

State Route 60/Lemon Avenue Interchange

LOS ANGELES COUNTY, CALIFORNIA
DISTRICT 07 – LA – 60, PM R21.5/R23.0 (KP R34.6/37.0)
EA# 07224100

INITIAL STUDY / ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (AND SECTION 4(F) EVALUATION)



Prepared by the
United States Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration
and the
State of California Department of Transportation

The Environmental Review, Consultation, and any other action required in accordance with applicable Federal laws for this project is being, or has been, carried out by Caltrans under its assumption of responsibility Pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 327.



January 2008

Summary

S.1 Overview

The Cities of Diamond Bar and Industry, in cooperation with the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) as assigned by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) under its assumption of responsibility pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 327, propose to construct a new interchange on State Route 60 (SR-60) at Lemon Avenue interchange, post mile (PM) R21.5/R23.0 (kilometer post [KP] 34.6 to KP 37.0). The proposed project would improve traffic operations by providing direct access to SR-60 from the surrounding urbanized and largely built-out areas in the Cities of Diamond Bar and Industry at the new Lemon Avenue interchange. These improvements are referred to in this Initial Study/Environmental Assessment (IS/EA) as the proposed project. As proposed, two of the project Build Alternatives will require the permanent acquisition of additional right-of-way (ROW).

This project is included in the adopted 2006 *Regional Transportation Improvement Program* (RTIP) as “construction of new partial diamond interchange for State Route 60 (SR-60) at Lemon Ave (SAFETEA-LU#587).” This project is included in the adopted 2004 *Regional Transportation Plan* (RTP Amendment) (April 2004) as “construct on/off ramps.” The pages from the RTIP and the RTP that include citations to the SR-60/Lemon Avenue interchange project are provided in Appendix H.

The project location and project limits are shown later on Figures 1.1 and 1.2.

S.2 Background of the Project

This project was included in the planning program for SR-60 before 1968. A freeway agreement with Los Angeles County, dated March 26, 1968, gave the State right-of-way (ROW) for an eastbound (EB) off-ramp and (WB) westbound on-ramp at the Lemon Avenue undercrossing.

In March 1984, a *Project Study Report* (PSR) for the proposed project was submitted to Caltrans headquarters for review but a project was not programmed because of a lack of funding commitment for the project. In June 1986, the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors adopted a resolution to support the project and to seek financial resources to fully fund the project. According to the Resolution, the City of Industry, which is west of the project area, would enter into an agreement with the County of

Los Angeles (County) to fully fund the project should this project go forward. A draft PSR was prepared, and again the project was not programmed because of a lack of funding commitment.

In early 2002, Caltrans initiated a Project Study Report/Project Development Support (PSR/PDS) effort as requested by the local agencies (Cities of Industry and Diamond Bar). The PSR/PDS was completed and approved in February 2003. In 2004, the Cities of Industry and Diamond Bar decided to move the project forward to the next phases. In a letter agreement between the Cities dated June 9, 2004, the Industry Urban Development Agency agreed to financially support the Project Approval/Environmental Documentation (PA/ED) and Plans, Specifications, and Estimates (PS&E) phases of the project. In 2005, Congress approved the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act-A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) program and earmarked \$9.6 million in that program for the construction of the proposed SR-60/Lemon Avenue interchange project.

The PSR/PDS identified and evaluated alternatives for the SR-60/Lemon Avenue interchange. Two Build Alternatives evaluated in the PSR/PDS were advanced for evaluation in the *Draft Project Report* (PR). After approval of the PSR/PDS, the Cities of Industry and Diamond Bar, with their engineering consultant, developed two additional Build Alternatives (Alternatives 4 and 5) to potentially be considered in the PA/ED phase.

S.3 Alternatives

The project alternatives evaluated in this IS/EA consist of a No Build Alternative (Alternative 1) and three Build Alternatives, as described in the following sections.

S.3.1 No Build Alternative

The No Build Alternative considers only those improvements that have been approved and funded at the time the Draft PR was prepared. These are:

- State Route 57 (SR-57)/SR-60 Direct High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) Connector Project: This project is currently under construction in the SR-57/SR-60 interchange, east of the location of the proposed SR-60/Lemon Avenue interchange project.
- SR-60 HOV Lanes Project: Construction of this project, to provide HOV lanes on the mainline SR-60 facility, is expected to begin 2007.

In addition, the SR-57/SR-60 Interchange Improvements Feasibility Study, to evaluate possible improvements to the SR-57/SR-60 interchange, was initiated on March 15, 2006, and is expected to be completed in mid-2007. However, because that study is not complete, no improvements identified in that study are assumed to be in place under the No Build and Build Alternatives for the proposed SR-60/Lemon Avenue interchange project.

