



**CEQA EXEMPTION / NEPA CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION  
DETERMINATION FORM (rev. 06/2022)**

**Project Information**

**Project Name (if applicable):** Pennsylvania Avenue Grade Separation Project

**DIST-CO-RTE:** 08-RIV-10

**PM/PM:** 8.1/8.3

**EA:** 1P300

**Federal-Aid Project Number:**

**PN:** 0823000158

**Project Description**

The City of Beaumont (City), in coordination with the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), is proposing a grade separation at the existing Pennsylvania Avenue/Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) at-grade crossing through the construction of an underpass (i.e., roadway would be depressed under the existing rail line) (Project). The roadway improvements would extend along Pennsylvania Avenue from 3rd Street to the south, to just north of the I-10 off-ramp to the north. Following construction, the horizontal alignment for the rail line would remain in its current location, while the vertical alignment/elevation would involve slight adjustment (elevation would vary from zero to two feet compared to the existing elevation). The width of the new bridge would be approximately 105 feet. (see Continuation Sheet)

**Caltrans CEQA Determination** (Check one)

- Not Applicable** – Caltrans is not the CEQA Lead Agency
- Not Applicable** – Caltrans has prepared an IS or EIR under CEQA

Based on an examination of this proposal and supporting information, the project is:

- Exempt by Statute.** (PRC 21080[b]; 14 CCR 15260 et seq.)
- Categorically Exempt. Class** Enter class. (PRC 21084; 14 CCR 15300 et seq.)
  - No exceptions apply that would bar the use of a categorical exemption (PRC 21084 and 14 CCR 15300.2). See the [SER Chapter 34](#) for exceptions.
- Covered by the Common Sense Exemption.** This project does not fall within an exempt class, but it can be seen with certainty that there is no possibility that the activity may have a significant effect on the environment (14 CCR 15061[b][3].)

**Senior Environmental Planner or Environmental Branch Chief**

N/A

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Project Manager**

N/A

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date



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Caltrans NEPA Determination (Check one)

Not Applicable

Caltrans has determined that this project has no significant impacts on the environment as defined by NEPA, and that there are no unusual circumstances as described in 23 CFR 771.117(b). See SER Chapter 30 for unusual circumstances. As such, the project is categorically excluded from the requirements to prepare an EA or EIS under NEPA and is included under the following:

23 USC 326: Caltrans has been assigned, and hereby certifies that it has carried out the responsibility to make this determination pursuant to 23 USC 326 and the Memorandum of Understanding dated April 18, 2022, executed between FHWA and Caltrans. Caltrans has determined that the project is a Categorical Exclusion under:

- 23 CFR 771.117(c): activity (c)(28)
23 CFR 771.117(d): activity (d)(Enter activity number)
Activity Enter activity number listed in Appendix A of the MOU between FHWA and Caltrans

23 USC 327: Based on an examination of this proposal and supporting information, Caltrans has determined that the project is a Categorical Exclusion under 23 USC 327. The environmental review, consultation, and any other actions required by applicable Federal environmental laws for this project are being, or have been, carried out by Caltrans pursuant to 23 USC 327 and the Memorandum of Understanding dated May 27, 2022, and executed by FHWA and Caltrans.

Senior Environmental Planner or Environmental Branch Chief

Gita Tokhmafshan
Print Name
Signature
Date 11/14/2025

Project Manager/ DLA Engineer

Samer Georges
Print Name
Signature
Date 11/14/2025

Date of Categorical Exclusion Checklist completion (if applicable): October 16, 2025

Date of Environmental Commitment Record or equivalent: October 16, 2025

Briefly list environmental commitments on continuation sheet if needed (i.e., not necessary if included on an attached ECR). Reference for additional information, as appropriate (e.g., additional studies and design conditions).



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### Continuation sheet:

#### **PROJECT DESCRIPTION (CONTINUED)**

The existing roadway condition on Pennsylvania Avenue consists of two through lanes in each direction (northbound [NB] and southbound [SB]), a center median, and a dedicated left-turn pocket from SB Pennsylvania Avenue to the eastbound (EB) Interstate (I-) 10 on-ramp. In addition, a sidewalk is present along the SB side of Pennsylvania Avenue that extends from East 1st Street to the south to East 6th Street to the north.

Consistent with the existing roadway cross-section, following construction of the Project Pennsylvania Avenue would consist of two through lanes in each direction (NB and SB), a center median, a dedicated left-turn pocket from SB Pennsylvania Avenue to the EB I-10 on-ramp, and a sidewalk in the SB direction. In addition, the following improvements would be included:

- Sidewalk along the NB side of Pennsylvania Avenue
- Reprofiling of existing I-10 EB on-ramp and westbound (WB) off-ramp for a distance of approximately 300 feet and 800 feet, respectively, to match the lowered elevation of Pennsylvania Avenue
- Addition of traffic signals at the Pennsylvania Avenue/I-10 EB on-ramp and Pennsylvania Avenue/I-10 WB off-ramp intersections
- Retaining wall along the NB side of the I-10 EB on-ramp
- Relocation of the existing sewer line that is located along Pennsylvania Avenue to accommodate the lowering of the existing roadway. The sewer line would be rerouted west along East 6th Street to Massachusetts Avenue where it would then travel south. A jack and bore approach would be used to install the sewer line under I-10, and the line would tie-into the existing sewer line that exists just south of I-10 and north of the UPRR alignment.

