robles' existing water conservation programs. Additionally, RTA will limit engine idling for buses parked at the site during operation of the proposed project.

3.3.4.4 San Luis Obispo Air Pollution Control District

The APCD shares responsibility with CARB for ensuring that all State and Federal ambient air quality standards are attained within the County. The APCD has jurisdiction under the California Health and Safety Code to develop emission standards for the County, issue air pollution permits, and require emission controls for stationary sources in the County. The APCD is also responsible for the attainment of State and Federal air quality standards in the County. Although the proposed Project would be located in a district that exceeds State standards of O_3 and PM_{10}, it would be consistent with the APCD's Transportation Control Measures T-2A Local Transit System Improvements and T-2B Regional Public Transit Improvements found in the CAP. Specifically, such local and regional transit improvements are anticipated to reduce emissions, vehicle miles traveled, and average daily trips – all of which help to reduce vehicle emissions in the region.

3.3.5 Thresholds of Significance

In accordance with the CEQA Guidelines and for the purposes of this analysis, the proposed Project would be deemed to have a significant air quality impact if the Project:

- Conflicts with or obstructs the implementation of the applicable air quality plan or SIP;
- Results in emissions that would violate any ambient air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or Projected air quality violation;
- Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the region is considered non-attainment under any Federal or State ambient air quality standard;
- Exposes sensitive receptors to substantial toxic air contaminant pollutant concentrations; or,
- Creates objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people.

Significance thresholds have been developed by the APCD and contained within the CEQA Air Quality Handbook (APCD, 2015). It should be noted that diesel particulate matter is considered a toxic air contaminant and carcinogen by APCD, CARB and the EPA. Since the proposed Project site is within 1,000 feet of a sensitive receptor (housing located approximately 400 feet on the other side of US-101), a Health Risk Assessment (HRA) could be required. HRAs are addressed in the CAPCOA *Health Risk Assessment for Proposed Land Use Projects* document and this project is considered a Type A project (i.e., a new toxic impact source to existing sensitive receptors). The nearest sensitive receptor is a home that is northwest from the proposed RTA bus parking facility. The RTA vehicles currently meet CARB emissions standards using Best Available Control Technology (diesel particulate filters) on 1998 or newer vehicles. The project's worst case daily diesel bus trip information and proximity to the nearest sensitive receptor was used to complete a screening HRA. The results of this assessment demonstrated that the worst case risk from the proposed facility would be significantly less than the APCD's 10 in a million risk threshold and as a result, no additional diesel emission mitigation is necessary.

3.3.6 Impact Analysis

This section presents emissions estimates used for the proposed Project as determined with the *California Emissions Estimator Model* software package (CalEEMod version 2013.2.2). The following assumptions were used for both construction and operational phases to determine emissions impacts for base year 2018:

- Two land uses modeled (1,250 square foot Government Office Building, and 1.5-acre Parking Lot).

- Total 31 construction days, 8 hours/day, and Monday-Friday.
- No existing building demolition required.
- 690 cubic yards of excavation material would be exported, while 560 cubic yards of Class 2 Aggregate Base and 1,760 tons of Hot Mix Asphalt would be imported.
- Since it would not be a public building, no consumer trips/emissions assumed.
- Minimum Tier 2 diesel engine technologies required during construction.
- Construction site would be wetted twice per day to reduce dust.
- Low-flow faucets and toilets assumed for modular office building.
- For a daily worst case scenario, changed CalEEMod default vehicle fleet to be made up of the following project trips and resulting fleet makeup: One-way trips to include 28 from heavy-duty diesel buses (31.11%), 10 from medium-duty buses (11.11%) and 52 from commute vehicles (57.78%).
- Default daily trip rate for CalEEMod General Office Building land of about 69 one way trips for every 1,000 square feet would result in about 86 trips for this 1,250 square foot proposed project's size. This is just about equivalent to the 90 daily trips worst case just described. Therefore, for modeling simplicity, the CalEEMod default daily trip rate for the project was retained. However, the one-way trip length was changed to the APCD's default longest distance (13 miles) to be more consistent with actual arrival and departure trip lengths for this project. This evaluation does not consider the daily bus route distances which already exist independently of the new proposed consolidated bus parking being evaluated for this project.
- Changed the default trip types to be 100 percent primary trips.
- Other minimal/conservative mitigations are assumed.

The mitigations assumed in the CalEEMod program and which are detailed in the mitigation measures at the end of this section result in the following percentage declines in emissions:

Metric	ROG	NO_x	CO	SO_2	Fugitive PM_{10}	Exhaust PM_{10}	PM_{10} Total	Fugitive $PM_{2.5}$	Exhaust $PM_{2.5}$	$PM_{2.5}$ Total	Greenhouse Gases					
											Bio-CO_2	Nonbio-CO_2	Total CO_2	CH_4	N_2O	CO_2e
	Tons Per Year										Metric Tons Per Year					
Unmitigated Construction	0.0699	0.2558	0.2129	0.000340	0.0316	0.0136	0.0452	0.0150	0.0128	0.0278	0.0000	29.5659	29.5659	0.004700	0.0000	29.6646
Mitigated Construction	0.0699	0.2558	0.2129	0.000340	0.0167	0.0136	0.0303	0.007420	0.0128	0.0202	0.0000	29.5659	29.5659	0.004700	0.0000	29.6646
Percent Reduction	***0.0%***	***0.0%***	***0.0%***	***0.0%***	***47.2%***	***0.0%***	***33.0%***	***50.5%***	***0.0%***	***27.3%***	***0.0%***	***0.0%***	***0.0%***	***0.0%***	***0.0%***	***0.0%***
Unmitigated Operations	0.2924	0.0549	0.2518	0.000350	0.0225	0.000650	0.0232	0.006040	0.000610	0.006640	0.3143	50.7851	51.0994	0.0244	0.000440	51.7462
Mitigated Operations	0.2921	0.0524	0.2445	0.000330	0.0210	0.000620	0.0216	0.005620	0.000580	0.006200	0.2431	49.1078	49.3509	0.0195	0.000410	49.8873
Percent Reduction	***0.1%***	***4.6%***	***2.9%***	***5.7%***	***6.7%***	***4.6%***	***6.9%***	***7.0%***	***4.9%***	***6.6%***	***22.7%***	***3.3%***	***3.4%***	***20.1%***	***6.8%***	***3.6%***

The APCD has determined Thresholds of Significance standards for both operations- and construction-related emissions, as depicted in the two tables below. If any of the thresholds are exceeded, the RTA would be required to implement additional mitigation measures. In all cases, the estimated measures of the proposed Project are well below the threshold standards.

Operations-Related Polluants	**Measure**	**Standard**	**Pass/Fail**
Ozone Precursors (ROG + NO_x)	11.57	25 Lbs/Day	Pass
Diesel Particulate Matter	0.1577	1.25 Lbs/Day	Pass
Fugitive Particulate Matter (PM_{10}),Dust	1.2985	25 Lbs/Day	Pass
Operations-Related Polluants	**Measure**	**Standard**	**Pass/Fail**
Greenhouse Gases (CO_2, CH_4, N_2O, HFC, DCF, F_6S)	280.02	1,150 CO_2e Metric Tons / Yr.	Pass

Construction-Related Polluants	**Measure**	**Standard**	**Pass/Fail**
Ozone Precursors (ROG + NO_x)	44.94	137 Lbs./Day	Pass
Diesel Particulate Matter	1.2585	7 Lbs./Day	Pass
Fugitive Particulate Matter (PM_{10}),Dust	0.0163	2.5 Tons/Qtr.	Pass
Construction-Related Polluants	**Measure**	**Standard**	**Pass/Fail**
Greenhouse Gases (CO_2, CH_4, N_2O, HFC, DCF, F_6S)	29.6646	Included in the Operational-phase	N/A

3.3.7 Answers to Checklist Questions

Questions A through C:

In the absence of any mitigation measures, the proposed Project construction activities would result in short-term O_3 precursor emissions from heavy equipment and motor vehicles, as well as fugitive dust (PM_{10}) emissions that could affect local air quality. With one required and three voluntary mitigation measures detailed at the end of this section, the emissions would be reduced to less than significant levels.

The nature of the Project's operation at the site would not significantly contribute to area pollution levels.

Question D:

During Project construction, PM_{10} and $PM_{2.5}$ concentrations could be increased. The County is designated as non-attainment for PM_{10} when measured against state standards. The Paso Robles monitoring station recorded two PM_{10} exceedances in 2001 and one exceedance in 2003. Since then, there was one exceedance recorded in 2006. No exceedances were reported for the federal standard for the years 2004 through 2006. Although emissions of PM_{10} are expected to be below applicable thresholds, RTA will voluntarily implement standard mitigations as described below to further minimize project impacts.

A sensitive receptor is located within 1,000 feet of mobile sources of diesel exhaust emitted during normal operations. Specifically, residential housing is located toward the west within approximately 400 feet from the proposed Project site, directly adjacent to the other side of US-101. However, the following factors suggest that the proposed Project would not result in substantial pollutant concentrations:

- A maximum of seven diesel-powered Urban Buses (UB) and two Transit Fleet Vehicles (TFV) are deployed from the proposed Project site during weekday morning start-up, and four UB and three TFV during the mid-day shift-change. Far fewer buses are operated during weekends. Buses are not permitted to otherwise idle more than five minutes while at the site. This operating scenario results in a short inhalation exposure period.

- The prevailing westerly winds would carry diesel bus emissions away from those sensitive receptors.

- All diesel-powered buses meet the CARB Urban Bus and Transit Fleet Vehicle emission standards, which greatly reduce PM and NO_x engine emissions in comparison to 2005 baseline standards.

Question E:

The Project would not generate substantial or long-term objectionable odors that could adversely affect sensitive receptors, such as residential areas, churches, and or schools.

3.3.8 Mitigation Measures

Mitigation Measure AQ-1 – Construction Equipment Emission Control Measures. As identified in the APCD *CEQA Air Quality Handbook*, construction mitigation measures are designed to reduce emissions (ROG, NOx, DPM, PM10 and GHG) from heavy-duty construction equipment and may include emulsified fuels, catalyst and filtration technologies, engine replacement, and new alternative fueled trucks. Although not technically required by APCD, RTA will implement the following voluntary construction-related emission reduction measures and shall include, but not be limited to, a combination of the following:

- Maintain all construction equipment in proper tune according to manufacturer's specifications;

- Fuel all off-road and portable diesel powered equipment with ARB certified motor vehicle diesel fuel (non-taxed version suitable for use off-road);

- Use diesel construction equipment meeting ARB's Tier 2 certified engines or cleaner off-road heavy-duty diesel engines, and comply with the State Off-Road Regulation;

- Use on-road heavy-duty trucks that meet the ARB's 2007 or cleaner certification standard for on-road heavy-duty diesel engines, and comply with the State On-Road Regulation;

- Construction or trucking companies with fleets that that do not have engines in their fleet that meet the engine standards identified in the above two measures (e.g. captive or NO_x exempt area fleets) may be eligible by proving alternative compliance;

- All on and off-road diesel equipment shall not idle for more than 5 minutes. Signs shall be posted in the designated queuing areas and or job sites to remind drivers and operators of the 5-minute idling limit;

- Diesel idling within 1,000 feet of sensitive receptors is not permitted;

- Staging and queuing areas shall not be located within 1,000 feet of sensitive receptors;

- Electrify equipment when feasible;

- Substitute gasoline-powered in place of diesel-powered equipment, where feasible; and,

- Use alternatively fueled construction equipment on-site where feasible, such as compressed natural gas (CNG), liquefied natural gas (LNG), propane or biodiesel.

Mitigation Measure AQ-2 – Construction-Related Dust Control Measures. Since the proposed Project site is within 1,000 feet of a sensitive receptor, dust generated by construction activities shall be kept to a minimum by full implementation of the following required mitigation measures.

- Reduce the amount of the disturbed area where possible;

    a. Use of water trucks or sprinkler systems in sufficient quantities to prevent airborne dust from leaving the site. Increased watering frequency would be required whenever wind speeds exceed 15 mph. Reclaimed (non-potable) water should be used whenever possible. Please note that since water use is a concern due to drought conditions, the contractor or builder shall consider the use of an APCD-approved dust suppressant where feasible to reduce the amount of water used for dust control. For a list of suppressants, see Section 4.3 of the CEQA Air Quality Handbook;

- All dirt stock pile areas should be sprayed daily as needed;

- Permanent dust control measures identified in the approved project re-vegetation and landscape plans should be implemented as soon as possible following completion of any soil disturbing activities;

- Exposed ground areas that are planned to be reworked at dates greater than one month after initial grading should be sown with a fast germinating, non-invasive grass seed and watered until vegetation is established;

- All disturbed soil areas not subject to re-vegetation should be stabilized using approved chemical soil binders, jute netting, or other methods approved in advance by the APCD;

- All roadways, driveways, sidewalks, etc. to be paved should be completed as soon as possible. In addition, building pads should be laid as soon as possible after grading unless seeding or soil binders are used;

- Vehicle speed for all construction vehicles shall not exceed 15 mph on any unpaved surface at the construction site;

- All trucks hauling dirt, sand, soil, or other loose materials are to be covered or should maintain at least two feet of freeboard (minimum vertical distance between top of load and top of trailer) in accordance with CVC Section 23114;

- Install wheel washers where vehicles enter and exit unpaved roads onto streets, or wash off trucks and equipment leaving the site;

- Sweep streets at the end of each day if visible soil material is carried onto adjacent paved roads. Water sweepers with reclaimed water should be used where feasible;

- All of these fugitive dust mitigation measures shall be shown on grading and building plans; and

- The contractor or builder shall designate a person or persons to monitor the fugitive dust emissions and enhance the implementation of the measures as necessary to minimize dust complaints, reduce visible emissions below 20% opacity, and to prevent transport of dust offsite. Their duties shall include holidays and weekend periods when work may not be in progress. The name and telephone number of such persons shall be provided to the APCD Compliance Division prior to the start of any grading, earthwork or demolition.

Mitigation Measure AQ-3 – Construction Permit Requirements

Portable equipment, 50 horsepower (hp) or greater, used during construction activities may require California statewide portable equipment registration (issued by the California Air Resources Board) or an APCD permit.

The RTA will ensure that the contractor(s) that will complete the project's construction phase will comply with these permit requirements. The following list is provided as a guide to equipment and operations that may have permitting requirements, but should not be viewed as exclusive. For a more detailed listing, refer to the Technical Appendices, page 4-4, in the APCD's 2012 CEQA Handbook.

- Power screens, conveyors, diesel engines, and/or crushers;
- Portable generators and equipment with engines that are 50 hp or greater;
- Electrical generation plants or the use of standby generator;
- Internal combustion engines;
- Rock and pavement crushing;

- Unconfined abrasive blasting operations;
- Tub grinders;
- Trommel screens; and,
- Portable plants (i.e., aggregate plant, asphalt batch plant, concrete batch plant, etc).

To minimize potential delays, prior to the start of the project, RTA will contact the APCD Engineering & Compliance Division at (805) 781-5912 for specific information regarding permitting requirements.

Mitigation Measure AQ-4 – Operational Permit Requirements

If this RTA facility will have one or more of the below list of equipment, they shall obtain an APCD permit. The following list is provided as a guide to equipment and operations that may have permitting requirements, but should not be viewed as exclusive. For a more detailed listing, refer to the Technical Appendix, page 4-4, in the APCD's 2012 CEQA Handbook.

