

Notice of Preparation

Notice of Preparation

To: _____ From: _____

(Address) (Address)

Subject: Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report

_____ will be the Lead Agency and will prepare an environmental impact report for the project identified below. We need to know the views of your agency as to the scope and content of the environmental information which is germane to your agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed project. Your agency will need to use the EIR prepared by our agency when considering your permit or other approval for the project.

The project description, location, and the potential environmental effects are contained in the attached materials. A copy of the Initial Study (is is not) attached.

Due to the time limits mandated by State law, your response must be sent at the earliest possible date but not later than 30 days after receipt of this notice.

Please send your response to _____ at the address shown above. We will need the name for a contact person in your agency.

Project Title: _____

Project Applicant, if any: _____

Date _____ Signature *Wahneema Lubiano* _____

Title _____

Telephone _____

Reference: California Code of Regulations, Title 14, (CEQA Guidelines) Sections 15082(a), 15103, 15375.

State Route

Notice of Preparation of an Environmental Impact Report for the State Route 239 Project

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) is the lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), as assigned by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and is issuing this Notice of Preparation (NOP) for the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the State Route 239 Project. Caltrans is issuing this NOP to solicit public and agency input into the development of the scope of the project and the environmental issues to be addressed in the EIR to be prepared for the State Route 239 Project. This NOP also advises the public that outreach activities will be conducted by Caltrans in partnership with the Contra Costa Transportation Authority (CCTA) in support of the preparation of the EIR. A separate Notice of Intent (NOI) for the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is being released consistent with the requirements of NEPA with the same scoping comment period as this NOP.

SCOPING COMMENT PERIOD: December 17, 2021 through February 4, 2022

Comments and suggestions on the environmental scope of the project are invited from all interested parties for a period of 49 days from December 17, 2021, through 5:00 p.m. on February 4, 2022.

Submit comments utilizing any of the following:

- **Direct Mail:**

Caltrans District 4
Office of Environmental Analysis
ATTN: Cody Ericksen, Associate Environmental Planner
P.O. Box 23660, **MS: 8B**
Oakland, CA 94623-0660

- **Project Email:** info@SR239project.net
- **Project Telephone:** (925) 390-3794
- **Project Website:** <https://www.SR239project.net/>

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ONLINE PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING

To provide an opportunity to learn more about the project and ask questions of the team, CCTA and Caltrans will hold an online public scoping meeting on Thursday, January 20, 2022, at 5:30 PM. The overarching goal of the meeting is to obtain public and agency input into the scope of the project's environmental review and range of issues and alternatives to consider in preparation of the EIR.

The link to join the online public scoping meeting will be made available on the **State Route 239 Project webpage** (<https://www.SR239project.net/>) on the day of the online public scoping meeting. The online public scoping meeting will begin with a presentation providing an overview of the State Route 239 Project and the environmental process, followed by an opportunity for attendees to submit questions and comments.

Materials supporting the online public scoping meeting will be available at the **State Route 239 Project webpage** (<https://www.SR239project.net/>) for the entire 49-day duration of the scoping period. Members of the public will be able to submit questions and comments through the project webpage or via the other methods provided above for the duration of the 49-day scoping period.

PROJECT HISTORY

State Route 239 was first legislated by the State in 1959 as a roadway linking State Route 4 in Brentwood to Interstate 205 or Interstate 580 west of Tracy in San Joaquin County (the State Route 239 corridor). In 2005, Contra Costa County obtained two rounds of federal funding to evaluate a transportation alignment along the State Route 239 corridor, and in 2011, Contra Costa County began a feasibility study to identify alignment alternatives in cooperation with Caltrans. Responsibility for the feasibility study was transferred from Contra Costa County to CCTA in 2012, and CCTA subsequently launched an extensive public outreach effort to guide the feasibility study.

CCTA completed a Project Study Report-Project Development Support (PSR-PDS) document for the project to proceed to the project approval and environmental document phase in cooperation with Caltrans.

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PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the State Route 239 Project include the following:

- Improve access and mobility between eastern Contra Costa County and western San Joaquin County
- Support inter-regional north-south goods movement operations
- Reduce regional/non-local traffic through the town of Byron
- Improve access to Byron Airport to support planned development as an emergency logistics hub
- Provide improvements for regional and sustainable alternative modes of travel
- Provide an enhanced evacuation route in the event of major disasters

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Caltrans has assumed environmental responsibilities as the CEQA lead agency and will prepare a Draft EIR in partnership with CCTA, the project sponsor, to provide a new, four-lane highway from State Route 4 near Marsh Creek Road in Contra Costa County to Interstate 580 in Alameda County or to Interstate 205 in San Joaquin County. This new route would ultimately improve the transportation network for an area that has few north-south roadway connections between eastern Contra Costa County and the western San Joaquin Valley. The State Route 239 Project is particularly important as it would provide relief from increasing commute traffic through the town of Byron, enhance mobility in eastern Contra Costa County, and improve access to the Byron Airport. Caltrans and CCTA are also considering multimodal alternatives for the State Route 239 Project, such as transit and active transportation improvements.