A shoofly (approximately 4,000 feet in length) would be created just south of, and parallel to, the existing UPRR tracks for use during construction to minimize impacts to UPRR.

The portion of the work within Caltrans' right of way includes installing traffic signals, sewer relocation, retaining walls, new Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) curb ramps, sidewalks, and modification to the EB I-10 on-ramp and WB I-10 off-ramp at Pennsylvania Avenue.

#### **PURPOSE AND NEED**

##### **Project Purpose**

The purpose of the project is to grade separate Pennsylvania Avenue from the UPRR line, thereby eliminating an existing at-grade railroad crossing.

##### **Project Need**

The current at-grade crossing experiences approximately 41 trains and 12,000 vehicles per day, according to the Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC) Grade



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Separation Priority Update Study (March 2012). These numbers are projected to rise to 100 trains and 20,000 vehicles per day by 2035. Vehicle wait time at this location has become a growing concern—traffic delay at the at-grade crossing was estimated at 18 hours per day in 2010 and is forecasted to reach 165 hours per day by 2035. In June 2022, a single train stoppage resulted in more than eight hours of congestion, severely impacting both local and regional travel.

Taking into account the anticipated increase in rail and vehicle volumes, eliminating the at-grade crossing is essential for enhancing safety, reducing operational delays, and minimizing collision risks. Grade separation at the UPRR crossing on Pennsylvania Avenue will address these needs by eliminating at-grade conflicts, improving congestion, and reducing accident potential.

### TECHNICAL STUDIES

Technical Study	Report Date	Date of Caltrans Approval
Air Quality Report	October 2025	November 13, 2025
Natural Environmental Study (Minimal Impacts)	October 2025	November 6, 2025
Determination of Biologically Equivalent or Superior Preservation Analysis (DBESP)	October 2025	November 7, 2025
Historic Property Survey Report	October 13, 2025	October 13, 2025
Archaeological Survey Report	October 7, 2025	October 13, 2025
Archaeological Survey Report/Correspondence with Native American Representatives	October 7, 2025	October 13, 2025
Initial Site Assessment	July 17, 2024	September 25, 2024
Initial Site Assessment Addendum	October 13, 2025	November 5, 2025
Combined Paleontological Identification Report and Paleontological Evaluation Report	April 29, 2025	June 16, 2025
Questionnaire to Determine Visual Impact Assessment Level	n/a	June 30, 2025



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### Air Quality

#### **Air Quality Assessment Report**

The Air Quality Report was approved by Caltrans on November 13, 2025. Compliance with Caltrans Standard Specifications Sections 14.9-02 and the SCAQMD Rules and Regulations during construction is expected to reduce construction-related air quality impacts from fugitive dust emissions and construction equipment emissions.

The information below summarizes the short- and long-term effects of the Pennsylvania Avenue Grade Separation Project on localized and regional air quality:

- During Project construction, implementation of exhaust and fugitive dust control measures would avoid or minimize impacts on air quality.
- The Project is included in the SCAG RTP/SCS Connect SoCal 2024 and 2025 FTIP under the FTIP ID, RIV180129A. The Project would comply with all PM<sub>2.5</sub> and PM<sub>10</sub> measures in the SIP and implement measures relied on in the RTP/TIP regional conformity analysis in a timely matter. The Project would not cause nor contribute to any new localized CO, PM<sub>2.5</sub>, and/or PM<sub>10</sub> violations or delay timely attainment of any NAAQS, required interim emissions reductions, or other milestones during the timeframe of the transportation plan (or regional emissions analysis).
- The Caltrans CO Protocol screening analysis demonstrated that the Project would not have a material effect on localized CO concentrations.
- This evaluation finds that the Project is not considered to be a POAQC, as defined by 40 CFR 93.123(b)(1); therefore, no quantitative PM hot-spot evaluation is required. It is unlikely that the Project would generate new air quality exceedances, worsen existing exceedances, or delay attainment of the NAAQS for PM<sub>2.5</sub>.
- The Project was found to have no meaningful regional or local MSAT effect, based on FHWA's updated interim MSAT guidance from January 18, 2023.
- GHG emissions are not projected to increase under the Build and No-Build scenarios in 2030 and 2050 compared with existing conditions in 2022. Implementation of the Project would be also not expected to increase GHG emissions relative to the No-Build condition in 2050.