- Portable generators and equipment with engines that are 50 hp or greater;
- Electrical generation plants or the use of standby generator;
- Auto and vehicle repair and painting facilities;
- Internal combustion engines;
- Cogeneration facilities; and
- Unconfined abrasive blasting operations.

Most facilities applying for an Authority to Construct or Permit to Operate with stationary diesel engines greater than 50 hp, should be prioritized or screened for facility wide health risk impacts. A diesel engine-only facility limited to 20 non-emergency operating hours per year or that has demonstrated to have overall diesel particulate emissions less than or equal to 2 lb/yr does not need to do additional health risk assessment. To minimize potential delays, prior to the start of the project, RTA will contact the APCD Engineering & Compliance Division at (805) 781-5912 for specific information regarding permitting requirements.

Mitigation Measure AQ-5 – Operational Phase Idling Limitations

To help reduce the emissions impact from RTA's diesel buses and equipment at the facility, they shall implement the following idling control techniques:

1. California Diesel Idling Regulations
    a. ***On-road diesel vehicles*** shall comply with Section 2485 of Title 13 of the California Code of Regulations. This regulation limits idling from diesel-fueled commercial motor vehicles with gross vehicular weight ratings of more than 10,000 pounds and licensed for operation on highways. It applies to California and non-California based vehicles. In general, the regulation specifies that drivers of said vehicles:

        1. Shall not idle the vehicle's primary diesel engine for greater than 5-minutes at any location, except as noted in Subsection (d) of the regulation; and,

2. Shall not operate a diesel-fueled auxiliary power system (APS) to power a heater, air conditioner, or any ancillary equipment on that vehicle during sleeping or resting in a sleeper berth for greater than 5.0 minutes at any location when within 1,000 feet of a restricted area, except as noted in Subsection (d) of the regulation.

b. Signs must be posted in the designated queuing areas and job sites to remind drivers and operators of the state's 5-minute idling limit.

c. The specific requirements and exceptions in the regulations can be reviewed at the following web sites: arb.ca.gov/msprog/truck-idling/2485.pdf and arb.ca.gov/regact/2007/ordiesl07/frooal.pdf.

2. Diesel Idling Restrictions Near Sensitive Receptors

In addition to the state required diesel idling requirements, the RTA shall comply with these more restrictive requirements to minimize impacts to nearby sensitive receptors:

a. Diesel idling within 1,000 feet of sensitive receptors shall not be permitted;
b. Use of alternative fueled or electric equipment is recommended as feasible; and
c. Signs that specify the no idling areas must be posted and enforced at the site.

3.3.9 Finding

With the incorporation of these 1 voluntary and 4 required mitigation measures, impacts to air quality would be less than significant.

3.4 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Evaluation Area	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES: Would the project:				
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 Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	☐	☐	■	☐

b. Have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or US Fish and Wildlife Service?	☐	☐	■	☐
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?	☐	☐	■	☐
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?	☐	☐	■	☐
e. Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	☐	☐	☐	■
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?	☐	☐	☐	■

3.4.1 Environmental Setting

Much of the language below was taken from the City of Paso Robles Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration report for the Water Treatment Plant project, which is located approximately 1.4 miles to the north. That project site is similarly nestled between US-101 and the Salinas River. The City of Paso Robles is lies within the Coastal Ranges Geomorphic Province of California, an area of mountain ranges with intervening valleys. The topography varies from relatively flat, low-lying flood plain areas to rolling hills and the steeply sloping foothills of the Santa Lucia Range. The City lies within the Salinas River watershed. The upper watershed begins at the headwaters southeast of Santa Margarita Lake and extends to the town of Bradley, just inside Monterey County. The Salinas River is the primary hydrologic feature in Paso Robles.

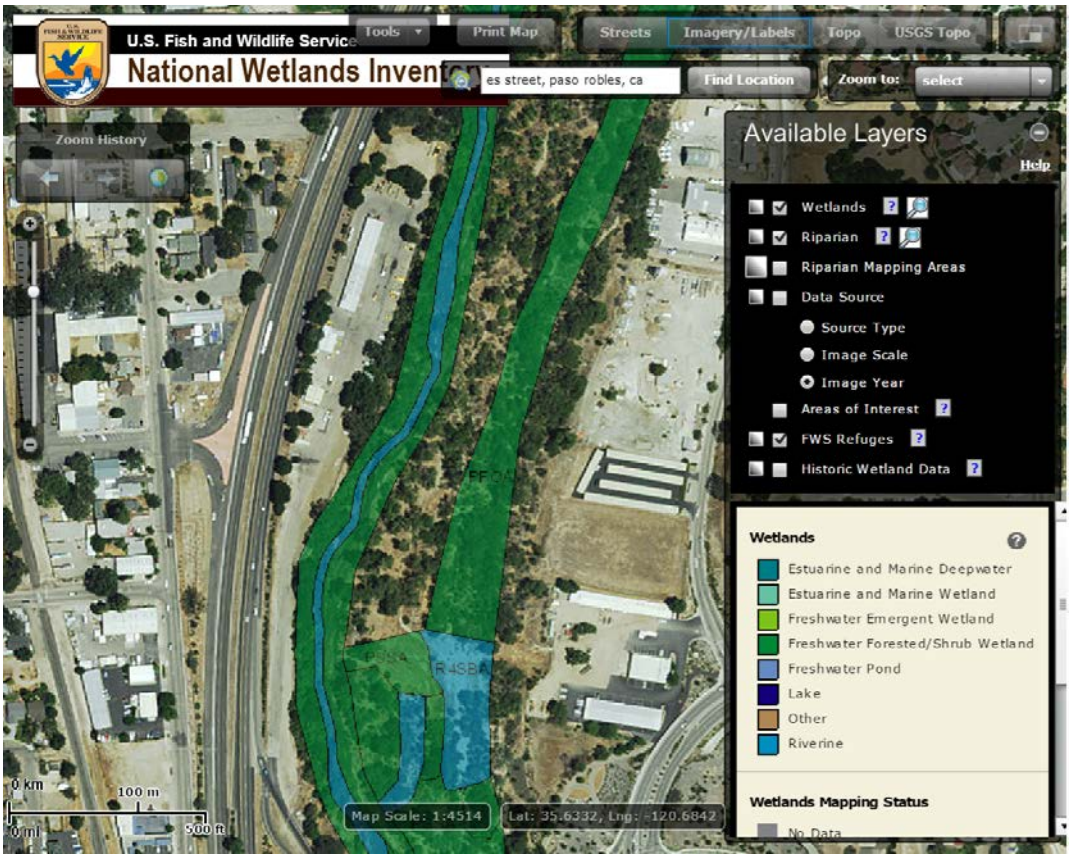
Although substantial subsurface flows occur throughout the year, the river is virtually dry on the surface from July through September with peak flows typically occurring in the months of January to March.

Directly adjacent to RTA's proposed Project site is the Salinas River Corridor and the planned Salinas River Trail. The *Salinas River Trail Master Plan* study was completed by the San Luis Obispo Council of Governments (SLOCOG) in 2014. The proposed Project would be located adjacent to the 5.5-mile section denoted as *Reach 5 – Paso Robles to San Miguel* (beginning at 13th Street in Paso Robles and continuing north to the community of San Miguel). As noted in the study report, there "are no existing formal or informal trails within this reach of the proposed trail alignment." In a February 3, 2016 Staff Report, SLOCOG recognized that RTA's proposed Project would be physically separated (both in terms of distance and by a fence) from the Salinas River Trail project; this would help preserve the corridor and could result in furthering potential future implementation of the recreation trail.

As described in the *Salinas River Trail Master Plan*, a number of sensitive animals and plants likely exist in the river corridor, although the Plan clearly states that further study would be necessary to determine if the Salinas River Trail project would impact any of those species. Nonetheless, the proposed Project would be constructed on land that has already been disturbed for heavy-duty vehicle storage uses. This is not considered a natural habitat and is not considered suitable for special-status plants or animals.

RTA reviewed the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Wetlands *Mapper* website to determine if the proposed Project would have any direct or indirect impacts on designated wetlands. The proposed Project site itself is not located directly within a designated wetland, but the land directly adjacent (toward the east) is designated as PFOC (pond/marsh, forested and seasonally flooded) due to the location of the seasonal Salinas River. All of the proposed Project facilities, paving/repaving, bus operations, bus parking, and other associated activities would occur within the existing disturbed and developed boundaries of the SLO County Corp Yard. In addition, all construction activities and staging equipment would be located outside of the designated wetland habitat.

A screenshot from the *Wetlands Mapper* website is shown below. No direct or indirect impacts to existing wetlands or other potentially jurisdictional features are proposed or expected to occur as a result of construction activities or bus storage operations occurring in the vicinity of this habitat.



3.4.2 Regulatory Setting

Waters and Wetlands. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has jurisdiction over waters of the United States (U.S.). The limit of jurisdiction in non-tidal waters extends to the ordinary high water mark and includes all adjacent wetlands. On June 29, 2015, the Environmental Protection Agency and the Corps issued a joint Clean Water Rule defining waters of the U.S. as:

> "All waters which are currently used, or were used in the past, or may be susceptible to use in interstate or foreign commerce, including all waters which are subject to the ebb and flow of the tide; including all interstate waters, including interstate wetlands; the territorial seas; all impoundments of waters otherwise identified as waters of the United States; related tributaries."

The Clean Water Rule also defines how five subcategories of waters (including Western Vernal Pools in California) should be evaluated individually or as a group of waters in a region.

The Corps and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency define wetlands as:

> "those areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions. Wetlands generally include swamps, marshes, bogs, and similar areas."

Section 404 of the Clean Water Act of 1977 prohibits discharge of dredged or fill material into Waters of the U.S. without an "Individual Permit" from the Corps, or authorization under one or more existing "Nationwide Permits." Areas in the vicinity of the Project site which qualify as jurisdictional waters of the U.S. and/or federal wetlands include the river bed and bank of the Salinas River and associated riparian vegetation. The proposed Project does not require a Section 404 permit.

Federal Endangered Species Act. The Federal Endangered Species Act (FESA) directs all Federal agencies to work to conserve endangered and threatened species and to use their authorities to further the purposes of the Act. Section 7 of the Act, called "Interagency Cooperation," is the mechanism by which Federal agencies ensure the actions they take, including those they fund or authorize, do not jeopardize the existence of any listed species. Under Section 7, Federal agencies must consult with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service when any action the agency carries out, funds, or authorizes (such as through a permit) may affect a listed endangered or threatened species. This process usually begins as informal consultation.

An incidental take permit is required under Section 10 when non-Federal activities will result in "take" of threatened or endangered wildlife. A habitat conservation plan (HCP) must accompany an application for an incidental take permit. The purpose of the habitat conservation planning process associated with the permit is to ensure there is adequate minimizing and mitigating of the effects of the authorized incidental take. The purpose of the incidental take permit is to authorize the incidental take of a listed species, not to authorize the activities that result in take. Neither a Section 7 permit nor a Section 10 permit is required for the proposed Project.

Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918. The MBTA protects all migratory birds, including their eggs, nest and feathers. The MBTA was originally drafted to put an end to the commercial trade in bird feathers, popular in the latter part of the 1800s. The MBTA is enforced by the USFWS, and potential impacts to species protected under the MBTA are evaluated by the USFWS in consultation with other federal agencies. Migratory bird species may be present within habitats adjacent the Project site area, including existing developed areas and ruderal areas. The mitigation measures presented at the end of this section includes methods to address any potential impacts.

California Endangered Species Act. The State of California Endangered Species Act (CESA) states that all native species of fishes, amphibians, reptiles, birds, mammals, invertebrates, and plants, and their habitats, threatened with extinction and those experiencing a significant decline which, if not halted, would lead to a threatened or endangered designation, will be protected or

preserved. The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) will work with all interested persons, agencies and organizations to protect and preserve such sensitive resources and their habitats. The State also lists "Special Concern" species based on limited distribution, declining populations, diminishing habitat, or unusual scientific recreational or educational value. Under State law, the CDFW is empowered to review Projects for their potential to impact state-listed species and California Special Concern species, and their habitats. The mitigation measures presented at the end of this section includes methods to address any potential impacts.

California Department of Fish and Wildlife Code, Chapter 6. This code governs state-designated wetlands, including riparian and stream habitat, and mandates that mitigation be implemented to replace wetland extent and value lost to development. Sections 1600-1616 of the California Fish and Game Code regulates activities that would alter the flow, bed, channel or bank of streams and lakes. Activities that affect these areas, as well as associated riparian habitats, would require a Streambed Alteration Agreement from the CDFW. The proposed Project will not require a Streambed Alteration Agreement.

City of El Paso de Robles – General Plan. The 2003 City of El Paso De Robles General Plan (as amended) is the City's statement of policies for guiding decisions through 2025 regarding Paso Robles physical form and development. It provides direction to decision-makers who must balance competing community objectives, which sometimes present trade-offs. With regard to biological resource conservation, the Plan includes policies in the Conservation Element to protect oak trees and sensitive habitat through a series of goals and actions. The Plan specifically requires mitigation for potential impacts to the San Joaquin Kit Fox and its habitat in consultation with CDFW and USFW.

3.4.3 Methodology

RTA staff conducted a database query of the CDFW Natural Diversity Data Base (CNDDB) to identify special-status species and sensitive habitats that have been observed within the U.S. Geological Survey 7.5-minute quadrangle for Paso Robles and the surrounding eight quadrangles. This resource provides status of plants and animals on the Federal Endangered Species Act (FESA) list, the California Endangered Species Act (CESA) list and the related CDFW list.

In addition, staff reviewed the California Native Plant Society (CPNS) Online Inventory of Rare and Endangered Vascular Plants of California database to determine information on possible rare plants that have potential to occur in the vicinity of the Project site.

Finally, staff reviewed existing environmental documents and various reports were reviewed for background information and recent findings information. In particular, staff focused on the 2009 *Biological Resources Survey Report for the El Paso de Robles Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade Project* since it is located nearby in a similar setting between US-101 and the Salinas River corridor.