Caltrans and CCTA are evaluating the overall State Route 239 corridor at both a Tier I (program) level and a Tier II (project) level. The Tier I programmatic-level study will evaluate and analyze alternatives that cover the entire SR 239 Corridor and will consist of a broad and general assessment used to establish and consider the types of environmental impacts that could occur as a result of the ultimate construction and operation of the entire project. Caltrans and CCTA are also evaluating an initial phase of the State 239 Project at a Tier II project-level of evaluation. The Tier II

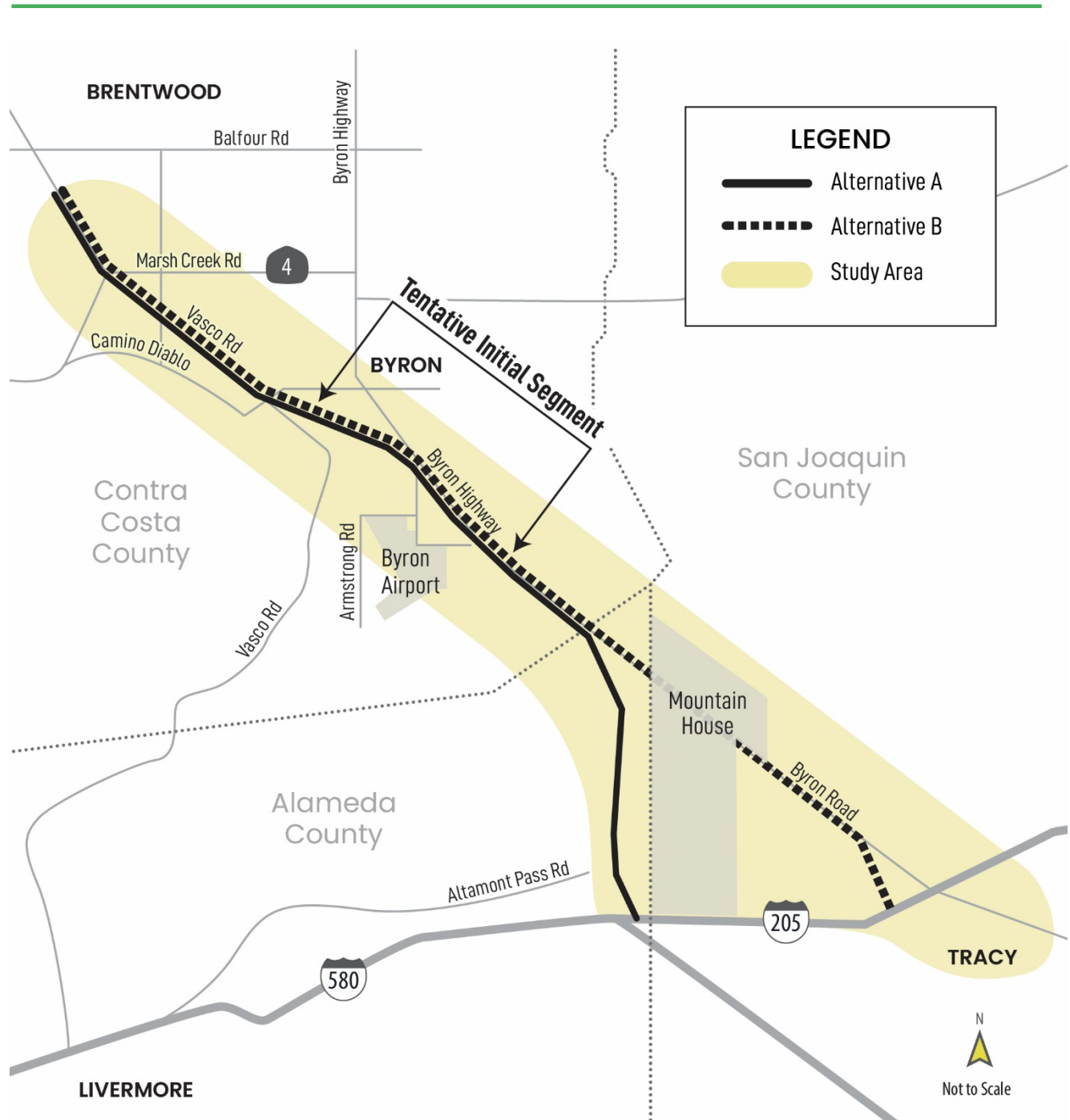
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evaluation will consist of a detailed, site-specific analysis that allows for project approval, design and construction of the initial phase.