### Regional Conformity

The Project is listed in the Connect SoCal 2024 financially constrained RTP, which was found to conform by SCAG on April 4, 2024, and FHWA and FTA made a regional conformity determination finding on May 10, 2024. The Project is also included in SCAG's financially constrained 2025 FTIP (Amendment #25-09). The SCAG FTIP was determined to conform by FHWA and FTA on December 16, 2024. Aside from the conformity category, which will be updated, the design concept and scope of the Project are consistent with the project description in the 2024-2050 RTP/SCS, the 2025 FTIP, and the "open to traffic" assumptions of the SCAG regional emissions analysis.



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### Project-Level Conformity

The Project is located in a federal nonattainment area for PM<sub>2.5</sub>, an attainment/maintenance area for PM<sub>10</sub>, and an attainment/maintenance area for CO; therefore, a project-level hot-spot analysis is required under 40 CFR 93.109. The Project would comply with all PM<sub>2.5</sub> and PM<sub>10</sub> measures in the SIP and implement measures relied on in the RTP/TIP regional conformity analysis in a timely matter. The Project would not cause nor contribute to any new localized CO, PM<sub>2.5</sub>, and/or PM<sub>10</sub> violations or delay timely attainment of any NAAQS, required interim emissions reductions, or other milestones during the timeframe of the transportation plan (or regional emissions analysis).

### Interagency Consultation

The project-level PM hot-spot analysis was presented to SCAG's Transportation Conformity Working Group for discussion and review on September 23, 2025. It was determined that the Project was not a project of air quality concern (POAQC).

### Avoidance, Minimization and Mitigation

**AQ-1:** During clearing, grading, earthmoving, or excavation operations, fugitive dust emissions will be controlled by regular watering or other dust preventive measures using the following procedures. All material excavated or graded will be sufficiently watered to prevent excessive amounts of dust. Watering will occur at least twice daily with complete coverage, preferably in the late morning and after work is done for the day. All material transported on site or off site will be either sufficiently watered or securely covered to prevent excessive amounts of dust. The areas disturbed by clearing, grading, earthmoving, or excavation operations will be minimized so as to prevent excessive amounts of dust. These control techniques will be indicated in Project specifications. Visible dust beyond the property line emanating from the Project will be prevented to the maximum extent feasible.

**AQ-2:** Project grading plans will show the duration of construction. Ozone precursor emissions from construction equipment vehicles will be controlled by maintaining equipment engines in good condition and in proper tune per manufacturers' specifications.

**AQ-3:** All trucks that are to haul excavated or graded material on site will comply with State Vehicle Code Section 23114, with special attention to Sections 23114(b)(F), (e)(2), and (e)(4), as amended, regarding the prevention of such material spilling onto public streets and roads.

**AQ-4:** The contractor will adhere to Caltrans Standard Specifications for Construction (Section 14.9 02).



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### **Biological Resources**

#### **Natural Environmental Study (Minimal Impacts)**

The Natural Environmental Study (Minimal Impacts) was approved by Caltrans on November 6, 2025. No state-listed species were observed or are expected to be affected by the Project, and no take is anticipated; therefore, a CESA ITP is not required. The Project Site lies outside NOAA Fisheries' jurisdiction and contains no Essential Fish Habitat. No federally jurisdictional wetlands or Waters of the United States (WOTUS) were identified within the biological study area. Standard BMPs will be implemented to prevent the spread of invasive species and protect nearby water features (see BIO-1-6, 9-12). Pre-construction nesting bird surveys will be conducted in compliance with the MBTA, California Fish and Game Code, and MSHCP guidelines (see BIO 7, 8, and 13).

#### **Determination of Biologically Equivalent or Superior Preservation Analysis**

Caltrans concurred with the Determination of Biologically Equivalent or Superior Preservation Analysis on November 7, 2025. No special status wildlife species were observed within the Project Site during the field survey events in 2024. The study area includes no United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)-designated critical habitat for plants, or wildlife. Additionally, no Burrowing Owl (*Athene cunicularia*), or their characteristic sign were detected within the Project Site, and no special status plant species were observed within the Project Site during the field surveys in 2024.

The Project site supports five drainage features that have been determined to be Waters of the State (WOTS) and MSHCP Section 6.1.2 Riparian/Riverine Resources. As such, the Project will result in 0.0349-acre of permanent loss, and 0.0453-acre of temporary disturbance associated with riverine resources. Compensatory mitigation will be required (see BIO-14).

### **Avoidance, Minimization and Mitigation**

**BIO-1:** Standard erosion control measures will be used to prevent sedimentation into adjacent areas. Post-construction site stabilization will include non-invasive erosion control seed mixes to prevent further spread of non-native species.

**BIO-2:** The Project will avoid direct impacts to California Buckwheat Scrub habitat. Construction fencing and signage will be installed to ensure that equipment and personnel do not enter these areas.

**BIO-3:** Construction activities will be confined to designated work areas to prevent unnecessary disturbance to adjacent habitats. Erosion control measures will be used to reduce soil loss and sedimentation.

**BIO-4:** Equipment and vehicles will be inspected and cleaned before entering and leaving the Project Site to prevent the spread of non-native invasive species.



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Revegetation efforts using native species will be considered for areas subject to temporary impacts.