CDFW Natural Diversity Data Base

The CNDDB query was completed on May 17, 2016. A total of 258 records were obtained for the nine quadrangle region, of which 40 are located in the Paso Robles quadrangle. The records are presented in the table below, and summarized as such:

- Least Bell's Vireo (bird) – included on the FESA and CESA Endangered lists.
- San Joaquin Kit Fox (mammal) – included on the FESA Endangered list and the CESA Threatened list.
- California Red-Legged Frog (amphibian) – included on the FESA Threatened list, and considered a CDFW Special Species of Concern.
- Vernal Pool Fairy Shrimp (crustacean) – included on the FESA Threatened list.
- Bald Eagle (bird) – delisted from the FESA list and included on the CESA Endangered list.
- Western Spadefoot (amphibian) – considered a CDFW Special Species of Concern.
- Golden Eagle (bird) – considered a CDFW Fully-Protected and Watch List species.
- Other CDFW Special Species of Concern listings:
    - Yellow Warbler (bird)
    - Burrowing Owl (bird)
    - Salinas Pocket Mouse (mammal)
    - Monterey Dusky-Footed Woodrat (mammal)
    - American Badger (mammal)
    - Western Pond Turtle (reptile)

CDFW Natural Diversity Data Base for Paso Robles & 8 Surrounding Quadrangles					
Element Type	**Scientific Name**	**Common Name**	**Federal Status**	**State Status**	**CDFW Status**
Animals - Amphibians	Rana draytonii	California red-legged frog	Threatened	None	SSC
Animals - Amphibians	Spea hammondii	western spadefoot	None	None	SSC
Animals - Birds	Aquila chrysaetos	golden eagle	None	None	FP ; WL
Animals - Birds	Buteo regalis	ferruginous hawk	None	None	WL
Animals - Birds	Haliaeetus leucocephalus	bald eagle	Delisted	Endangered	FP
Animals - Birds	Ardea alba	great egret	None	None	-
Animals - Birds	Ardea herodias	great blue heron	None	None	-
Animals - Birds	Botaurus lentiginosus	American bittern	None	None	-
Animals - Birds	Nycticorax nycticorax	black-crowned night heron	None	None	-
Animals - Birds	Agelaius tricolor	tricolored blackbird	None	None	SSC
Animals - Birds	Baeolophus inornatus	oak titmouse	None	None	-
Animals - Birds	Setophaga petechia	yellow warbler	None	None	SSC
Animals - Birds	Athene cunicularia	burrowing owl	None	None	SSC
Animals - Birds	Vireo bellii pusillus	least Bell's vireo	Endangered	Endangered	-
Animals - Crustaceans	Branchinecta lynchi	vernal pool fairy shrimp	Threatened	None	-
Animals - Insects	Trimerotropis occulens	Lompoc grasshopper	None	None	-
Animals - Insects	Polyphylla nubila	Atascadero June beetle	None	None	-
Animals - Mammals	Vulpes macrotis mutica	San Joaquin kit fox	Endangered	Threatened	-
Animals - Mammals	Perognathus inornatus psammophilus	Salinas pocket mouse	None	None	SSC
Animals - Mammals	Neotoma macrotis luciana	Monterey dusky-footed woodrat	None	None	SSC
Animals - Mammals	Taxidea taxus	American badger	None	None	SSC
Animals - Reptiles	Emys marmorata	western pond turtle	None	None	SSC
Plants - Vascular	Monolopia gracilens	woodland woollythreads	None	None	-
Plants - Vascular	Amsinckia douglasiana	Douglas' fiddleneck	None	None	-
Plants - Vascular	Caulanthus lemmonii	Lemmon's jewelflower	None	None	-
Plants - Vascular	Lepidium jaredii ssp. jaredii	Jared's pepper-grass	None	None	-
Plants - Vascular	Astragalus macrodon	Salinas milk-vetch	None	None	-
Plants - Vascular	California macrophylla	round-leaved filaree	None	None	-
Plants - Vascular	Malacothamnus jonesii	Jones' bush-mallow	None	None	-
Plants - Vascular	Castilleja densiflora var. obispoensis	San Luis Obispo owl's-clover	None	None	-
Plants - Vascular	Eschscholzia hypecoides	San Benito poppy	None	None	-
Plants - Vascular	Antirrhinum ovatum	oval-leaved snapdragon	None	None	-
Plants - Vascular	Gilia latiflora ssp. cuyamensis	Cuyama gilia	None	None	-
Plants - Vascular	Gilia tenuiflora ssp. amplifaucalis	trumpet-throated gilia	None	None	-
Plants - Vascular	Navarretia nigelliformis ssp. radians	shining navarretia	None	None	-
Plants - Vascular	Chorizanthe palmeri	Palmer's spineflower	None	None	-
Plants - Vascular	Eriogonum elegans	elegant wild buckwheat	None	None	-
Plants - Vascular	Delphinium gypsophilum ssp. parvifloru	small-flowered gypsum-loving larkspu	None	None	-
Plants - Vascular	Ceanothus cuneatus var. fascicularis	Lompoc ceanothus	None	None	-
Plants - Vascular	Horkelia cuneata var. sericea	Kellogg's horkelia	None	None	-
Notes: SSC = Species of Special Concern, FP = Fully Protected Species, WL = Watch List Species					

California Native Plant Society Online Inventory

Staff reviewed the CNPS Online Inventory of Rare and Endangered Vascular Plants of California database on May 17, 2016. A total of 45 plants were listed in the USGS 7.5-minute nine-quadrangle area centered on the Paso Robles quadrangle. Of these, ten plants were listed and are presented in the table below. Of particular note:

- Two rare plants in the nine-quadrangle region is included on the FESA Threatened species list:
    - Santa Lucia Purple Amole (Agavaceae, a perennial bulbiferous herb)
    - Spreading Navarretia (Polemoniaceae, an annual herb)

- None of the ten rare plants recorded in Paso Robles are included on the FESA or CESA Endangered or Threatened species list.

County of San Luis Obispo

According to a review of County of San Luis Obispo Planning and Building Department maps for critical habitat, the following can be surmised:

1. San Joaquin Kit Fox: the proposed Project site is located in an area characterized as having a Standard Mitigation Ratio of less than 2:1 (i.e., light blue). The Standard Mitigation Ratio means that for every acre of permanent disturbance resulting from project activities (e.g. pad for barn, access road, landscaping etc.), RTA would normally be required to mitigate a total of 2:1 acre(s). However, according to the map, no San Joaquin Kit Fox sightings were observed in the vicinity of the proposed Project site within the past 10 years. Sightings were recorded to the north and east of Paso Robles, and those areas where characterized as having Standard Mitigation Ratios of 2:1 (dark blue), 3:1 (orange) and 4:1 (red). The proposed Project will not require off-site mitigation.

2. California Red-Legged Frog (rana draytonii): the proposed Project site is not located within any of the critical habitat areas for the Red-Legged Frog. No mitigation is necessary.

3. Vernal Pool Fairy Shrimp: the proposed Project site is located in a Vernal Pool region, although nearest Fairy Shrimp critical habitat is located several miles toward the east. No mitigation is necessary

3.4.4 Plant Communities and Wildlife Habitats

Because the proposed Project would be constructed on property that has already been disturbed for heavy-duty vehicle storage activities and the site is already fully fenced to separate it from the Salinas River corridor, RTA did not conduct a focused wildlife resources survey. Nonetheless, the mitigation measures below would ensure protection of wildlife resources if any were discovered during the final design and construction of site improvements.

Below are several pictures that were taken panoramically from a vantage point of roughly where the mobile office building would be installed, at approximately 9:00 AM on June 21, 2016. As shown, the current site is currently developed for vehicle storage and circulation needs, and the area is paved using either asphalt or decomposed granite. The proposed Project would not disturb land that has not already been disturbed nor would any trees be removed, so the impact to biological resources would not be significant.

The series of pictures below show a panoramic view beginning at the stop sign at the southern end of the property (at the entrance from Paso Robles Street), and panning 360 degrees in a counterclockwise direction. The final picture shows the view across US-101.

Answers to Checklist Questions

Question A:

Noise, dust and vehicle operation generated by construction and demolition activities may disrupt foraging activities of some wildlife within the boundaries of the proposed Project site and immediate vicinity. Although highly mobile wildlife species (e.g., birds) would be expected to avoid the proposed Project site, construction activities could also result in mortality of less mobile species. Additionally, short-term construction activities may result in secondary impacts to the Salinas River due to dust, erosion, sedimentation, and risk of upset (i.e., accidental spills from construction vehicles and/or equipment). Overall, due to the current level of disturbance associated with the existing County Corp yard activities and the availability of suitable habitat in the region, impacts to general wildlife are expected to be less than significant. However, the proposed Project has the potential to result in temporary impacts to nesting birds protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA). Implementation of the mitigation measures outlined below would mitigate impacts to nesting birds to less than significant levels.

As discussed above, special-status species such as Least Bell's Vireo, San Joaquin Kit Fox, California Red-Legged Frog, Vernal Pool Fairy Shrimp, Bald Eagle, Western Spadefoot, and Golden Eagle all have the potential to occur within the habitats immediately adjacent to the proposed Project site. However, the proposed Project would not result in any direct or indirect impacts to the riparian corridor, stream channels, or potentially viable habitat in which sensitive species could be found; therefore, impacts to these species would be considered less than significant. Furthermore, implementation of the mitigation measures outlined below would reduce potential secondary impacts to these species to less than significant levels.

Long-term impacts may occur due to an increase of human activity and noise associated with the proposed Project operations. Such activity may disturb migratory birds which may utilize the riparian forest or oak trees adjacent to the proposed Project site for nesting and migratory purposes. However, these long-term impacts are considered to be less than significant due to the high level of disturbance associated with the existing facility, and the availability of suitable nesting habitat within the proposed Project site and surrounding areas.

Question B:

Special-status species have the potential to occur within the habitats immediately adjacent to the proposed Project site. However, the proposed Project would not result in any direct impacts to the riparian corridor, stream channels, or potentially viable habitat in which sensitive species could be found; therefore, impacts to these species would be considered less than significant. Furthermore, implementation of the mitigation measures outlined below would reduce potential secondary impacts to these species to less than significant levels.

Questions C and D:

Long-term impacts may occur due to an increase of human activity and noise associated with proposed Project operations. Such activity may disturb migratory birds which may utilize the riparian forest or oak trees adjacent to the proposed Project site for nesting and migratory purposes. However, these long-term impacts are considered to be less than significant due to the high level of disturbance associated with the existing facility, and the availability of suitable nesting habitat in the surrounding areas.

Question E:

The proposed Project would not conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, nor would the project conflict with any local, regional or state conservation plan.

3.4.5 Mitigation Measures

Past and current land use practices have impacted the extent and diversity of the plant communities existing within and adjacent to the proposed Project site. However, as indicated above, the areas surrounding the proposed Project site – particularly the Salinas River corridor – contains suitable habitat to support a wide species diversity. Therefore, it is recommended that the following measures be implemented during the proposed Project to reduce potential impacts to sensitive resources to a less than significant level:

Mitigation Measure: BIO-1 – Construction Storm Water Plan and SWPPP: Prior to construction, RTA shall – in close consultation with San Luis Obispo County officials – prepare an operations-based Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) acceptable to the City of Paso Robles; this SWPPP will focus on the operations of RTA independent of County Corp Yard activities. RTA shall also develop in detail a Construction Storm Water Plan in conjunction with the Project's final design and grading plan for implementation during construction activities. Specific details are provided in the City of Paso Robles Construction Site Storm Water Quality Requirements. Elements covered in the program would include:

- Soil stockpiles and graded slopes shall be covered after 14 days if inactivity and 24 hours prior to and during inclement weather conditions.

- Fiber rolls shall be placed along the top of exposed slopes and at the toes of graded areas to reduce surface soil movement, as necessary.

- A routine monitoring plan shall be implemented to ensure success of all on-site erosion and sedimentation control measures.

- Dust control measures shall be implemented to graded areas during construction activities to control fugitive dust.

- Streets surrounding the Project Site shall be cleaned daily or as necessary.

- Best Management Practices shall be strictly followed to prevent spills and discharges of pollutants on site (material and container storage, proper trash disposal, construction entrances, etc.).

Mitigation Measure: BIO-2 – Construction-Related Erosion Control BMPs: Prior to and during construction, the contractor shall implement erosion control best management practices. To reduce the potential for inadvertent release of sediment from construction area to adjacent stream, drainage, wetland, or other sensitive resource areas, the contractor shall install appropriate erosion control devices around the perimeter of areas that require disturbance of the ground surface. Storm drains and gutters leading to drainage and wetland areas shall be blocked to prevent water entry. Erosion control devices shall be checked on a daily basis to ensure proper function.

Mitigation Measure: BIO-3 – Construction Outside Nesting Season: If feasible, construction activities will take place outside of the nesting bird season (i.e., March 15 to August 15). If construction activities occur within nesting bird season, a qualified biologist shall perform pre-activity nesting bird surveys to determine if breeding/nesting birds are present within the proposed Project site. If an active bird nest is identified, then CDFG and/or USWFS shall be consulted to determine appropriate buffer during construction activities.

Mitigation Measure: BIO-4 – Qualified Biologist Preconstruction Survey: A qualified biologist shall be retained to conduct a preconstruction survey of the proposed Project site and the adjacent habitats. In the event that any special-status species are identified within the proposed Project area, all work shall cease and the appropriate agencies shall be contacted for further consultation. As necessary, appropriate regulatory agency permits and/or approvals shall be obtained to allow relocation of special-status species from the Project area. In addition, the following measures shall be implemented to further mitigate impacts to the San Joaquin Kit Fox:

- Retain qualified biologist to conduct pre-construction survey of the project site and conduct a pre-construction kit fox briefing for construction workers to minimize kit fox impacts.

- Include kit fox protection measures on project plans.

- Require strict adherence to the existing 15 mph speed limit at the project site during construction.

- Stop all construction activities at dusk.

- Cover excavations deeper than 2 feet at the end of each working day or provide escape ramps for kit fox.

- Inspect pipes, culverts or similar structures for kit fox before burying, capping, or moving.

- Remove food-related trash from project site.

- If a kit fox is discovered at any time in the project area, all construction must stop and the CDFW and USFWS contacted immediately. The appropriate federal and state permits must be obtained before the project can proceed.

Mitigation Measure BIO-5 – Construction Worker Education Program: A construction worker education program shall be prepared and presented to all construction personnel at the beginning of the proposed Project. The program shall discuss sensitive species with potential to occur in the construction zone, with emphasis on special-status wildlife and plant species. The program shall explain the importance of minimizing disturbance and adhering to other disturbance minimizing measures.

Mitigation Measure: BIO-6 – Defining Project Site Limits: The use of heavy equipment and vehicles shall be limited to the proposed Project limits, existing roadways, and defined staging areas/access points. The boundaries of each work area shall be clearly defined and marked with visible flagging and/or orange protective fencing.

Mitigation Measure: BIO-7 – Operations-Related Erosion Control Measures: Erosion control measures shall be implemented to prevent runoff to the Salinas River corridor and associated tributaries. Silt fencing, in conjunction with other methods, shall be used to prevent erosion and avoid and/or minimize silts and sediments from entering adjacent waterways.

Mitigation Measure: BIO-8 – Protection of Salinas River: During construction, washing of concrete, paint, or equipment and refueling and maintenance of equipment shall occur only in designated areas a minimum of 50 feet from the Salinas River. Straw bales, sandbags, and sorbent pads shall be available to prevent water and/or spilled fuel from entering the stream channel. In addition, all equipment and materials shall be stored/stockpiled away from the swale. Construction equipment shall be inspected by the operator on a daily basis to ensure that equipment is in good working order and no fuel or lubricant leaks are present.

Mitigation Measure: BIO-9 – Oak Tree Protection: Oak tree protection and replacement procedures shall be implemented during the Project. This includes procedures for protecting oak trees to remain in place during construction, and replacing oak trees that are impacted. Oak tree protections must comply with the City of Paso Robles Tree Ordinance No. 835 N.S; therefore, the following measures shall be implemented to mitigate for potential impacts to oak trees:

- Permits to Remove or Prune will be obtained in the event any oak tree or limb over 6-inches in DBH are to be removed, or otherwise destroyed;

- Protective fencing shall be installed around oak trees that have the potential to be impacted by proposed construction activities. The fencing shall be installed prior to grubbing/construction and provide the greatest protection of the root zone of oak trees;

Heavy mulching is also recommended. If possible, planting during the warmest, driest months (June through September) shall be avoided.