These improvements would do little in the way of providing adequate levels of service (LOS) and operational conditions at the existing interchanges on this segment of SR-60, would mostly serve to handle the existing traffic demand on the facilities they are improving, and would not provide for a new interchange at Lemon Avenue. These improvements are assumed to occur under the No Build Alternative and the proposed Build Alternatives for the SR-60/Lemon Avenue interchange.

S.3.2 Alternative 2: Partial Interchange

Alternative 2 would construct a half interchange with a WB on-ramp from Lemon Avenue and an EB off-ramp over Lemon Avenue to Golden Springs Drive. The existing sound wall along EB SR-60 west of Lemon Avenue would be removed, and a new sound wall would be installed along the edge of pavement of the EB off-ramp. The conceptual engineering plan for Alternative 2 is provided in Attachment A.

Alternative 2 is consistent with the Freeway Agreement dated March 26, 1968, and can be constructed within the existing State ROW for SR-60.

The partial interchange and the EB off-ramp, an isolated off-ramp under Alternative 2, are nonstandard and have the potential for wrong-way movements and driver confusion. The EB off-ramp has a nonstandard superelevation transition and runoff due to the short distance between SR-60 and Golden Springs Drive. It would also require permanent closure of Banning Way for access control, which would impact planned development at the northeast corner of Golden Springs Drive and Lemon Avenue.

S.3.3 Alternative 3: Partial Interchange

Alternative 3 would construct a partial (three-legged) interchange, with a WB on-ramp, an EB off-ramp, and an EB on-ramp at Lemon Avenue. It would also permanently remove the existing EB off- and on-ramps at Brea Canyon Road. An auxiliary lane from the proposed EB on-ramp to the connector to southbound (SB)

SR-57 would be constructed under Alternative 3. The existing sound wall along EB SR-60 west of Lemon Avenue would be removed, and new sound walls would be installed along the edge of pavement of the EB off-ramp and on-ramp. The conceptual engineering plan for Alternative 3 is provided in Attachment A.

Removing the existing WB on- and off-ramps at Brea Canyon Road would increase the existing auxiliary lane to more than the standard requirement of over 2,000 feet (ft) (610 meters [m]) and would provide an adequate weaving section for EB SR-60. It would also eliminate the traffic bottleneck at Golden Springs Drive between the EB ramps and Brea Canyon Road.

Alternative 3 would require the partial acquisition of six parcels. No structures would be affected by the partial property acquisitions under Alternative 3.

S.3.4 Alternative 4: Full Interchange

Alternative 4 would provide a full interchange at Lemon Avenue without removing the existing WB access from Brea Canyon Road. Alternative 4 is similar to Alternative 3, except that it would add a two-lane service road between Lemon Avenue and Brea Canyon Road. The service road would replace the existing WB on-ramp from Brea Canyon Road and run parallel to SR-60 on the north. It would terminate at Lemon Avenue. The conceptual engineering plan for Alternative 4 is provided later in Attachment A.

Alternative 4 would require the partial acquisition of 29 parcels. No structures would be affected by the partial property acquisitions under Alternative 4.

S.4 Areas of Controversy and Unresolved Issues

No areas of controversy or unresolved issues have been identified for the proposed SR-60/Lemon Avenue interchange project.

S.5 Summary of Impacts

Table S-1 summarizes the potential adverse impacts of the No Build Alternative and the proposed Build Alternatives for the SR-60/Lemon Avenue interchange, based on the findings of this IS/EA. Avoidance, minimization and mitigation measures, as required for adverse impacts of the proposed project, are also listed in Table S-1.

Table S-1 Summary of Impacts and Avoidance, Minimization, and Mitigation Measures

Potential Impact	No Build Alternative	Alternative 2	Alternative 3	Alternative 4	Avoidance, Minimization, and Mitigation Measures
Land Use	Not consistent with General Plan goals and transportation plans	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	None required
Growth	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	None required
Farmlands and Timberlands	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	None required
Community Impacts	No impacts	Short-term impacts on businesses during construction	Short-term impacts on businesses during construction	Short-term impacts on businesses during construction	Mitigation Measure TRA-1. Refer to Section 2.8
Relocation	No impacts	No impacts	One non-residential property will be acquired.	One non-residential property will be acquired.	Refer to Appendix D.
Environmental Justice	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	None required
Utilities and Emergency Services	No impacts	Short-term impacts on emergency services during construction	Short-term impacts on emergency services during construction	Short-term impacts on emergency services during construction	Mitigation Measure TRA-1. Refer to Section 2.8
Traffic and Transportation/ Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities	No impacts	Short-term traffic delays and impacts during construction	Short-term traffic delays and impacts during construction	Short-term traffic delays and impacts during construction	Mitigation Measure TRA-1. Refer to Section 2.8
	No long-term adverse impacts.	No long-term adverse impacts.	No long-term adverse impacts.	No long-term adverse impacts.	None required.
Visual and Aesthetics	No impacts	Potential changes in visual quality and character. Potential light effects.	Potential changes in visual quality, character, and light effects.	Potential changes in visual quality and character, light and shade effects.	Mitigation Measure V-1. Mitigation Measure V-2. Mitigation Measure V-3. Refer to Section 2.9