**BIO-5:** Construction personnel will receive training regarding the importance of protecting native vegetation and avoiding unnecessary disturbance to adjacent areas.

**BIO-6:** A qualified botanist will conduct a final pre-construction survey 7 days prior to ground-disturbing activities to verify the absence of special-status plants. If any special-status species are detected at that time, avoidance measures such as temporary protective fencing will be implemented.

**BIO-7:** A qualified biologist will conduct pre-construction clearance surveys within 14 - 30 days and one survey 24 hours prior to ground disturbance to confirm that no BUOWs have colonized the Project Site. If an active BUOW burrow is found, consultation with CDFW will be required, and avoidance buffers will be implemented.

**BIO-8:** If BUOW or an active burrow is detected, a 50-meter (164-foot) no-disturbance buffer will be established.

**BIO-9:** Construction activities will be limited to designated work areas to minimize habitat disturbance. Dust control measures will be used to prevent habitat degradation in adjacent areas.

**BIO-10:** A qualified biologist will monitor construction activities to ensure compliance with avoidance measures and prevent unintentional impacts to wildlife.

**BIO-11:** Construction personnel will receive environmental awareness training regarding migratory and nesting bird protections. Vegetation removal and ground-disturbing activities will be conducted outside of the nesting season when practical.

**BIO-12:** A qualified biologist will be on-site during initial ground-disturbing activities to ensure compliance with nesting bird protection measures. Weekly monitoring reports will be prepared and submitted to Lead Federal Agency (i.e., Caltrans) if any avoidance measures are triggered.

**BIO-13:** If construction occurs during the breeding season for nesting birds (February 1 – September 30), a qualified biologist will conduct a nesting bird survey within 3 days prior to ground disturbance. The survey will cover all suitable nesting habitats within the Project Site and a 500-foot buffer.

If an active nest is detected, the following avoidance measures will be implemented:

1. Default buffer distances:



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- 100 feet - non-passerines
  - 300 feet – passerines and
  - 500 feet - raptors and Federal- and State-listed species.
2. If a smaller buffer is required due to site conditions, a Nesting Bird Management Plan will be developed to determine appropriate protection measures.

Work within the buffer will be postponed until the nest is deemed inactive or fledglings have left the area

**BIO-14:** To compensate for 0.0349 acres of permanent loss and 0.0453 acres of temporary disturbance associated WOTS, the Project shall purchase 0.16 acres (2:1 ratio) of either creation, re-establishment, or rehabilitation credits at the Riverpark Mitigation Bank. Should Riverpark Mitigation Bank become unavailable in the future, an alternative mitigation strategy, shall be reviewed and approved prior to issuance of a grading permit.

It is presumed that these credits biological functions are superior to the existing baseline conditions. As the proposed mitigation would be at least equivalent, if not superior, to avoidance of the resources, as the features to be impacted are only involved in managing stormwater within the urban infrastructure of the City of Beaumont, but are not comparable to natural riparian or riverine resources in terms of biological functions and values.

### **Cultural Resources**

#### **Historic Property Survey Report**

Caltrans approved the Historic Property Survey Report on October 13, 2025. The APE encompasses approximately 18.6 acres, mostly within the existing rights-of-way of the various transportation facilities involved. No buildings of historical origin are located adjacent to the site of the proposed underpass. While much of the Area of Potential Effects (APE) north of I-10 is lined by existing buildings, some of them evidently historical in age, no permanent alteration of the landscape is anticipated in that area as a result of this undertaking. Therefore, no additional APE beyond the project footprint is required for visual, atmospheric, or non-physical effects.

Caltrans, pursuant to Section 106 PA Stipulation IX.A has determined a finding of No Historic Properties Affected is appropriate for this project as there are no historic properties within the APE.

#### **Archaeological Survey Report**

Caltrans approved the Archaeological Survey Report on October 13, 2025. The results of research indicate that the only features of prehistoric or historical origin within or partially within the Area of Potential Effects (APE) are the various transportation facilities involved in the undertaking, including the UPRR, Pennsylvania Avenue, Sixth Street, and Massachusetts Avenue. Among these, the UPRR and Sixth Street were previously



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recorded into the California Historical Resources Inventory and designated Sites 33-009498 (CA-RIV-6381H) and 33-028614, respectively.

While it is known to have played an important role in the early growth of the southern California region, a full evaluation of the Southern Pacific Railroad under the criteria for the National Register of Historic Places is beyond the scope of this study. The proposed Project would not substantially alter the current conditions, appearance, or operations of the railroad. Therefore, it is considered eligible for inclusion in the National Register for the purposes of this undertaking in accordance with Section 106 PA Stipulation VIII.C.4 (pending CSO approval).