Mitigation Measure: BIO-10 – Exterior Lighting Controls: To minimize the effects of future exterior lighting on special status wildlife species, all outdoor lighting fixtures shall be positioned and/or shielded to avoid direct lighting to adjacent streams and surrounding habitat areas.

3.4.6 Finding

Implementation of the ten above-mentioned measures should reduce impacts to special-status species potentially occurring within or adjacent to the proposed Project site and existing sensitive habitat areas to a less than significant level.

3.5 CULTURAL RESOURCES

Evaluation Area	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
V. CULTURAL RESOURCES: Would the project:				
a. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in §15064.5?	☐	☐	☐	■
b. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to §15064.5?	☐	☐	☐	■
c. Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	☐	■	☐	☐
d. Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?	☐	■	☐	☐

3.5.1 Environmental Setting

Paso Robles is located on the California Central Coast, which was inhabited by the Salinian Indians for thousands of years before the Mission Era. Paso Robles is located on what was once the Rancho Paso de Robles Mexican land grant that was purchased by the Blackburn family in 1857. The land became a rest-stop for travelers of the El Camino Real trail, and Paso Robles was known for its mineral hot springs. During this period, Paso Robles began to attract pioneer settlers who would become the founding members of the community. They would later establish cattle ranches, apple and almond orchards, dairy farms, and vineyards.

The current SLO County Corp Yard is considered to be a developed and urban landscape, and the presence of undisturbed native soils is unlikely. The proposed Project is not located in the immediate vicinity of any known cultural, historic or archeological resources. It should be noted, however, that the existing two facilities located at 4th/Pine Streets and at 8th/Pine Streets are located a few blocks away (to the east) from the City's Historic Preservation District overlay zone; both of those bus storage facilities would be abandoned upon completion of the proposed project and would be available for more appropriate uses.

Neither the County Corp Yard property, nor any of the individual buildings, structures, or features appears to be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) or the California Register of Historic Resources (CRHR), either separately or as a contributor to a larger historic district. The buildings and structures on the property are utilitarian resources that are ubiquitous to industrial operations. Lastly, the property is not expected to yield important information about prehistory or history. Therefore, the property is not considered a historic property, as defined in Section 106 of the National Register of Historic Places, nor does it qualify as a historical resource under the California Environmental Quality Act. Therefore, no impact would occur.

The pictures provided in Section 3.4 Biological Resources above clearly show that the proposed Project site is already disturbed for vehicle storage and circulation purposes, and all construction and operation activities associated with the bus parking yard would be located in previously disturbed soils. No cultural resources have been identified in this area when it was constructed or during any rehabilitation projects undertaken by SLO County. The proposed Project would not result in new or increased impacts to cultural resources and no new mitigation measures are required.

3.5.2 Thresholds of Significance

Based on the mandatory findings of significance criteria at Section 15065 and Appendix G of the State CEQA Guidelines (Governor's Office of Planning and Research, 1999), an impact would be significant if any of the following conditions, or potential thereof, would result with implementation of the Proposed Project:

- Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in Section 15065.5;

- Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 15064.5;

- Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature of paleontological or cultural value; or,

- Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries.

Additionally, the State Historical Commission is officially responsible for determining whether a property is eligible for listing in the California Register of Historical Resources. A resource shall be considered "historically significant" if it meets the criteria for listing in the California Register, including the following attributes:

- Is associated with events that have made significant contribution to the broad patterns of California's history and cultural heritage;

- Is associated with the lives of persons important in our past;

- Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, region or method of construction, or represents the work of an important creative individual, or possess high artistic values; or

- Has yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Cultural resources that meet one or more of these criteria are defined as "historical resources" under CEQA. The other set of standards used for determining whether a site may be considered "significant" is the eligibility criteria for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). These criteria provided the template for those now used for the California Register. The regulations for the NRHP define the criteria for legally evaluating the significance of cultural resources:

> The quality of significance in American history, architecture, archaeology, engineering, and culture is present in districts, sites, buildings, structures, and objects that possess integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association, and:
>
> A. are associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history; or
>
> B. are associated with the lives of persons significant in our past; or

C. embody the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that possess high artistic values, or that represent a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction; or

D. have yielded, or may be likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

3.5.3 Answers to Checklist Questions

Question A:

No permanent buildings or structures currently exist on that portion of the property that would be used by RTA for the proposed Bus Parking Yard Project. Neither the SLO County Road Department's existing storage barn or modular office building, nor the Street Department's maintenance building, appear to be eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places due to its lack of historical significance and integrity.

Questions B through C:

The portion of SLO County's Corp Yard that would be used by RTA has been disturbed for heavy-duty vehicle storage and maintenance purposes, and it is unlikely that any of the previous County excavations completed as part of the existing paving area would have detected deeply buried cultural sites. No known archeological resources are known on the proposed Project site. The two mitigation measures presented below would address any archeological resources that might be discovered during ground disturbance activities.

3.5.4 Mitigation Measures

The following measures are recommended:

Mitigation Measure: CUL-1 – Discovery of Human Remains: In accordance with the California Health and Safety Code, if human remains are uncovered during ground disturbing activities, RTA and its contractor(s) will immediately halt potentially damaging excavation in the area of the burial and will notify the SLO County Coroner and a professional archaeologist to determine the nature of the remains. The coroner is required to examine all discoveries of human remains within 48 hours of receiving notice of a discovery (Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5[b]). If the coroner determines that the remains are those of a Native American, he or she must contact the NAHC by phone within 24 hours of making that determination (Health and Safety Code Section 7050[c]). After the coroner's findings have been made, the archaeologist and the NAHC-designated Most Likely Descendant will determine the ultimate treatment and disposition of the remains and take appropriate steps to ensure that additional human interments are not disturbed. The responsibilities of RTA for acting upon notification of a discovery of Native American human remains are identified in Section 5097.9 of the California Public Resources Code.

California law recognizes the need to protect Native American human burials, skeletal remains, and items associated with Native American burials from vandalism and inadvertent destruction. RTA will ensure that the procedures for the treatment of Native American human remains contained in California Health and Safety Code Sections 7050.5 and 7052, and California Public Resources Code Section 5097, are followed.

Mitigation Measure: CUL-2 – Discovery of Prehistoric/Historic Deposits: If prehistoric or historic deposits or features are discovered during ground disturbing activities, activities in the area should cease and a qualified archaeologist shall inspect the discovery and prepare a recommendation for a further course of action.

3.5.5 Finding

With the incorporation of the two mitigation measures presented above, impacts to cultural resources would be less than significant.

3.6 GEOLOGY AND SOILS

Evaluation Area	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
VI. GEOLOGY AND SOILS: Would the project:				
a. Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:				
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.	☐	☐	■	☐
ii. Strong seismic ground shaking?	☐	☐	■	☐
iii. Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	☐	☐	■	☐
iv. Landslides?	☐	☐	■	☐

c. Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	☐	■	☐	☐
d. 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?	☐	☐	■	☐
e. 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?	☐	☐	■	☐
f. 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?	☐	☐	☐	■

3.6.1 Environmental Setting

Much of regional setting language below was taken from the City of Paso Robles Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration report for the Water Treatment Plant project, which is located approximately 1.4 miles to the north. That project site is similarly nestled between US-101 and the Salinas River. The proposed RTA Bus Parking Facility Project is located within SLO County's existing Corp Yard. The elevation of the proposed Project site is approximately 710 feet above mean sea level with a slightly sloping terrain to the east towards the Salinas River.

3.6.1.1 Regional Geology

The proposed Project site lies within the Coastal Ranges Geomorphic Province, an area characterized by low rolling hills with broad valleys and eroded alluvial terraces. The site is within the western margins of the Salinian block portion of the province. The Salinian block is composed of a Mesozoic and older crystalline basement complex of plutonic and metamorphic rocks overlain by a thick sequence of Upper Cretaceous and lower Tertiary marine and non-marine sedimentary rocks.

Bedrock at the proposed Project site consists of the Paso Robles Formation, which underlies most of the hillside west of the City. The Paso Robles Formation is composed of a poorly consolidated mixture of gravel, sand, silt, and clay. The formation is rich in clay due in part to a high concentration of eroded shale clasts reworked from the Monterey Formation. The Paso Robles Formation is in turn overlain by a mantle of unconsolidated alluvial terrace deposits.

3.6.1.2 Seismic Hazards

The Paso Robles area is subject to seismic hazards from several regional faults. Seismic hazards can include surface fractures along pre-existing fault planes and damage from seismically induced ground-motion including liquefaction and landslides. Active fault zones mapped in this area include the San Andreas (northeast of the City), Rinconada Fault (south of the City), and Hosgri "Offshore" Fault. The Offshore Fault is seismically active, but available marine geophysical data indicate that future surface rupture is improbable along this fault. Also, a broad set of short, discontinuous faults between Santa Maria and Big Sur occur near the Paso Robles area, often referred to as the Nacimiento fault zone. The Salinian block is bound on the east and west by the San Andreas and the Sur/Nacimiento/Rinconada fault systems, respectively. The geologic structure in the Paso Robles area is characterized by a series of northwest-trending anticlinal and synclinal folds and faults. A number of earthquakes with a moment magnitude greater than 5 have occurred in recent time in the region on these faults, including the 2003 magnitude 6.5 San Simeon Earthquake.

The Rinconada fault is the closest mapped fault to the Project area. It is mapped as a locally concealed northwest-southeast trending fault immediately northeast of the Project area. The epicenter of the San Simeon Earthquake was located approximately 20 miles west-northwest of the Project site, near the Nacimiento and Oceanic fault zones. The rupture of the San Simeon Earthquake is estimated to have extended southeast to within approximately eight miles west of the City.

Ground shaking is a major seismic concern for Paso Robles. Portions of Paso Robles, especially those areas within or immediately adjacent to the Salinas River and Huerhuero Creek floodplains, are located on alluvial deposits, which can increase the potential for ground shaking damage. Ground motion lasts longer on loose, unconsolidated materials than on solid rock. As a result, structures located on these types of materials may suffer greater damage. Alluvial soils can be a greater hazard for structures than proximity to a fault or an earthquake's epicenter. In addition, areas with shallow depths to groundwater, especially those areas located along Salinas River, can be prone to extreme shaking and liquefaction.

3.6.1.3 Soils

Prime soils in the City include Lockwood shaley loam, Hanford and Greenfield gravelly sandy loam, Arbuckle fine sandy loam, and Cropley Clay, when irrigated. Soils within the City are generally well to moderately-drained soils with a surface layer of coarse sandy loam to shaley loam west of the Salinas River, ranging to clay loam east of the river.

Soils in Paso Robles are classified as having high to moderate susceptibility to erosion. In the low-lying areas surrounding the Salinas River, erodability is attributed to river scouring and potential flooding. In the steep upland areas of the City, soils are subject to erosion from wind, rain, grazing, and human disturbance of soil and vegetation. Construction in areas of expansive soils may require major sub-excavation and replacement of existing materials with engineered fill.

3.6.2 Answers to Checklist Questions

Question A and C:

The Project would not expose people or structures to potential significant adverse effects, including risk of loss, injury, or death involving rupture of a known earthquake fault or strong seismic ground shaking. The nature of the Project would not expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including risk of loss, injury, or death involving seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction. Because the Project site is located in a high to moderate-risk liquefaction zone, any proposed construction would require the adoption of appropriate engineering design in conformance with geotechnical and seismic standards for construction. Of particular importance is compliance with new Department of Housing and Community Development regulations as they pertain to commercial modular units (see HCD Information Bulletin 2016-02).

The Project would not expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including risk of loss, injury, or death involving landslides. Landslides are not considered a hazard at the site due to the relatively flat topographic relief of the land. The proposed Project would not create substantial compaction of the ground surface through construction activities, nor would it draw down substantial amounts of near-surface groundwater. Therefore, significant subsidence is not likely to occur. Proposed excavation and grading activities would require the adoption of appropriate engineering design in conformance with geotechnical standards for construction.

Question B:

Due to the relatively level topography of the Project site, the Project has low potential to result in significant soil erosion during construction, resulting in loss of topsoil or unstable soil conditions. Regardless, standard construction best management practices (BMPs) would be implemented to avoid and minimize soil loss and erosion with a Construction Storm Water Plan in conjunction with Project's final design and grading plan (see Mitigation Measure GEO-1).

Question D:

Soils underlying the Project footprint have low potential for expansiveness, since the site has been used for transportation purposes for many years. If, during ground disturbance activities, expansive soils are discovered RTA will halt construction activities and seek professional geotechnical services to redesign the affected area.

Question E:

The Project would not rely on septic tanks or other alternative wastewater disposal systems, so the capability of soils to adequately support the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems is not an issue associated with implementation of the proposed Project.

Question F:

Project construction and operation activities are not anticipated to result in significant soil degradation or contamination.

3.6.3 Mitigation Measure

Mitigation Measure GEO-1 – Construction Storm Water Plan and SWPPP: Prior to construction, RTA shall – in close consultation with San Luis Obispo County officials – prepare an operations-based Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) acceptable to the City of Paso Robles; this SWPPP will focus on the operations of RTA independent of County Corp Yard activities. RTA shall also develop in detail a Construction Storm Water Plan in conjunction with the Project's final design and grading plan for implementation during construction activities. Specific details are provided in the City of Paso Robles Construction Site Storm Water Quality Requirements. Elements covered in the program would include:

- Soil stockpiles and graded slopes shall be covered after 14 days if inactivity and 24 hours prior to and during inclement weather conditions.

- Fiber rolls shall be placed along the top of exposed slopes and at the toes of graded areas to reduce surface soil movement, as necessary.

- A routine monitoring plan shall be implemented to ensure success of all on-site erosion and sedimentation control measures.

- Dust control measures shall be implemented to graded areas during construction activities to control fugitive dust.

- Streets surrounding the Project Site shall be cleaned daily or as necessary.

- Best Management Practices shall be strictly followed to prevent spills and discharges of pollutants on site (material and container storage, proper trash disposal, construction entrances, etc.).

3.6.4 Finding

With the incorporation of the mitigation measure presented above, impacts to geology, seismicity and soils would be less than significant.

3.7 GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Evaluation Area	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
VII. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS: Would the project:				
a. Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?	☐	☐	■	☐
b. Conflict with any applicable plan, policy, or regulation of an agency adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gasses?	☐	☐	■	☐

In 2007, through the adoption of Senate Bill 97, California's lawmakers identified the need to analyze greenhouse gas emissions as a part of the CEQA process. Even in the absence of adopted CEQA thresholds for GHG emissions, lead agencies are required to analyze the GHG emissions of proposed projects and must reach a conclusion regarding the significance of those emissions. The proposed GHG thresholds for SLO County provide guidance for lead agencies to implement new development in a manner that will help our region provide its share of the GHG reductions outlined in AB 32. To meet these reduction goals, development in the County must become more sustainable with a focus on energy efficient mixed use urban infill and redevelopment that reduces vehicle dependency and expands alternative transportation modes, all of which supports SLO County's Clean Air Plan. While building efficiency has significantly improved in California over the years and continues to improve, the necessary reductions cannot be achieved by one area or sector alone. It will require careful consideration of site design, location, transportation, energy efficiency, water and waste handling.

In 2012, the APCD adopted its Greenhouse Gas Thresholds policy and amended it into the 2009 APCD *CEQA Air Quality Handbook*. The predominant issue addressed in the policy was development of a threshold of significance at which a project would not substantially conflict with existing California legislation adopted to reduce statewide GHG emissions.