Potential Impact	No Build Alternative	Alternative 2	Alternative 3	Alternative 4	Avoidance, Minimization, and Mitigation Measures
Cultural Resources	No impacts	Potential impacts during construction	Potential impacts during construction	Potential impacts during construction	Refer to Section 2.10
Hydrology and Floodplains	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	None required
Water Quality and Storm Water Runoff	No impacts	Potential for adverse water quality impacts.	Potential for adverse water quality impacts.	Potential for adverse water quality impacts.	Mitigation Measure WQ-1. Mitigation Measure WQ-2. Refer to Section 2.12
Geology, Soils, Seismic, and Topography	No impacts	Potential impacts related to seismic ground shaking, slope stability, erosion, and rippability	Potential impacts related to seismic ground shaking, slope stability, erosion, and rippability	Potential impacts related to seismic ground shaking, slope stability, erosion, and rippability	Refer to Section 2.13
Paleontology	No impacts	Potential adverse impacts on paleontological resources during construction	Potential adverse impacts on paleontological resources during construction	Potential adverse impacts on paleontological resources during construction	Mitigation Measure PAL-1. Refer to Section 2.14
Hazardous Wastes and Materials	No impacts	No impacts related to 880 South Lemon Avenue: Potential to uncover previously unknown hazardous materials; disturbed soils; potential to release hazardous materials during removal of road striping	No impacts related to 880 South Lemon Avenue: Potential to uncover previously unknown hazardous materials; disturbed soils; potential to release hazardous materials during removal of road striping	Potential for adverse impacts to soils and groundwater in the project limits related to 880 South Lemon Avenue: Potential to uncover previously unknown hazardous materials; disturbed soils; potential to release hazardous materials during removal of road striping	Mitigation Measure HW-1. Mitigation Measure HW-2. Mitigation Measure HW-3. Mitigation Measure HW-4. Mitigation Measure HW-5. Mitigation Measure HW-6. Refer to Section 2.15

Potential Impact	No Build Alternative	Alternative 2	Alternative 3	Alternative 4	Avoidance, Minimization, and Mitigation Measures
Air Quality	No impacts	Potential short-term dust and emissions impacts during construction	Potential short-term dust and emissions impacts during construction	Potential short-term dust and emissions impacts during construction	Refer to Section 2.16
Noise	No impact	Potential short-term noise impact during construction and long-term noise impacts	Potential short-term noise impact during construction and long-term noise impacts	Potential short-term noise impact during construction and long-term noise impacts	Refer to Section 2.17 Reasonable and feasible sound walls as described in Table 2.17-5.
	No impact		Potential long-term noise impacts	Potential long-term noise impacts	
Natural Communities	No impact	Impact on willow riparian woodland	Impact on willow riparian woodland	Impact on willow riparian woodland	Mitigation Measures BIO-2 and BIO-5. Refer to Section 2.19
Wetlands and Waters of the United States	No impact	Impact on United States Army Corps of Engineers (ACOE) and California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG) jurisdictional waters	Impact on ACOE and CDFG jurisdictional waters	Impact on ACOE and CDFG jurisdictional waters	Mitigation Measure BIO-1. Mitigation Measure BIO-2. Mitigation Measure BIO-3. Mitigation Measure BIO-4. Mitigation Measure BIO-5. Mitigation Measure BIO-6. Refer to Section 2.19
Plant Species	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	None required
Animal Species	No impacts	Potential for adverse impacts on nesting birds during construction	Potential for adverse impacts on nesting birds during construction	Potential for adverse impacts on nesting birds during construction	Mitigation Measure BIO-7. Refer to Section 2.21
Threatened and Endangered Species	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No Impacts	None required
Invasive Species	No impacts	Potential to spread invasive species	Potential to spread invasive species	Potential to spread invasive species	Mitigation Measure BIO-8. Mitigation Measure BIO-9. Mitigation Measure BIO-10. Mitigation Measure BIO-11. Refer to Section 2.23

Summary

Potential Impact	No Build Alternative	Alternative 2	Alternative 3	Alternative 4	Avoidance, Minimization, and Mitigation Measures
Cumulative Impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	No impacts	None required