There is no physical evidence of the historic Cocomaricopa-Bradshaw Trail along the 6.25-mile alignment of Sixth Street in Beaumont and Ramsey Street in neighboring Banning. Like the other roads of historical origin in the APE, namely Pennsylvania Avenue and Massachusetts Avenue, the current configuration and appearance of Sixth Street reflect the results of repeated upgrading and constant maintenance in the modern era, and none of the three streets exhibits any distinctively historical character. As working components of the modern transportation infrastructure, they were determined to be exempt from evaluation pursuant to Section 106 PA Stipulation VIII.C.1A and Attachment 4 (Property Type 3).

Geoarchaeological analysis suggests that the subsurface sediments in the APE are relatively low in sensitivity for potentially significant cultural remains of prehistoric origin, especially since the near surface soils, typically the most likely strata to contain archaeological deposits, have been extensively disturbed by past construction activities associated with the roadways, the railroad, and underground utilities.

### Avoidance, Minimization and Mitigation

**CUL-1:** If cultural materials are discovered during construction, all earth-moving activity in and around the immediate discovery area will be diverted until a qualified archaeologist can assess the nature and significance of the find.

**CUL-2:** In the event that human remains are found, the county coroner shall be notified and ALL construction activities within 60 feet of the discovery shall stop. Pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 5097.98, if the remains are thought to be Native American, the coroner will notify the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) who will then notify the Most Likely Descendent (MLD). The person who discovered the remains will contact the District 8 Division of Environmental Planning; Gabrielle Duff, DEBC: (909) 501-5142 and Julie Scrivner, DNAC: (909) 260-8265. Further provisions of PRC 5097.98 are to be followed as applicable.

### Native American Consultation

#### **Archaeological Survey Report/Correspondence with Native American Representatives**



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On September 5, 2023, a written request was sent to the State of California Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) for a records search in the commission's Sacred Lands File (see HPSR Attachment D). In response, the NAHC states in a letter dated October 19, 2023, that the Sacred Lands File did not indicate any known Native American cultural resources in the vicinity but recommends that local Native American groups be contacted for further information. For that purpose, the NAHC provided a list of potential contacts in the region (see HPSR Attachment D). Following previously established consultation protocol between Caltrans and the local Native American groups, three Native American representatives in the region were contacted in writing on March 7, 2024, as listed below (see HPSR Attachment D):

- Bernadette Ann Brierty, Tribal Historic Preservation Officer (THPO), Morongo Band of Mission Indians;
- Alexandra McCleary, Cultural Lands Manager, Yuhaaviatam of San Manuel Nation;
- Joseph Ontiveros, THPO, Soboba Band of Luiseño Indians.

The Morongo Band and Yuhaaviatam subsequently replied in writing, while the Soboba Band provided their comments by telephone (see HPSR Attachment D). On behalf of Yuhaaviatam, Cultural Resources Technician Eunice Ambriz responded via e-mail on March 11, 2024, stating that the APE was outside Serrano ancestral territory. The tribe declined further participation in this undertaking. When reached by telephone on April 24, 2024, Mr. Ontiveros of the Soboba Band expressed concerns for this undertaking because it is located within a "tribal and cultural property." He requested further consultation with Caltrans per Section 106.

In written replies from Ms. Brierty and from Cultural Resource Specialist Laura Chatterton on March 25, 2024, the Morongo Band finds the area to be "highly sensitive for cultural resources regardless of the presence or absence of remaining surface artifacts and features." Therefore, the tribe requested further participation in the undertaking, including government-to-government consultation with the City of Beaumont and Caltrans, tribal review of all cultural resource documentation for the undertaking and other project data, and Native American monitoring of construction activities.

In response to their comments, on August 26, 2025, Caltrans notified the Morongo Band and the Soboba Band that the cultural resources documentation was available for their review. On September 17, 2025, Caltrans followed up with both tribes by sending them a link to download the documentation and requesting any further comments. To date, neither of the tribes has responded.

### *Avoidance, Minimization and Mitigation*

To date no comments have been received by the tribes that request or trigger avoidance, minimization, or mitigation specific to tribal resources.

### *Hazardous Waste*



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### Initial Site Assessment

Caltrans approved the Initial Site Assessment (ISA) on September 25, 2024. The ISA was conducted in conformance with the scope and limitations of ASTM E1527-21 and the Caltrans PDPM Guidelines for ISA (Caltrans, 2006) and SER (Caltrans, 2021), for the proposed Pennsylvania Avenue Grade Separation Project located in the city of Beaumont, California.

This assessment has revealed no evidence of RECs in connection with the Site except for the following:

- Portions of the Site are directly adjacent or underlying the Union Pacific Railroad Tracks, therefore there exists the potential for historical near surface soil impacts from heavy metals, petroleum hydrocarbons, and polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) related to the rail operations within the railroad right-of-way.
- The Site has been occupied by Pennsylvania Avenue (since before 1938) and I-10 was constructed in the 1960s, including an overpass over Pennsylvania Avenue and an on-ramp and off-ramp. The portion of Pennsylvania Avenue between the eastbound on-ramp and East 6th Street appears likely to have been heavily travelled and there is the potential for historical near surface soil impacts from ADL in the unpaved areas of the Project adjacent to Pennsylvania Avenue.