3.7.1 Answers to Checklist Questions

Question A and B:
As discussed above in Section 3 Air Quality, neither the construction nor the operations of the project would result in a significant greenhouse gas impact. Operation of the proposed Project would involve no greater consumption of motor vehicle fuels or increased electrical demand which would generate GHG emissions in comparison to the existing levels. However, implementation of the Project would preclude the increase in motor vehicle fuels that would be required if the all bus parking were to instead occur at RTA's primary facility in San Luis Obispo.

The proposed project is consistent with the 2014 San Luis Obispo Council of Governments *Regional Transportation Plan* (RTP). The RTP is a comprehensive plan guiding transportation policy for the region and makes recommendations concerning improvements to the existing transportation network of highways, transit, air, water, rail and bicycling. Securing a long-term location for the proposed Project is seen as fulfilling several of the strategies for satisfying multiple recommendations in the RTP, including:

- Support the incorporation of projects that enable access by transit, bicycling and walking. With regard to bicycling and walking, the project would be consistent with the *Salinas River Trail Master Plan*.

- Support the implementation of programs and projects that enhance multimodal transportation choices, limit automobile oriented development and promote pedestrian scale communities.

- Work with Caltrans, local jurisdictions and transportation providers to develop transportation facilities and amenities that fit within the unique character of the community.

As noted in Section 3 above, the location of the proposed Project is within the jurisdiction of the APCD. The APCD's 2001 Clean Air Plan (CAP) identifies emission control measures addressing the attainment and maintenance of State and Federal ambient air quality standards. The proposed project would not result in any inconsistencies with the adopted CAP, would not result in significant air quality impacts, and would not result in additional carbon monoxide generation. However, if RTA is forced to move all North County bus storage operations to our San Luis Obispo facility, that would result in adverse air quality impacts.

The CAP includes land use management strategies to guide decision makers on land use approaches that result in improved air quality. Implementation of the proposed Project is not anticipated to conflict with the CAP because the project is limited to consolidation of two bus storage yards at an existing vehicle storage site. The proposed Project would address existing demands for public transit services. Due to the nature of the proposed Project, the land use of the site would not change or require transportation control measures.

3.7.2 Finding

No mitigation is required.

3.8 HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS

Evaluation Area	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
VIII. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS: Would the project:				
a. Create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	☐	☐	■	☐
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?	☐	☐	■	☐
c. Emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	☐	☐	■	☐
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?	☐	☐	■	☐
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?	☐	☐	☐	■

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?	☐	☐	☐	■
g. Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	☐	☐	■	☐
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?	☐	☐	■	☐

3.8.1 Environmental Setting

RTA's proposed use on the County-owned property is consistent with the County's historic heavy equipment storage and light- and medium-duty vehicle maintenance activities that exist today on the site. As part of the proposed Project, RTA would implement mitigation measures to avoid any potential impacts to sensitive nearby areas through appropriate design and storm water system maintenance procedures. In particular, as part of the project RTA would construct storm water capturing/clarifying features, and develop/abide by a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan to protect the nearby Salinas River watershed.

Much of the regulatory language below was taken from the City of Paso Robles Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration report for the Water Treatment Plant project, which is located approximately 1.4 miles to the north. That project site is similarly nestled between US-101 and the Salinas River.

3.8.2 Regulatory Setting

The following section provides a brief description of some of the applicable state and federal regulations relating to the use, storage, and disposal of hazardous substances and petroleum.

Federal Laws/Regulations

Federal Water Pollution Control Act of 1972 (Clean Water Act). The Clean Water Act governs the control of water pollution in the United States. This Act includes the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) program, which requires that permits be obtained for point discharges of wastewater. This Act also requires that storm water discharges be permitted,

monitored, and controlled for public and private entities. The proposed Project will not require an NPDES permit.

Resource Control and Recovery Act of 1974 (RCRA). RCRA was enacted as the first step in the regulation of the potential health and environmental problems associated with solid hazardous and non-hazardous waste disposal. RCRA, and the formation of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to implement the Act, provide the framework for national hazardous waste management, including tracking hazardous wastes from point of origin to ultimate disposal. RTA is not required to obtain an EPA Identification Number because no regulated waste activities are included in the operations or construction of the proposed Project.

Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act of 1980 (CERCLA). Under CERCLA, owners and operators of real estate where there is hazardous substances contamination may be held strictly liable for the costs of cleaning up contamination found on their property. No evidence linking the owner/operator with the placement of the hazardous substances on the property is required. CERCLA, also known as Superfund, established a fund for the assessment and remediation of the worst hazardous waste sites in the nation. The proposed Project site is not a listed Superfund site; the Klau and Buena Vista abandoned mercury mines located 12 miles west of Paso Robles are the nearest sites.

California Laws/Regulations

Porter-Cologne Water Quality Control Act (Division 7 of the California Water Code). The Porter-Cologne Act established a regulatory program to protect water quality and protect beneficial uses of the state's waters. The Porter-Cologne Act also established the State Water Resources Control Board and nine regional boards as the main state agencies responsible for water quality in the state. Discharges of wastes (including spills, leaks, or historical disposal sites) where they may impact the waters of the state are prohibited under the Porter-Cologne Act, including the discharge of hazardous wastes and petroleum products. The assessment and remediation of these waters are regulated by the regional boards; the Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board administers such waters in the vicinity of the proposed Project. As mentioned above, the proposed Project will not require an NPDES permit.

Title 22, California Code or Regulations. Title 22 of the California Code of Regulation regulates the use and disposal of hazardous substances in California. It contains regulatory thresholds for hazardous wastes which are more restrictive than the federal hazardous waste regulations. The proposed Project will not generate hazardous wastes that would require a Department of Toxic Substances Control permit.

California Health and Safety Code Sections 25500 et seq. The California community right-to know hazardous material law applies to any facility that handles any hazardous material (chemical, chemical-containing products, hazardous wastes, etc.) in a quantity that exceeds reporting thresholds. The most common thresholds that trigger regulation based on that state statute are 500 pounds of solid, 55 gallons of liquid, and 200 cubic feet of compressed gas, based on the

presence of individual chemicals. The basic requirements of hazardous materials and community right-to-know regulations for covered facilities include:

- Determining whether the facility handles hazardous materials;
- Immediate reporting of releases of hazardous materials;
- Submission and update of a Hazardous Materials Business Plan (including an accurate chemical inventory, site map showing hazardous materials storage locations, emergency response plan, and notification procedures) as required by the local administering agency;
- Notification of the local administering agency of the handling of specified quantities of acute hazardous materials and submission of a Risk Management Plan (RMP) as required;
- Annual submission for manufacturing facilities of a Toxic Chemical Release Report (Form R) if threshold amounts of certain toxic chemicals are made, or processed for use; and,
- Requirements for hazardous materials storage imposed by local administering agencies, fire departments, and California Occupational Safety and Health Administration (Cal/OSHA) standards.

California Department of Industrial Relations, Division of Occupational Safety and Health. Worker health and safety in California is regulated by the Division of Occupational Safety and Health (Cal/OSHA). Cal/OSHA standards and practices for workers handling hazardous materials are contained in Title 8 of the California Code of Regulations. No permit is required as part of the proposed Project.

Local Regulations

The San Luis Obispo County Division of Environmental Health Services conducts inspections to ensure proper handling, storage, and disposal of hazardous materials and proper remediation of contaminated sites. In addition, the Hazardous Materials Release Response Plans and Inventory Law of 1985 (Business Plan Act) requires that any business that handles or stores hazardous materials prepare a Hazardous Materials Business Plan. Under this law, businesses are required to submit inventories of onsite hazardous materials and wastes and locations where these materials are stored and handled. This information is collected and reviewed by the SLODEH for emergency response planning. Because the proposed Project would not store, use or handle hazardous materials in sufficient quantities (55 gallons of a liquid, 500 pounds of a solid or 200 cubic feet of compressed gas), no permit is required.

3.8.3 Answers to Checklist Questions

Questions A, B, C, and D:

While grading and construction activities may involve the limited transport, storage, use or disposal of hazardous materials, such as the fueling/servicing of construction equipment onsite or the removal and export of contaminated soils, the activities would be short-term or one-time in nature and would be subject to federal, state, and local health and safety requirements. Impacts related to grading and construction activities would be less than significant.

Long-term operation of the Project would involve on-vehicle use of hazardous materials, including motor fuel, hydraulic fluids, antifreeze/engine coolant and other associated materials. In addition, a small amount of fluid will be stored on-site to top-up liquids discovered to be low during vehicle start-up inspections. There are a number of federal, state and local requirements and regulations that are designed to minimize risks from accidental releases of hazardous materials and the Project will be in compliance with all the applicable requirements and regulations.

With implementation of the proposed Project, there are no reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions that would create a significant hazard to the public due to the release of hazardous materials. Impacts are considered less than significant.

Question E:

The Project site is not on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5.

Question F:

The Project site is not located within any airport safety zones per the City's 1977 Airport Land Use Plan (amended as recently as 2007) for the Paso Robles Municipal Airport and is not located within two miles of the airport.

Question G:

During construction of the proposed Project, there is a possibility that the existing roadway may be part of an emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan and would experience potential interference with such plans. However, such interference would only occur occasionally during the construction period and all construction activities would be halted during the emergency event. Therefore, these potential temporary interferences on the roadway would result in less than significant impacts to emergency response and evacuation.

Question H:
The Project would not expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires. The existing Project site is an urbanized area with no wildland areas adjacent in proximity to the site. Therefore, impacts are considered less than significant.

3.8.4 Finding

Hazards and hazardous materials impacts would be less than significant. No mitigation is required.

3.9 HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY

Evaluation Area	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
IX. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY: Would the project:				
a. Violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?	☐	■	☐	☐
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., Would the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells drop to a level which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)? Would decreased rainfall infiltration or groundwater recharge reduce streambase flow?	☐	☐	■	☐
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 offsite?	☐	☐	■	☐

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?	☐	☐	■	☐
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?	☐	☐	■	☐
f. Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?	☐	☐	■	☐
g. Place housing within a 100-year flood hazard area as 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?	☐	☐	☐	■
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?	☐	☐	■	☐
j. Inundation by mudflow?	☐	☐	■	☐
k. Conflict with any Best Management Practices found within the local jurisdiction's Storm Water Management Plan?	☐	☐	■	☐
l. Substantially decrease or degrade watershed storage of runoff, wetlands, riparian areas, aquatic habitat, or associated buffer zones?	☐	☐	■	☐

3.9.1 Environmental Setting

Much of the regulatory language below was taken from the City of Paso Robles Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration report for the Water Treatment Plant project, which is located approximately 1.4 miles to the north. That project site is similarly nestled between US-

101 and the Salinas River. The Project area is located in the upper Salinas River watershed. The upper watershed begins at the headwaters southeast of Santa Margarita Lake and extends to the town of Bradley, just inside Monterey County. The Salinas River is the primary hydrologic feature in Paso Robles. Although substantial subsurface flows occur throughout the year, the river is virtually dry on the surface from July through September. Peak flows typically occur during the months of January to March and are largely controlled by the Santa Margarita Lake and Dam, located approximately 20 miles upstream of the City. Downstream, tributary flows to the river are regulated by the Nacimiento Reservoir and Dam on the Nacimiento River, and the San Antonio Reservoir and Dam on the San Antonio River. Data from the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) gauging station in Paso Robles (for the years from 1939 to 2016) indicate that mean monthly stream flows in the Salinas River typically range from about 356 cubic feet per second (cfs) in February to about 0.05 cfs in August. Since 1939, the highest recorded monthly average flow was 2,884 cfs in February 1998. In addition to the river, several smaller intermittent creeks flow through the Paso Robles area. These creeks carry runoff from the hills east and west of the City and discharge to the Salinas River. The most important of these is Huerhuero Creek, which carries runoff from the northeastern portion of the City to the Salinas River.

Groundwater is the primary source of water supply in the City. The City derives its water from both Salinas River underflow and a regional aquifer known as the Paso Robles Groundwater Basin. The Paso Robles Groundwater Basin encompasses an area of approximately 505,000 acres (790 square miles). In general, groundwater flow moves northwest across the basin towards the Estrella area, then north towards the basin outlet at San Ardo. The biggest change in groundwater flow patterns in recent years has been the hydraulic gradient east of Paso Robles, along the Highway 46 corridor, which has steepened in response to greater pumping by the increasingly concentrated development of rural ranchettes, vineyards, and golf courses. The City participated in the Nacimiento Water Project (NWP) to utilize Nacimiento Reservoir water so that it can reduce dependence on groundwater to meet municipal water demand.

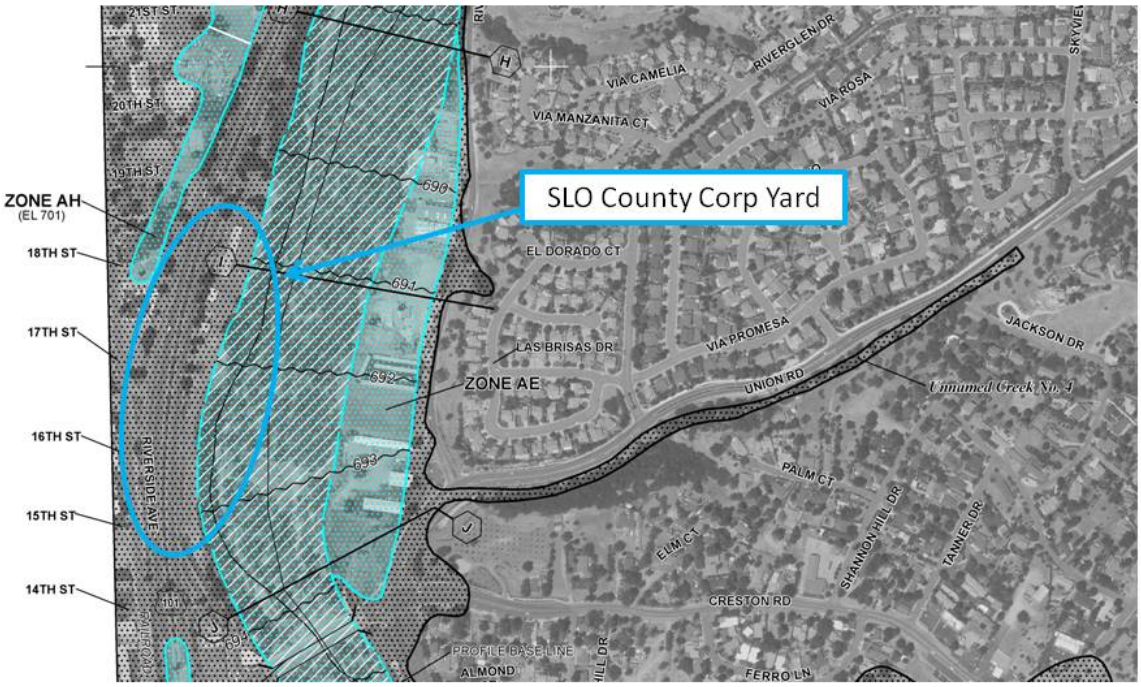
The Salinas River watershed is periodically subject to major flooding. Intense but infrequent winter storms can result in significant watershed runoff, and flooding conditions are caused when preceding rains have saturated the watershed.

The National Flood Insurance Program 100-year floodplain is considered to be the base flood condition, which is defined as a flood event that has a 1% chance of occurring in each year. Floodplains near the proposed Project include the nearby Salinas River along the eastern edge of the project site. According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency's National Flood Hazard Layer map, the proposed Project site is located in Map Panel Number 06079C0393G. Further reviews of the map clearly indicate that the proposed Project would lie at the western edge and potentially in some portions within the designated Floodway (Zone AE, Base Flood Elevations determined). See the graphic below for details on the Zone AE in relation to the proposed Project site.

However, no parked vehicles or the proposed modular office building would lie within the Floodway. Further, the proposed Project would not include any construction activities that would

alter any disturbed or undisturbed property within the Floodway. Based on the location of proposed improvements within the existing facility area, stormwater runoff rates and flooding patterns of the Salinas River during and following storm events would not differ significantly from current conditions. In addition, the construction of facilities within flood hazard zones is subject to design standards incorporated in the Paso Robles City Municipal Code.

Proposed RTA Bus Storage in Relation to Floodplain



3.9.2 Regulatory Setting

3.9.2.1 Agencies

Due to a variety of uses and impacts, and because of its importance to development, a complex web of laws and agencies have developed over time to control and manage water resources. Agencies with significant responsibility for some aspect of water planning are briefly described below:

- The City of Paso Robles has ultimate water-related regulatory authority over the proposed Project. The City's General Plan provides policies intended to address impacts associated with flooding and drainage hazards. The City will review proposed Project documents and issue approvals for the Conditional Use Permit, and grading/building permits.

- The **State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB)** and the **Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB)** are the agencies designated by the State of California to protect water quality of all water resources in the state and Central Coast region, respectively. No water control board approvals are required for the proposed Project.

- The **United States Army Corps of Engineers (Corps)** is a federal agency with permit authority over any filling of a waterway or wetlands. No Corps approvals are required for the proposed Project.

- The **California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG)** is a state agency with permit authority for any modification of a waterway (such as a bridge). Its primary concern is fish and wildlife habitat. No CDFG approvals are required for the proposed Project.

Other agencies with some interest in water or water quality are the USFWS, and the U.S. EPA.

3.9.2.2 Regulatory Codes and Acts

The RWQCB establishes water quality standards that are required by Section 303 of the Federal Clean Water Act and the state Porter-Cologne Water Quality Act. The SWRCB has adopted a NPDES general permit for Storm Water Discharges Associated with Construction Activity (State Permit) that requires every construction Project greater than one acre to submit a Notice of Intent (NOI) for coverage, and prepare and implement a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP).

Under the conditions of the state permit, the Project site would be required to eliminate or reduce non-storm water discharges to waters of the nation, develop and implement a SWPPP for the Project construction activities, and perform inspections of the storm water pollution prevention measures and control practices to ensure conformance with the site SWPPP. The state permit prohibits the discharge of materials other than storm water discharges, and prohibits all discharges that contain a hazardous substance in excess of reportable quantities established at 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 117.3 or 40 CFR 302.4. The state permit also specifies that construction activities must meet all applicable provisions of Sections 301 and 402 of the Clean Water Act.

3.9.3 Answers to Checklist Questions:

Question A:

Temporary impacts to water quality during construction of the proposed Project could occur due to the operation of heavy equipment, disturbance and stockpiling of soils, and dewatering (if necessary) of trenches. RTA and its contractor(s) would implement BMPs for construction activity

to limit sedimentation in the Salinas River. To do this, RTA would develop a detailed Project-specific Construction Storm Water Plan in conjunction with the Project's final design and grading plan. Elements covered in the program would include: (a) soil stabilization, (b) sediment control, (c) tracking control, (d) material and waste management, (e) dust control, (f) vehicle and equipment BMPs, and (g) dewatering measures (see Mitigation Measure HWQ-1).

Dissolved constituents in storm water discharges from the site after the Project is completed do not represent a potential water quality impact. Storm water runoff typical of developed urban uses is not applicable to this Project. Operation of the Project would not result in a deterioration of the quality of the receiving surface waters.

Question B:

The proposed Project would not significantly deplete or interfere with groundwater supplies. No on-site bus washing would take place; the primary use of water would be for standard office operations (restrooms, kitchen/breakroom, etc.), as well as on-site landscape maintenance.

Questions C and D:

Construction activities related to the proposed Project would require minimal trenching for utility placement, which would not substantially alter draining patterns. Operation of the facility would result in negligible (if any) impacts to drainage patterns.

Questions E and F:

On-site flooding would be generally limited to periodic heavy rainfall events. It is anticipated that the existing stormwater runoff capacity would be sufficient to handle the small increase in off-site runoff; therefore, the proposed Project would not result in a substantial risk of off-site flooding or additional sources of polluted runoff.

The proposed Project would increase impervious surfaces. RTA would be required to develop its own Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), which will prohibit the discharge of materials other than storm water discharges, and prohibits all discharges that contain a hazardous substance in excess of reportable quantities established at 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 117.3 or 40 CFR 302.4. Under the conditions of the SWPPP, the Project site would be required to eliminate or reduce non-storm water (point source) discharges to waters of the nation, develop and implement a SWPPP for the Project construction activities, and perform inspections of the storm water pollution prevention measures and control practices to ensure conformance with the site SWPPP. Furthermore, construction activities must meet all applicable provisions of Sections 301 and 402 of the Clean Water Act. Conformance with Section 402 of the CWA would ensure that the Project does not violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements and would ensure that the Project would not substantially degrade surface or groundwater quality. Standard erosion control devices installed as part of the SWPPP are being implemented as part of Project construction activities.

It is very likely that elements of the Construction Storm Water Plan and SWPPP would overlap; however, both would be required to be implemented due to the formalities of City and State requirements.

Question G:

The Project would not involve the construction and placement of housing within a Federal Emergency Management Agency 100-year flood zone.

Question H:

RTA would implement measures to control erosion and sedimentation during construction. The proposed Project would be located partially in the 100-year floodplain; however, no buildings would be located within the floodplain. Construction of the proposed Project is not expected to change the established 100-year floodplain boundary. With implementation of engineering design standards and mitigation measures, the Project would not result in any significant impacts to floodplains.

Question I:

Due to its distance from the ocean and other large bodies of water, there is a negligible likelihood that the Project site would be affected by either dam failure and inundation or the effects of a tsunami.

Question J:

Since no structures would be constructed in the floodplain, it is unlikely that mudflow would inundate the site.

Question K:

The proposed Project would not conflict with any Best Management Practices of the City of Paso Robles Storm Water Management Plan. The City's *Guidance Document for Municipal Stormwater Permit 2013-2018* will be used to develop both the Construction Storm Water Plan and SWPPP, and will identify the selected stormwater management procedures, pollution control technologies, spill response procedures, and other means that will be used to minimize erosion and sediment production and the release of pollutants to surface water.

Question L:

The proposed project will not substantially decrease or degrade watershed storage of runoff, wetlands, riparian areas, aquatic habitat, or associated buffer zones.

3.9.4 Mitigation Measure

Mitigation Measure HWQ-1 – Construction Storm Water Plan and SWPPP: Prior to construction, RTA shall – in close consultation with San Luis Obispo County officials – prepare an operations-based Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) acceptable to the City of Paso Robles; this SWPPP will focus on the operations of RTA independent of County Corp Yard activities. RTA shall also develop in detail a Construction Storm Water Plan in conjunction with the Project's final design and grading plan for implementation during construction activities. Specific details are provided in the City of Paso Robles Construction Site Storm Water Quality Requirements. Elements covered in the program would include:

- Soil stockpiles and graded slopes shall be covered after 14 days if inactivity and 24 hours prior to and during inclement weather conditions.

- Fiber rolls shall be placed along the top of exposed slopes and at the toes of graded areas to reduce surface soil movement, as necessary.

- A routine monitoring plan shall be implemented to ensure success of all on-site erosion and sedimentation control measures.

- Dust control measures shall be implemented to graded areas during construction activities to control fugitive dust.

- Streets surrounding the Project Site shall be cleaned daily or as necessary.

- Best Management Practices shall be strictly followed to prevent spills and discharges of pollutants on site (material and container storage, proper trash disposal, construction entrances, etc.).

3.9.5 Finding

With the incorporation of the mitigation measure presented above, impacts to hydrology and water quality would be less than significant.

3.10 LAND USE AND PLANNING

Evaluation Area	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
X. LAND USE AND PLANNING: Would the project:				
a. Physically divide an established community?	☐	☐	☐	■
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?	☐	☐	☐	■
c. Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan?	☐	☐	☐	■

3.10.1 Environmental Setting

The proposed Project would be in keeping with existing City of Paso Robles land use and zoning requirements, and would use land already disturbed for transportation uses. The County Corp Yard property is zoned appropriately for Government uses, and it is surrounded by other public uses to the west and west-southwest (US-101, 13th Street and the northbound on-ramp), the Salinas River to the east, a commercial use (Taps Truck Accessories) to the southeast, and heavy equipment storage to the north and south-southeast. The implementation of the project would be compatible with surrounding land uses.

3.10.2 Answers to Checklist Questions

Question A:

Implementation of the Project would not physically divide an established community. No urban development is proposed as part of the Project.

Question B:

Implementation of the proposed Project would not conflict with allowable uses under the General Plan land use designations and/or City zonings. With the implementation of proposed

mitigation measures contained in this document, the Project would not conflict with any adopted policies, plans or regulations.

Question C:

Because of the site's historically urban/industrial uses and its location in an urbanized setting, no habitat conservation plans would apply to the Project site. No impact would result from Project development, and no mitigation measures are necessary.

3.10.3 Finding

The proposed Project would result in less than significant impacts to land use and planning. No mitigation is required.

3.11 MINERAL RESOURCES

Evaluation Area	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XI. MINERAL RESOURCES: Would the project:				
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?	☐	☐	☐	■
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?	☐	☐	☐	■

3.11.1 Answers to Checklist Questions

Questions A and B:

The site does not provide any known mineral or natural resources, such as timber, oil, or gas that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state.

3.11.2 Finding

The proposed Project would result in no significant impacts to mineral resources. No mitigation is required.

3.12 NOISE

Evaluation Area	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XII. NOISE: Would the project result in:				
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?	☐	☐	■	☐
b. Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels?	☐	☐	■	☐
c. A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?	☐	☐	■	☐
d. A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?	☐	■	☐	☐
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?	☐	☐	☐	■

3.12.1 Environmental Setting

Much of the language below was taken from the City of Paso Robles Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration report for the Water Treatment Plant project, which is located approximately 1.4 miles to the north. That project site is similarly nestled between US-101 and the Salinas River. Noise is generally defined as "unwanted sound." It consists of any sound that may produce physiological or psychological damage and/or interfere with a person's communication, work, rest, recreation, and sleep. While hearing impairment and other physical damage does occur from high noise levels, the damage in terms of quality of life from stress and annoyance is much more widespread.

Sound intensity or acoustic energy is measures in decibels (dB). A-weighted decibels correct for the relative frequency response of the human ear. For example, an A-weighted noise level

includes a de-emphasis on high frequencies of sound that are heard by a dog's ear, but not by a human ear. Ambient community sounds generally range from 30 dBA (very quiet) to 100 dBA (very loud).

To the human ear, sound has two significant characteristics: pitch and loudness. Pitch is generally an annoyance, while loudness can affect our ability to hear. Pitch is the number of complete vibrations (cycles per second) of a wave that results in the tone's range from high to low. Loudness is the strength of a sound that describes a noisy or quiet environment. It is measured by the amplitude of the sound wave. Loudness is determined by the intensity of the sound waves combined with the reception characteristics of the ear. The sound intensity refers to how hard the sound wave strikes an object, which, in turn, produces the sound's effect. This is a characteristic of sound which can be precisely measured with instruments.

Many noise rating schemes exist for various time periods, but an appropriate rating of ambient noise affecting human communities would also account for the annoying effects of sound. The predominant rating scales for human communities are the Noise Equivalent Level (L_{eq}), the Community Noise Equivalent Level (CNEL) and the Day/Night Average Sound Level (L_{dn}) based on A-weighted decibels (dBA). The Leq is the total sound energy of time varying noise over a sample period. The CNEL is the time varying noise over a 24-hour period with A-weighting factor applied to noises occurring during evening hours from 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. (relaxation hours) and at night from 10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m. (sleeping hours) of 5 and 10 dB, respectively.

The L_{dn} measure is an average of the A-weighted sound levels experienced during a 24-hour period. Unlike the CNEL (which divides the 24-hour period into three periods), the L_{dn} divides the 24-hour period into only two periods. The L_{dn} identifies day (7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.) and night (10:00 p.m. to 7:00 a.m.) periods, eliminating the evening hours as more sensitive than the daytime. Since nighttime noise levels are considered more annoying, these measurements are increased by 10 dB before averaging along with the daytime levels. Although not as sensitive a measure as the CNEL, for most transportation noise sources the two measures (CNEL and L_{dn}) are essentially equal and may be used interchangeably.

The major noise sources in the proposed Project area consist of the U.S. Highway 101, the nearby railway line, and industrial uses in the vicinity of the Project site. Roadway noise is a combination of direct noise emissions from vehicles and the sound from tires passing over the road surface. In addition, large truck traffic can dramatically contribute to roadway noise, as the sound generated from Jake-brakes, large tires, and diesel engines greatly exceeds noise from passenger cars and light trucks.

3.12.2 Standards of Significance

CEQA Guidelines suggest that implementation of a project would result in significant noise impacts if the project would result in any of the following:

- Exposure of persons to, or generation of, noise levels in excess of standards established in the local plans or ordinances;

- Exposure of persons to or generation of excessive groundborne vibration or groundborne noise levels;

- A substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels without the project;

- A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project;

- 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, where the project would expose people residing or working in the area to excessive noise levels; and,

- For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, where the project would expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels.

Below is a table that depicts typical noise levels from both transportation sources and other familiar sources that is presented in the *FTA Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment Manual* in 1995. As shown, a city bus passing by emits a noise level of approximately 80 dBA at 50 feet, which can be described as annoying. The nearest sensitive receptor is the residential housing located approximately 400 feet toward the west from the proposed Project site. RTA staff used the *Noise Model Based on FTA General Noise Assessment* model to determine the approximate L_{dn} sound level at the nearest sensitive receptor site, which is approximately 41 dBA based on this distance and the planned early morning and late evening bus start-up and turn-in activities. This sound level at the residential area is essentially the same as the sound encountered in a library. For this reason, the noise impacts of the proposed Project are considered to be negligible.

Typical Noise Levels			
Transportation Sources	**Noise Level (dBA)**	**Other Sources**	**Description**
Jet takeoff (200 feet)	130		painfully loud
	120		
Car horn (3 feet)	110		maximum vocal effort
	100	shout (0.5 feet)	very annoying
Heavy truck passby (50 feet)	90	jack hammer (50 feet)	loss of hearing with prolonged exposure
		home shop tools (3 feet)	
Train on a structure passby (50 feet)	85	backhoe (50 feet)	
City bus passby (50 feet)	80	bulldozer (50 feet)	annoying
		vacuum cleaner (3 feet)	
Train passby (50 feet)	75	blender (3 feet)	
City bus at stop (50 feet)			
Freeway traffic (50 feet)	70	lawn mower (50 feet)	
		large office	
Train in station (50 feet)	65	washing machine (3 feet)	intrusive
	60	TV (10 feet)	
Light traffic (50 feet)		talking (10 feet)	
Light traffic (100 feet)	50	refrigerator (3 feet)	quiet
	40	library	
	30	soft whisper (15 feet)	very quiet
Sources: FTA (1995); EPA (1971, 1974)			

3.12.3 Answers to Checklist Questions

Questions A and B:

The proposed Project alignment would not be located in the immediate vicinity of noise sensitive land uses

Question C:

In the long-term, there would be no substantial increase in ambient noise levels over and above existing levels. There would be no addition of stationary noise sources (i.e., a combustion engine-powered generator) associated with any portion of the proposed Project.