In general, observations should be made during future property development for areas of possible contamination such as, but not limited to, the presence of underground facilities, railroads, buried debris, waste drums, and tanks, stained soil or odorous soils. Should such materials be encountered, further investigation and analysis may be necessary at that time. Additional recommendations are included in the ECR.

### Initial Site Assessment Addendum

Caltrans concurred with the Initial Site Assessment Addendum on November 5, 2025. The ISA Addendum was performed in conformance with the scope and limitations of the Caltrans ISA Guidance Document. Based upon the findings of the ISA Addendum, Group Delta presents the following conclusions:

- The results of the online database review (i.e., DTSC EnviroStor and SWRCB GeoTracker) remain consistent with the approved 2024 ISA and no additional potential RECs were identified. The results of the database search conducted by EDR Inc. were generally consistent with the approved 2024 ISA with the exception of two EDR database listings that were not explicitly addressed in the approved 2024 ISA. Based on the lack of reported violations or releases, current case-closed/NFA status, and/or soil-only media impacted, the additional two listings are not considered RECs to the Project.
- No significant changes in environmental case listings were identified for properties within the Project footprint and in the Project footprint's vicinity.

### Avoidance, Minimization and Mitigation



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**HAZ-1:** Subsurface soil sampling for contaminants of concern will occur within the proposed earthwork areas in portions of the site directly adjacent or underlying the UPRR tracks and the portion of Pennsylvania Avenue between the eastbound on-ramp and East 6th Street.

**HAZ-2:** An asbestos survey will be conducted on the I-10 Overpass Bridge prior to demolition or modification.

**HAZ-3:** Sampling and analysis of yellow striping will be performed in accordance with Construction Program Procedure Bulletin 99-2 and the Caltrans Standard Specifications and the corresponding Standard Special Provisions.

**HAZ-4:** An Aerially Deposited Lead (ADL) Site Investigation will be conducted for the project footprint and preliminary site investigation of the railroad ROW that will be impacted.

### Paleontology

#### **Combined Paleontological Identification Report and Paleontological Evaluation Report**

Caltrans approved the Combined Paleontological Identification Report and Paleontological Evaluation Report on June 16, 2025. No paleontological localities are known to be present within or in the immediate vicinity of the APE. However, the relatively undisturbed Pleistocene-age alluvial soils present at depth subsurface in the APE are considered to be sensitive for potentially significant, nonrenewable paleontological resources.

Based on these findings, Based on the sensitivity assessment outlined above, CRM TECH recommends to the City of Beaumont and Caltrans a conclusion that the proposed project may impact paleontological resources potentially present in subsurface sediments. Therefore, CRM TECH further recommends that a paleontological Mitigation Plan (PMP) be prepared for the project during final design by a qualified paleontologist. As the primary component of the PMP, all earthmoving operations reaching beyond the disturbed surface and near-surface soils, generally five to six feet in depth within the existing roadbed and along the UPRR, be monitored for paleontological resources. Under this condition, the project may be cleared to proceed in compliance with CEQA and NEPA provisions on paleontological resources.

### Avoidance, Minimization and Mitigation

**PAL-1:** All earth-moving operations reaching beyond the disturbed surface soils, generally five to six feet in depth within the existing roadbed and along the UPRR, will be monitored by a qualified paleontological monitor. The monitor will be prepared to quickly salvage fossils as they are unearthed to avoid construction delays and will collect samples of sediments that are likely to contain fossil remains of small vertebrates or invertebrates. The monitor must have the power to



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temporarily halt or divert grading equipment to allow for the removal of abundant or large specimens.

**PAL-2:** Collected samples of sediment will be processed to recover small fossils, and all recovered specimens will be identified and curated at a repository with permanent retrievable storage.

**PAL-3:** A report of findings, including an itemized inventory of recovered specimens, will be prepared upon completion of the procedures outlined above. The report should include a discussion of the significance of the paleontological findings, if any. The report and the inventory, when submitted to the City of Beaumont and Caltrans, will signify completion of the statutory compliance process regarding paleontological resources.

### **Visual Impacts**

#### **Questionnaire to Determine Visual Impact Assessment Level**

Caltrans concurred with the Visual Impact Assessment Questionnaire on June 30, 2025. No visual resources related to regulatory requirements. No or negligible visual changes to the environment are proposed. None or minimal public concern has been identified. This Questionnaire with rationale for selected responses to questions in the available spaces after each question along with a statement of no visual resource impact is appropriate and provides a sufficient rationale why a technical study is not required.

#### **Avoidance, Minimization and Mitigation**

There will be no visual impact. No avoidance, minimization, or mitigation measures are required.

#### **Noise Study**

Per Caltrans' email received on September 02, 2025, the Project, as currently designed, has been reviewed and does not meet the criteria for a Type I project as defined in 23 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 772 and the Caltrans *Traffic Noise Analysis Protocol* (TNAP). Therefore, a Noise Study was not required.