Question D:

There would likely be a significant but temporary increase in noise levels at locations immediately adjacent to the proposed Project site during construction activities. Mitigation Measure NOI-1 would serve to reduce this impact to the extent feasible by limiting activity to the daytime hours and by the use of noise-muffling equipment.

Question E:

The Project is not located within an airport land use plan.

3.12.4 Mitigation Measure

Mitigation Measure: NOI-1 – Construction-Related Noise Control. RTA shall ensure that the construction contractor employs the following noise reducing measures during construction activities:

- Construction activities shall be limited to between 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. No construction activities shall take place on Saturdays or Sundays, or on federal or state holidays.

- All equipment shall have sound-control devices no less effective than those provided by the manufacturer. No equipment shall have un-muffled exhaust pipes.

3.12.5 Finding

Impacts related to noise and noise-sensitive receptors would be limited to the short-term during construction activities, and would be reduced to less than significant with the implementation of the mitigation measure presented above.

3.13 POPULATION AND HOUSING

Evaluation Area	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XIII. POPULATION AND HOUSING: Would the project:				
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)?	☐	☐	■	☐
b. Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	☐	☐	■	☐
c. Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	☐	☐	■	☐

3.13.1 Answers to Checklist Questions

Questions A through C:

The Project does not include any infrastructure or development that would affect existing population and housing, or induce growth in the City. Additionally, workers performing Project construction would most likely come from the local community or nearby communities and would not create an indirect need for short- or long-term housing. The Project would also not substantially change the demographics of the area.

3.13.2 Finding

The proposed Project would result in less than significant impacts to population and housing. No mitigation is required.

3.14 PUBLIC SERVICES

Evaluation Area	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XIV. PUBLIC SERVICES: 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:				
a. Fire protection?	☐	☐	■	☐
b. Police protection?	☐	☐	■	☐
c. Schools?	☐	☐	☐	■
d. Parks?	☐	☐	☐	■
e. Other public facilities?	☐	☐	■	☐

3.14.1 Answers to Checklist Questions

Questions A and B:

The proposed Project site is served by the Paso Robles Fire Department. The Paso Robles fire station is located approximately 3 minutes from the project site at 900 Park Street in Paso Robles. Access to the project site would be from 13th Street and Paso Robles Street. The proposed project would not impose a significant demand for fire protection services.

The project site is also served by the City of Paso Robles Police Department. The City of Paso Robles Police Department is located approximately 3 minutes from the project site (also at 900 Park Street in Paso Robles). Bus storage operations do not typically have a high demand for police

protection, although there have been reports of transient homeless persons living along the Salinas River that might pose a potential security threat to employees and/or property. For that reason, RTA intends to install security lighting and possibly security cameras (similar to the systems used at RTA's primary operating facility in San Luis Obispo). The County Corp Yard is fully fenced, including a sliding gate that is locked every evening to protect County assets.

Overall, no new public safety facilities or additional personnel would be required due to the consolidation of the two existing bus storage facilities at the proposed site. Anticipated impacts are considered less than significant and no mitigation is required.

Question C:

The proposed Project would not impact schools.

Question D:

Directly adjacent to the proposed Project site is the Salinas River Corridor and the planned Salinas River Trail. The *Salinas River Trail Master Plan* study was completed by SLOCOG in 2014. The proposed project would be located adjacent to the 5.5-mile section denoted as *Reach 5 – Paso Robles to San Miguel* (beginning at 13th Street in Paso Robles and continuing north to the community of San Miguel). As noted in the study report, there "are no existing formal or informal trails within this reach of the proposed trail alignment." In a February 3, 2016 Staff Report, SLOCOG recognized that RTA's proposed Bus Parking Yard Project would be physically separated (both in terms of distance and by a fence) from the Salinas River Trail project; this would help preserve the corridor and could result in furthering potential future implementation of the recreation trail.

Question E:

The construction of the Project is unlikely to affect other public services, such as drainage, wastewater service, and water service.

3.14.2 Finding

The proposed Project would result in less than significant impacts to public services. No mitigation is required.

3.15 RECREATION

Evaluation Area	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XV. RECREATION				
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?	☐	☐	☐	■
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?	☐	☐	☐	■

3.15.1 Answers to Checklist Questions

Questions A and B:

The nearest park to the proposed Project site is the Salinas River Trail. The Project would not increase the demand for existing neighborhood or regional parks or other recreational facilities beyond the facilities existing in the City.

3.15.2 Finding

The proposed Project would result in less than significant impacts to recreation. No mitigation is required.

3.16 TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC

Evaluation Area	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XVI. TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC: Would the project:				
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?	☐	☐	■	☐
b. Conflict with an applicable congestion management program, including but not limited to a level of service standards and travel demand measures, or other standards established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways?	☐	☐	■	☐
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?	☐	☐	☐	■
d. Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	☐	☐	☐	■
e. Result in inadequate emergency access?	☐	☐	☐	■
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?	☐	☐	☐	■

3.16.1 Environmental Setting

RTA provided hour-by-hour employee arrival-departure data, as well as hour-by-hour bus departure-arrivals data, to public works and planning staff at both the County and the City; neither identified these vehicles movements as needing further review. No private vehicle parking would be eliminated as a result of the project.

3.16.3 Answers to Checklist Questions

Questions A and B:

Paso Robles Street provides access for the Project; the site is also located directly adjacent the northbound US-101 onramp. This traffic could include construction activities such as heavy equipment entering and exiting. Construction vehicles used to haul Project materials, such as earth material and general construction equipment (i.e., backhoe), could also potentially utilize 13th Street and Creston Road. Minor, short-term impacts would also occur to traffic and circulation from the arrival and departure of work trucks during peak traffic periods. Truck trips would be limited to worker trips and materials deliveries.

No long-term impacts resulting in increased congestion or traffic delays would occur with implementation of the Project.

Question C:

The Project would not conflict with the Paso Robles Airport Land Use Plan and would not result in substantial safety risks from hazards, noise, or a change in air traffic patterns.

Question D through F:

There would be no design features that would increase hazardous conditions or incompatible uses on Paso Robles Street. The Project site should not conflict with emergency access routes for the duration of construction activities, nor during long-term operation of the facility. The proposed Project is consistent with the 2014 San Luis Obispo Council of Governments Regional Transportation Plan and the Paso Robles Circulation Element of the General Plan.

3.16.5 Finding

The impact to transportation and traffic would be less than significant. No mitigation is required.

3.17 UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEM

Evaluation Area	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XVII. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS: Would the project:				
a. Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?	☐	☐	☐	■
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?	☐	☐	☐	■
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?	☐	☐	☐	■
d. Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed?	☐	☐	☐	■
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?	☐	☐	☐	■
f. Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?	☐	☐	☐	■
g. Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	☐	☐	☐	■

3.17.1 Environmental Setting

Much of the language below was taken from the City of Paso Robles Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration report for the Water Treatment Plant project, which is located approximately 1.4 miles to the north. That project site is similarly nestled between US-101 and the Salinas River.

Water

The City derives its water from three sources: the Salinas River alluvial flow, the Paso Robles Groundwater Basin (which is a regional aquifer), and the Nacimiento Water Project (NWP). The first two sources are replenished primarily from uncontrolled runoff originating from several major and minor stream tributaries of the Salinas River, from wastewater treatment plant discharge of effluent into the Salinas River, and to a lesser extent, direct infiltration from precipitation and irrigation. The State allocates eight cubic feet per second of water from the Salinas River to the City of Paso Robles. The City has secured a 4,000 acre-feet per year water entitlement from the NWP, which was completed in 2011.

The City of Paso Robles Department of Public Works operates and maintains the City's wastewater treatment plant, which is located at 3200 Sulphur Springs Road. All City wastewater is pumped to the Sulphur Springs treatment plant, where it is treated by the secondary trickling filtration method. Ultimately, the treated wastewater effluent is discharged into the Salinas River, and dried solids are disposed of at the City Landfill as vegetative cover. The permitted capacity of the City plant is 4.9 million gallons per day (mgd). The current average daily sewage flow into the plant is 2.8 mgd. The sewerage system divides collection into primary east-side versus west-side sewage flows. Two primary lines merge inside the wastewater plant, ultimately converging as a single source of effluent at the treatment plant.

Solid Waste

Solid waste collection service in the City is provided by Paso Robles Waste Disposal Company, the contract hauler for the entire City of Paso Robles. Solid waste is collected and disposed of at the Paso Robles Landfill, located east of City limits, at 9000 Highway 46 East.

The landfill is a Class III facility owned by the City of Paso Robles and managed by Pacific Waste Services, Inc. The 80-acre landfill has been operating since 1970 and has a permitted maximum daily tonnage of 450 tons per day. The landfill accepts Agricultural, Construction/Demolition, Green Materials, Industrial, Metals, Mixed Municipal, Sludge (BioSolids), Tires, and Wood Waste. The landfill has a permitted design capacity 6,495,000 cubic yards, with a remaining capacity of 5,190,000 cubic yards, as of October 1, 2012. The landfill has an estimated lifespan of approximately 2051.

3.17.2 Answers to Checklist Questions

Questions A through D:

No new or expanded wastewater treatment facilities, water supply facilities, or stormwater drainage facilities would be required as a result of the proposed Project. The proposed Project would not be required to be served by existing water supplies as no development is proposed in conjunction with the Project.

Question E:

The proposed Project would not affect wastewater treatment capacity.

Questions F and G:

The proposed Project may generate solid concrete, asphalt, and other construction wastes. The majority of these wastes would be recycled, in accordance with existing City waste diversion requirements. No additional waste would be generated by the Project upon completion. The proposed Project would comply with all federal, state and local laws and regulations related to solid waste.

3.17.3 Finding

The impacts to utilities and service systems would be less than significant. No mitigation is required.

3.18 MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE

Evaluation Area	Potentially Significant Impact	Less Than Significant Mitigation Incorporated	Less Than Significant Impact	No Impact
XVIII. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE				
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, 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?	☐	■	☐	☐
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)?	☐	■	☐	☐
c. Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	☐	☐	■	☐

3.18.1 Mandatory Findings of Significance Discussion

A. As discussed in the preceding sections, the proposed Project does have the potential to significantly degrade the quality of the environment, including effects on animals, or plants, or to eliminate historic or prehistoric resources unless mitigated. The mitigations elsewhere in this report will reduce the impacts to a less than significant level.

B. When Project impacts are considered along with, or in combination with other impacts, the Project-related impacts may be significant. Mitigation measures have been incorporated into the proposed Project to reduce Project-related impacts to a less than significant level.

C. The proposed Project does not have environmental effects that could cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly. Nonetheless, mitigation measures have been developed that would further reduce these less than significant impacts.

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SECTION 4.0 – DETERMINATION

On the basis of the initial evaluation, I find that:

☐ The proposed project will not have a significant effect on the environment.

☒ Although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because mitigation measures described on the attached sheet and hereby made a part of the Negative Declaration have been added to the project.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Geoff Straw, RTA Executive Director

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SECTION 5.0 – SUMMARY LIST OF MITIGATION MEASURES

The following 18 mitigation measures (#4 is repeated in three separate subsections) will minimize to less-than-significant or completely avoid on-going/long-term environmental impacts that would occur as a result of RTA consolidating its two operating facilities into the proposed Project site.

1. **Mitigation Measure AES-1 – Exterior Lighting Controls**: An exterior lighting plan will be developed, which will include the height, location, and intensity of all exterior lighting. All light poles, fixtures, and hoods shall be dark (non-reflective) colored. Lighting shall be designed to eliminate any off site glare. All exterior site lights shall utilize full cut-off, "hooded" lighting fixtures to prevent offsite light spillage and glare.

2. **Mitigation Measure AQ-1 – Construction Equipment Emission Control Measures**. As identified in the APCD *CEQA Air Quality Handbook*, construction mitigation measures are designed to reduce emissions (ROG, NOx, DPM, PM10 and GHG) from heavy-duty construction equipment and may include emulsified fuels, catalyst and filtration technologies, engine replacement, and new alternative fueled trucks. Although not technically required by APCD, RTA will implement the following voluntary construction-related emission reduction measures and shall include, but not be limited to, a combination of the following:

    - Maintain all construction equipment in proper tune according to manufacturer's specifications;

    - Fuel all off-road and portable diesel powered equipment with ARB certified motor vehicle diesel fuel (non-taxed version suitable for use off-road);

    - Use diesel construction equipment meeting ARB's Tier 2 certified engines or cleaner off-road heavy-duty diesel engines, and comply with the State Off-Road Regulation;

    - Use on-road heavy-duty trucks that meet the ARB's 2007 or cleaner certification standard for on-road heavy-duty diesel engines, and comply with the State On-Road Regulation;

    - Construction or trucking companies with fleets that that do not have engines in their fleet that meet the engine standards identified in the above two measures (e.g. captive or NO_x exempt area fleets) may be eligible by proving alternative compliance;

    - All on and off-road diesel equipment shall not idle for more than 5 minutes. Signs shall be posted in the designated queuing areas and or job sites to remind drivers and operators of the 5-minute idling limit;

    - Diesel idling within 1,000 feet of sensitive receptors is not permitted;

- Staging and queuing areas shall not be located within 1,000 feet of sensitive receptors;

- Electrify equipment when feasible;

- Substitute gasoline-powered in place of diesel-powered equipment, where feasible; and,

- Use alternatively fueled construction equipment on-site where feasible, such as compressed natural gas (CNG), liquefied natural gas (LNG), propane or biodiesel.

3. **Mitigation Measure AQ-2 – Construction-Related Dust Control Measures**. Since the proposed Project site is within 1,000 feet of a sensitive receptor, dust generated by construction activities shall be kept to a minimum by full implementation of the following required mitigation measures.

    - Reduce the amount of the disturbed area where possible;

        b. Use of water trucks or sprinkler systems in sufficient quantities to prevent airborne dust from leaving the site. Increased watering frequency would be required whenever wind speeds exceed 15 mph. Reclaimed (non-potable) water should be used whenever possible. Please note that since water use is a concern due to drought conditions, the contractor or builder shall consider the use of an APCD-approved dust suppressant where feasible to reduce the amount of water used for dust control. For a list of suppressants, see Section 4.3 of the CEQA Air Quality Handbook;

    - All dirt stock pile areas should be sprayed daily as needed;

    - Permanent dust control measures identified in the approved project re-vegetation and landscape plans should be implemented as soon as possible following completion of any soil disturbing activities;

    - Exposed ground areas that are planned to be reworked at dates greater than one month after initial grading should be sown with a fast germinating, non-invasive grass seed and watered until vegetation is established;

    - All disturbed soil areas not subject to re-vegetation should be stabilized using approved chemical soil binders, jute netting, or other methods approved in advance by the APCD;

    - All roadways, driveways, sidewalks, etc. to be paved should be completed as soon as possible. In addition, building pads should be laid as soon as possible after grading unless seeding or soil binders are used;

- Vehicle speed for all construction vehicles shall not exceed 15 mph on any unpaved surface at the construction site;

- All trucks hauling dirt, sand, soil, or other loose materials are to be covered or should maintain at least two feet of freeboard (minimum vertical distance between top of load and top of trailer) in accordance with CVC Section 23114;

- Install wheel washers where vehicles enter and exit unpaved roads onto streets, or wash off trucks and equipment leaving the site;

- Sweep streets at the end of each day if visible soil material is carried onto adjacent paved roads. Water sweepers with reclaimed water should be used where feasible;

- All of these fugitive dust mitigation measures shall be shown on grading and building plans; and

- The contractor or builder shall designate a person or persons to monitor the fugitive dust emissions and enhance the implementation of the measures as necessary to minimize dust complaints, reduce visible emissions below 20% opacity, and to prevent transport of dust offsite. Their duties shall include holidays and weekend periods when work may not be in progress. The name and telephone number of such persons shall be provided to the APCD Compliance Division prior to the start of any grading, earthwork or demolition.

4. <u>Mitigation Measure AQ-3 – Construction Permit Requirements</u>

Portable equipment, 50 horsepower (hp) or greater, used during construction activities may require California statewide portable equipment registration (issued by the California Air Resources Board) or an APCD permit.

The RTA will ensure that the contractor(s) that will complete the project's construction phase will comply with these permit requirements. The following list is provided as a guide to equipment and operations that may have permitting requirements, but should not be viewed as exclusive. For a more detailed listing, refer to the Technical Appendices, page 4-4, in the APCD's 2012 CEQA Handbook.

- Power screens, conveyors, diesel engines, and/or crushers;
- Portable generators and equipment with engines that are 50 hp or greater;
- Electrical generation plants or the use of standby generator;
- Internal combustion engines;
- Rock and pavement crushing;
- Unconfined abrasive blasting operations;
- Tub grinders;
- Trommel screens; and,
- Portable plants (i.e., aggregate plant, asphalt batch plant, concrete batch plant, etc).

To minimize potential delays, prior to the start of the project, RTA will contact the APCD Engineering & Compliance Division at (805) 781-5912 for specific information regarding permitting requirements.

5. <u>Mitigation Measure AQ-4 – Operational Permit Requirements</u>

If this RTA facility will have one or more of the below list of equipment, they shall obtain an APCD permit. The following list is provided as a guide to equipment and operations that may have permitting requirements, but should not be viewed as exclusive. For a more detailed listing, refer to the Technical Appendix, page 4-4, in the APCD's 2012 CEQA Handbook.

- Portable generators and equipment with engines that are 50 hp or greater;
- Electrical generation plants or the use of standby generator;
- Auto and vehicle repair and painting facilities;
- Internal combustion engines;
- Cogeneration facilities; and
- Unconfined abrasive blasting operations.

Most facilities applying for an Authority to Construct or Permit to Operate with stationary diesel engines greater than 50 hp, should be prioritized or screened for facility wide health risk impacts. A diesel engine-only facility limited to 20 non-emergency operating hours per year or that has demonstrated to have overall diesel particulate emissions less than or equal to 2 lb/yr does not need to do additional health risk assessment. To minimize potential delays, prior to the start of the project, RTA will contact the APCD Engineering & Compliance Division at (805) 781-5912 for specific information regarding permitting requirements.

6. <u>Mitigation Measure AQ-5 – Operational Phase Idling Limitations</u>

To help reduce the emissions impact from RTA's diesel buses and equipment at the facility, they shall implement the following idling control techniques:

a. <u>California Diesel Idling Regulations</u>

1. ***On-road diesel vehicles*** shall comply with Section 2485 of Title 13 of the California Code of Regulations. This regulation limits idling from diesel-fueled commercial motor vehicles with gross vehicular weight ratings of more than 10,000 pounds and licensed for operation on highways. It applies to California and non-California based vehicles. In general, the regulation specifies that drivers of said vehicles:

   - Shall not idle the vehicle's primary diesel engine for greater than 5-minutes at any location, except as noted in Subsection (d) of the regulation; and,

   - Shall not operate a diesel-fueled auxiliary power system (APS) to power a heater, air conditioner, or any ancillary equipment on that vehicle during sleeping or resting in a sleeper berth for greater than 5.0 minutes at any

location when within 1,000 feet of a restricted area, except as noted in Subsection (d) of the regulation.

2. Signs must be posted in the designated queuing areas and job sites to remind drivers and operators of the state's 5-minute idling limit.

3. The specific requirements and exceptions in the regulations can be reviewed at the following web sites: arb.ca.gov/msprog/truck-idling/2485.pdf and arb.ca.gov/regact/2007/ordiesl07/frooal.pdf.

b. Diesel Idling Restrictions Near Sensitive Receptors – In addition to the state required diesel idling requirements, the RTA shall comply with these more restrictive requirements to minimize impacts to nearby sensitive receptors:

1. Diesel idling within 1,000 feet of sensitive receptors shall not be permitted;
2. Use of alternative fueled or electric equipment is recommended as feasible; and
3. Signs that specify the no idling areas must be posted and enforced at the site.

7. **Mitigation Measure (*same for all three*): BIO-1, GEO-1 & HWQ-1 – Construction Storm Water Plan and SWPPP**: Prior to construction, RTA shall – in close consultation with San Luis Obispo County officials – prepare an operations-based Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) acceptable to the City of Paso Robles; this SWPPP will focus on the operations of RTA independent of County Corp Yard activities. RTA shall also develop in detail a Construction Storm Water Plan in conjunction with the Project's final design and grading plan for implementation during construction activities. Specific details are provided in the City of Paso Robles Construction Site Storm Water Quality Requirements. Elements covered in the program would include:

- Soil stockpiles and graded slopes shall be covered after 14 days if inactivity and 24 hours prior to and during inclement weather conditions.

- Fiber rolls shall be placed along the top of exposed slopes and at the toes of graded areas to reduce surface soil movement, as necessary.

- A routine monitoring plan shall be implemented to ensure success of all on-site erosion and sedimentation control measures.

- Dust control measures shall be implemented to graded areas during construction activities to control fugitive dust.

- Streets surrounding the Project Site shall be cleaned daily or as necessary.

- Best Management Practices shall be strictly followed to prevent spills and discharges of pollutants on site (material and container storage, proper trash disposal, construction entrances, etc.).

8. **Mitigation Measure: BIO-2 – Construction-Related Erosion Control BMPs**: Prior to and during construction, the contractor shall implement erosion control best management practices. To reduce the potential for inadvertent release of sediment from construction area to adjacent stream, drainage, wetland, or other sensitive resource areas, the contractor shall install appropriate erosion control devices around the perimeter of areas that require disturbance of the ground surface. Storm drains and gutters leading to drainage and wetland areas shall be blocked to prevent water entry. Erosion control devices shall be checked on a daily basis to ensure proper function.

9. **Mitigation Measure: BIO-3 – Construction Outside Nesting Season:** If feasible, construction activities will take place outside of the nesting bird season (i.e., March 15 to August 15). If construction activities occur within nesting bird season, a qualified biologist shall perform pre-activity nesting bird surveys to determine if breeding/nesting birds are present within the proposed Project site. If an active bird nest is identified, then CDFG and/or USWFS shall be consulted to determine appropriate buffer during construction activities.

10. **Mitigation Measure: BIO-4 – Qualified Biologist Preconstruction Survey**: A qualified biologist shall be retained to conduct a preconstruction survey of the proposed Project site and the adjacent habitats. In the event that any special-status species are identified within the proposed Project area, all work shall cease and the appropriate agencies shall be contacted for further consultation. As necessary, appropriate regulatory agency permits and/or approvals shall be obtained to allow relocation of special-status species from the Project area. In addition, the following measures shall be implemented to further mitigate impacts to the San Joaquin Kit Fox:

    - Retain qualified biologist to conduct pre-construction survey of the project site and conduct a pre-construction kit fox briefing for construction workers to minimize kit fox impacts.

    - Include kit fox protection measures on project plans.

    - Require strict adherence to the existing 15 mph speed limit at the project site during construction.

    - Stop all construction activities at dusk.

    - Cover excavations deeper than 2 feet at the end of each working day or provide escape ramps for kit fox.

- Inspect pipes, culverts or similar structures for kit fox before burying, capping, or moving.

- Remove food-related trash from project site.

- If a kit fox is discovered at any time in the project area, all construction must stop and the CDFW and USFWS contacted immediately. The appropriate federal and state permits must be obtained before the project can proceed.

11. **Mitigation Measure BIO-5 – Construction Worker Education Program**: A construction worker education program shall be prepared and presented to all construction personnel at the beginning of the proposed Project. The program shall discuss sensitive species with potential to occur in the construction zone, with emphasis on special-status wildlife and plant species. The program shall explain the importance of minimizing disturbance and adhering to other disturbance minimizing measures.

12. **Mitigation Measure: BIO-6 – Defining Project Site Limits:** The use of heavy equipment and vehicles shall be limited to the proposed Project limits, existing roadways, and defined staging areas/access points. The boundaries of each work area shall be clearly defined and marked with visible flagging and/or orange protective fencing.

13. **Mitigation Measure: BIO-7 – Operations-Related Erosion Control Measures:** Erosion control measures shall be implemented to prevent runoff to the Salinas River corridor and associated tributaries. Silt fencing, in conjunction with other methods, shall be used to prevent erosion and avoid and/or minimize silts and sediments from entering adjacent waterways.

14. **Mitigation Measure: BIO-8 – Protection of Salinas River:** During construction, washing of concrete, paint, or equipment and refueling and maintenance of equipment shall occur only in designated areas a minimum of 50 feet from the Salinas River. Straw bales, sandbags, and sorbent pads shall be available to prevent water and/or spilled fuel from entering the stream channel. In addition, all equipment and materials shall be stored/stockpiled away from the swale. Construction equipment shall be inspected by the operator on a daily basis to ensure that equipment is in good working order and no fuel or lubricant leaks are present.

15. **Mitigation Measure: BIO-9 – Oak Tree Protection:** Oak tree protection and replacement procedures shall be implemented during the Project. This includes procedures for protecting oak trees to remain in place during construction, and replacing oak trees that are impacted. Oak tree protections must comply with the City of Paso Robles Tree Ordinance No. 835 N.S; therefore, the following measures shall be implemented to mitigate for potential impacts to oak trees:

    - Permits to Remove or Prune will be obtained in the event any oak tree or limb over 6-inches in DBH are to be removed, or otherwise destroyed;

- Protective fencing shall be installed around oak trees that have the potential to be impacted by proposed construction activities. The fencing shall be installed prior to grubbing/construction and provide the greatest protection of the root zone of oak trees;

Heavy mulching is also recommended. If possible, planting during the warmest, driest months (June through September) shall be avoided.

16. **Mitigation Measure: BIO-10 – Exterior Lighting Controls:** To minimize the effects of future exterior lighting on special status wildlife species, all outdoor lighting fixtures shall be positioned and/or shielded to avoid direct lighting to adjacent streams and surrounding habitat areas.

17. **Mitigation Measure: CUL-1 – Discovery of Human Remains:** In accordance with the California Health and Safety Code, if human remains are uncovered during ground disturbing activities, RTA and its contractor(s) will immediately halt potentially damaging excavation in the area of the burial and will notify the SLO County Coroner and a professional archaeologist to determine the nature of the remains. The coroner is required to examine all discoveries of human remains within 48 hours of receiving notice of a discovery (Health and Safety Code Section 7050.5[b]). If the coroner determines that the remains are those of a Native American, he or she must contact the NAHC by phone within 24 hours of making that determination (Health and Safety Code Section 7050[c]). After the coroner's findings have been made, the archaeologist and the NAHC-designated Most Likely Descendant will determine the ultimate treatment and disposition of the remains and take appropriate steps to ensure that additional human interments are not disturbed. The responsibilities of RTA for acting upon notification of a discovery of Native American human remains are identified in Section 5097.9 of the California Public Resources Code.

    California law recognizes the need to protect Native American human burials, skeletal remains, and items associated with Native American burials from vandalism and inadvertent destruction. RTA will ensure that the procedures for the treatment of Native American human remains contained in California Health and Safety Code Sections 7050.5 and 7052, and California Public Resources Code Section 5097, are followed.

18. **Mitigation Measure: CUL-2 – Discovery of Prehistoric/Historic Deposits:** If prehistoric or historic deposits or features are discovered during ground disturbing activities, activities in the area should cease and a qualified archaeologist shall inspect the discovery and prepare a recommendation for a further course of action.

19. **Mitigation Measure: NOI-1 – Construction-Related Noise Control.** RTA shall ensure that the construction contractor employs the following noise reducing measures during construction activities:

- Construction activities shall be limited to between 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. No construction activities shall take place on Saturdays or Sundays, or on federal or state holidays.

- All equipment shall have sound-control devices no less effective than those provided by the manufacturer. No equipment shall have un-muffled exhaust pipes.

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SECTION 6.0 – REFERENCES

1. *Policy and Procedures for Environmental Evaluation of RTA Projects*, adopted by the RTA Board of Directors on May 4, 2016.

2. *Feasibility and Findings Report for Bus Parking Area at County Corporation Yard in Paso Robles*, The Wallace Group, December 29, 2015. Presented as Agenda Item B-2 at the January 6, 2016 RTA Board of Directors meeting.

3. *2003 City of Robles General Plan* (as amended).

4. *Guidance Document for Municipal Stormwater Permit 2013-2018*, City of Paso Robles.

5. *City of Paso Robles Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration report for the Water Treatment Plant and Main East Pipeline Project* (as amended), Padre Associates, December 24, 2008.

6. Draft *City of Paso Robles CEQA Addendum to the Tertiary Treatment Project IS/MND* report, February 2016.

7. *Biological Resources Survey Report for the El Paso de Robles Wastewater Treatment Plant* report, SWCA Environmental Consultants, November 2009.

8. *County of San Luis Obispo Grading and Stormwater Management EIR*, 2009.

9. *Critical Habitat Mapping* website, County of San Luis Obispo Department of Planning and Building

10. *2014 Regional Transportation Plan / Sustainable Communities Strategy* report, SLOCOG.

11. *Salinas River Trail Master Plan*, SLOCOG, 2014.

12. *Clean Air Plan* (as amended), San Luis Obispo Air Pollution Control District, 2001.

13. *CEQA Air Quality Handbook* (as amended), San Luis Obispo Air Pollution Control District, 2012.

14. *California Emissions Estimator Model* (CalEEMod) software package, version 2013.2.2.

15. *CAPCOA Health Risk Assessments for Proposed Land Use Projects*, California Air Pollution Control Officers Association, July 2009.

16. *CDFW Natural Diversity Data Base*, California Department of Fish and Wildlife.

17. *Facility/Site Summary Details: City of Paso Robles Landfill (40-AA-0001)*, CalRecycle Solid Waste Information System website.

18. *Online Inventory of Rare and Endangered Vascular Plants of California*, California Native Plant Society website.

19. *Wetlands Mapper,* U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service website.

20. *National Flood Hazard Layer*, Federal Emergency Management Agency website.

21. *FTA Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment Manual*, FTA 1995.

22. *Noise Model Based on FTA General Transit Nose Assessment* spreadsheet, HMMH, Inc. 2006