#### **Avoidance, Minimization and Mitigation**

N/A



# Categorical Exclusion Checklist

## PROJECT INFORMATION

**DIST-CO-RTE:** 08-RIV-10

**PM/PM:** 8.1/8.3

**Fed. Aid Number (Local Project):** n/a

**EA/Project Number:** 1P300 / 0823000158

## SECTION A: Type of CE

Use the information in this section to determine the applicable CE and corresponding activity for this project.

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**1. Project is a CE under CE Assignment 23 USC 326** (activity must be listed in 23 CFR 771.117 (c) or (d) list (See [Chapter 30 in the SER](#)) or included in activities listed in [Appendix A of the CE Assignment MOU](#) to be eligible for 23 USC 326).

Yes, **Activity:** Enter activity       No

### **Notes for specific activities:**

- **If using (c)9**, distinguish between (c)9(i) or (c)9(ii) on the form and include copy of the emergency declaration in the file.
- **If using (c)22**, identify in the project description that all work is within operational right-of-way.
- **If using (c)23**, distinguish between (c)23(i) and (c)23(ii) on the form.
- **If using (c)26, (c)(27), or (c)(28)**, ensure that the action DOES NOT include any of the constraints found in 23 CFR 771.117(e). If it does, it may not be processed under (c)(26), (c)(27), or (c)(28), however, the project may qualify for a CE under 23 CFR 771.117(d)(13).

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**2. Project is a CE for a highway project under NEPA Assignment 23 USC 327** (Use only if project does not qualify under CE Assignment 23 USC 326 (activities not included in question 1)).

Yes       No

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## **3. Independent Utility and Logical Termini**

- The project complies with NEPA requirements related to connected actions and segmentation (i.e., the project must have independent utility, connect logical termini when applicable, be usable and be a reasonable expenditure even if no additional transportation improvements in the area are made and not restrict further consideration of alternatives for other reasonably foreseeable transportation improvements). (FHWA Final Rule, "Background," Federal Register Vol. 79, No. 8, January 13, 2014.)

## Categorical Exclusion Checklist

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### 4. Categorical Exclusions Defined (23 CFR 771.117[a]).

FHWA regulation 23 CFR 771.117(a) defines categorical exclusions as actions which:

- do not induce significant impacts to planned growth or land use for the area;
- do not require the relocation of significant numbers of people;
- do not have a significant impact on any natural, cultural, recreational, historic or other resources;
- do not involve significant air, noise, or water quality impacts;
- do not have significant impacts on travel patterns; or
- do not otherwise, either individually or cumulatively, have any significant environmental impacts.

Checking this box certifies that project meets the above definition for a Categorical Exclusion.

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### 5. Exceptions to Categorical Exclusions/Unusual Circumstances (23 CFR 771.117[b]).

FHWA regulation 23 CFR 771.117(b) provides that any action which normally would be classified as a CE but could involve *unusual circumstances* requires the Department to conduct appropriate environmental studies to determine if the CE classification is proper. Unusual circumstances include actions that involve:

- Significant environmental impacts;
- Substantial controversy on environmental grounds;
- Significant impact on properties protected by section 4(f) of the DOT Act or section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act; or
- Inconsistencies with any Federal, State, or local law, requirement or administrative determination relating to the environmental aspects of the action.

**All of the above unusual circumstances have been considered in conjunction with this project.** (Choose one)

Checking this box certifies that **none of the above conditions apply** and that the project qualifies for a Categorical Exclusion.

Checking this box certifies that unusual circumstances **are involved**. However, the appropriate studies/analysis have been completed, and it has been determined that the CE classification is still appropriate.

## Categorical Exclusion Checklist

### **SECTION B: Compliance with FHWA NEPA policy to complete all other applicable environmental requirements<sup>1</sup> prior to making the NEPA determination:**

During the environmental review process for which this CE was prepared, all applicable environmental requirements were evaluated. Outcomes for the following requirements are identified below and fully documented in the project file. **[NOTE: EVERY SECTION BELOW MUST BE COMPLETED, DO NOT SKIP ANY SECTIONS.]**

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#### **FSTIP**

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- The project description on the Categorical Exemption/Categorical Exclusion Form matches the project description in the FSTIP and RTP, and the appropriate page of the FSTIP is in the project file.

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#### **Air Quality**

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- [Air Quality Conformity Findings Checklist](#) has been completed and project meets all applicable AQ requirements.
- For 23 USC 326 projects which require an air quality conformity determination (this will apply to certain projects under 23 CFR 771.117(c)(22), (c)(23), (c)(26), (c)(27), and (c)(28)), list the date of the Caltrans conformity determination:
- For 23 USC 327 projects, list date of FHWA concurrence on conformity determination:  
December 16, 2024

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#### **Cultural Resources**

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- Section 106 compliance is complete.
- A Screened Undertaking Memo was prepared, or
- A Historic Properties Survey Report was prepared, and the following finding was made:
- No Historic Properties Affected     No Adverse Effect with Standard Conditions
- No Adverse Effect     Adverse Effect/MOA     Phasing/Project PA

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#### **Noise**

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##### 23 CFR 772

- Is this a Type 1 project?     Yes     No (skip this section.)
- Future noise levels with project either approach or exceed NAC or result in a substantial increase.
- If yes:  Abatement is reasonable and feasible
- Abatement is not reasonable or feasible

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<sup>1</sup> Please consult the SER for a complete list of applicable laws, statutes, regulations, and executive orders that must be considered before completing the CE.

## Categorical Exclusion Checklist

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### Biology

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#### USFWS

Species List<sup>2</sup>:

- Not required  
 Required, Date: June 2025

Effect Determination:

- No Effect Section 7 (Federal Endangered Species Act)

*Consultation* with USFWS Findings (Effect determination):

- Not Likely to Adversely Affect with USFWS Concurrence. Date: \_\_\_\_\_<sup>3</sup>  
 Likely to Adversely Affect with Biological Opinion Date: \_\_\_\_\_<sup>3</sup>

#### NOAA Fisheries

Species List<sup>2</sup>:

- Not required  
 Required, Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Effect Determination:

- No Effect Section 7 (Federal Endangered Species Act)

*Consultation* with NOAA Fisheries Findings (Effect determination):

- Not Likely to Adversely Affect with NOAA Fisheries Concurrence. Date: \_\_\_\_\_<sup>3</sup>  
 Likely to Adversely Affect with Biological Opinion Date: \_\_\_\_\_<sup>3</sup>

**Essential Fish Habitat (Magnuson-Stevens Act)** Findings (Effect determination):

- Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act does not apply  
 No Adverse Effect     Adverse Effect and consultation with NOAA Fisheries

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### Floodplains

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Floodplains (Executive Order #11988)

- No Floodplains     No Significant Encroachment     Significant Encroachment

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<sup>2</sup> See the "Changes to Species List Requirements" memo (April 9, 2021) for decision tree and information on determining if a list is required and date requirements.

<sup>3</sup> If concurrence or BO is expected after PA&ED, enter "Pending" into this field.

## Categorical Exclusion Checklist

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### Waters, Wetlands

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#### Section 404 of the Clean Water Act

Impacts to Waters of the U.S.:  No  Yes; anticipated approval:

- Nationwide Permit  Individual Permit  Regional General Permit  
 Letter of Permission

#### Section 401 of the Clean Water Act

- Exemption  Certification  Not Applicable

#### Wetland Protection (Executive Order #11990)

- No Wetland Impact  
 Wetland Impact; Wetlands Only Practicable Alternative Finding is included in a separate document in the project file.

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#### Section 4(f) Transportation Act (23 CFR 774)

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Section 4(f) regulation was considered as a part of the review for this project and a determination was made:

- Section 4(f) does not apply
- There are no potential Section 4(f) properties in the project vicinity.
  - The properties do not meet the definition of a Section 4(f) property, the project does not “use” a Section 4(f) property, or the project meets the criteria for an exception (e.g., temporary occupancy). Document in project file or CE.
- Section 4(f) applies
- De Minimis
  - Programmatic: Type: List one of the five categories as defined in 23 CFR 774.3
  - Individual:
    - Legal Sufficiency Review complete  HQ Coordinator Review Complete

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#### Section 6(f) – Properties Acquired with Land and Water Conservation Fund grants

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Was the above property purchased with grant funds from the Land and Water Conservation Fund?

- No, Section 6(f) does not apply. No additional documentation required.  
 Yes:  Documentation of approval from National Park Service Director (through California State Parks) has been received for the conversion/and replacement of 6(f) property.

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#### Coastal Zone

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Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972

- Not in Coastal Zone  Qualifies for Exemptions  Qualifies for Waiver  
 Coastal Permit Required  
 Consistent with Federal, State, and Local Coastal Plans  Federal Consistency

## Categorical Exclusion Checklist

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### Coast Guard – Bridge Over Navigable Waters of the U.S.

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- Not applicable
- 23 USC 144(c) USCG Bridge Permit Exception
- 33 CFR 115.70 Advance Approval
- USCG Bridge Permit

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### Relocation and Right of Way

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#### Relocations

- No Relocations
- Project involves Enter number relocations and will follow the provisions of the Uniform Relocation Act.

#### Right of Way Acquisitions/Easements

- No right of way acquisitions or easements
- Project involves 2 acquisitions and 5 temporary construction easements.

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### Hazardous Waste and Materials

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Are hazardous materials or contamination exceeding regulatory thresholds (as set by U.S. EPA, Cal EPA, County Environmental Health, etc.) present?  Yes  No

If yes, is the nature and extent of the hazardous materials or contamination fully known?

- Yes  No

If no, briefly discuss the plan for securing information:

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### **SECTION C: Certification**

Based on the information obtained during environmental review process and included in this checklist, the project is determined to be a Categorical Exclusion pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act and is in compliance with all other applicable environmental laws, regulations, and Executive Orders.

Prepared by:

Kim Thompson

Environmental Planner

  
Signature

10-16-2025

Date