CEQA requires that an EIR consider a reasonable range of alternatives in addition to a proposed project. Caltrans and CCTA are seeking comments from agencies, stakeholders, and the public regarding potentially feasible alternatives for evaluation in the EIR. After consideration of input received in response to the scoping process, Caltrans and CCTA will consider the need for analysis of additional alternatives. Only a reasonable range of alternatives that meet most of the project objectives, are feasible, and reduce one or more significant impacts of the project will be analyzed in the EIR. Alternatives that are found to be infeasible, which do not meet most of the project objectives, or which do not reduce one or more significant impacts of the project will be briefly discussed in the EIR as to why they were not considered further. Two alternatives for Tier I have been identified for further study in the EIR, in addition to a No Build Alternative. These alternatives were developed through refinements of the alternatives identified in the PSR-PDS and include:

- Alternative A would be a four-lane highway with an alignment generally east of the Byron Airport. South of the airport and west of Mountain House, the alignment would turn southward and then connect to the I-580/I-205 interchange; and
- Alternative B would be a four-lane highway with an alignment east of the Byron Airport. South of the airport, it would be parallel to and west of Byron Highway before joining Byron Road and connecting to I-205 west of Tracy.

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With respect to Tier II, this initial phase is proposed to be a two-lane facility (one lane in each direction) between State Route 4 near Marsh Creek Road and the Byron Airport. The build alternative under consideration for this initial phase would

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constitute an initial fundable and operable project segment to connect Vasco Road and Byron Highway.

The Tier I (program) and Tier II (project) evaluations will be included in a single combined document, a Tier I/Tier II EIR/EIS, consistent with the requirements of CEQA and NEPA.

Later phases, beyond the initial phase, would require future separate Tier II (project-level) environmental documents before they are programmed for design and construction.

POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS

The purpose of the EIR is to assess the potential environmental effects of the proposed project on the physical, human, and natural environments. A wide variety of resource areas will be studied during the environmental review of this project to identify potential impacts, including:

- Agriculture: The project will convert farmland to transportation use.
- Biological Resources: The project will convert habitat for biological resources and may affect wildlife movement.
- Community and Environmental Justice Impacts: The project may affect community resources. The effects on minority populations and low-income populations will be evaluated in the EIR/EIS.
- Economic Impacts: The project will result in construction employment and spending and may affect economic conditions during operation
- Air Quality: The project will result in emissions during construction and operation.
- Climate Change/Greenhouse Gas/Energy Use: The project will result in GHG emissions and energy use during construction and operation.
- Cultural Resources (including historic buildings, structures, districts, and archaeology): The project may affect cultural resources.
- Geology/Soils/Seismicity: The project will disturb soils during construction and will involve construction on slopes.

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- Growth: The project may induce planned or unplanned growth; this will be evaluated in the EIR/EIS.
- Hydrology/Water Quality/Storm Water: The project will have potential water quality effects during construction, will increase impermeable surfaces, and may affect existing floodplains.
- Noise: The project will result in construction noise and traffic operational noise.
- Transportation/Traffic Studies (including an assessment of vehicle miles travelled [VMT] and compliance with Senate Bill [SB] 743): The project may change VMT compared to baseline conditions.
- Hazards Wastes/Hazardous Materials: Project construction and operations will include the handling of petroleum and hazardous materials
- Land Use: The project may affect existing land uses directly or indirectly.
- Paleontology: The project may affect paleontological resource.
- Utilities: The project may affect utilities found in the project area.
- Visual Impacts: The project will change visual aesthetics in the project area due to the introduction of new transportation facilities.

The significance of any impacts to the above environmental resources has not yet been determined and will be studied and discussed in the EIR. Additionally, measures to avoid, minimize, and mitigate any significant adverse impacts will be identified and evaluated in the EIR.

ANTICIPATED PERMITS AND APPROVALS

Permits and approvals from the following agencies may be necessary for project construction: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (USBR), U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB), California Department of Water Resources (DWR), California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), and the planning departments of Contra Costa, San Joaquin, and Alameda counties.

SPECIAL MEETING ACCOMMODATIONS

The online public scoping meeting is American with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessible and can be viewed in the desired language through use of Google translate. For additional accessibility preferences, email info@SR239project.net, call (925) 390-3794 or for the deaf, hard of hearing or speech impaired (TDD), users may contact the California Relay Service TTY and/or Voice Line at **1-800-735-2929**, or **711**.

ADAPTACIONES ESPECIALES PARA LA REUNIÓN

La reunión de consulta preliminar pública en línea es accesible de conformidad con la Ley para Estadounidenses con Discapacidades o ADA y puede verse en el idioma de su preferencia mediante el uso del traductor de Google. Para otras preferencias de accesibilidad envíe un mensaje a info@SR239project.net, llame al (925) 390-3794, o los usuarios con problemas del oído o del habla (TDD por su sigla en inglés) pueden comunicarse con el Servicio de Retransmisión por Teletipo de California (TTY por su sigla en inglés) y/o con la Línea de Voz al **1 800 735 2929** o al **711**.

會議特殊情況遷就安排

我們的線上公共範圍網站符合《美國殘障人法》（Americans with Disabilities Act，簡稱 ADA）無障礙存標準，並且使用者可借助 Google 翻譯工具以所需的語言查看網站內容。如需查詢能否安排額外的協助具，請傳送電郵至 info@SR239project.net，或致電 (925) 390-3794。聾啞人士或聽力語言障礙 (TDD) 使用者請撥電話 **1-800-735-2929** 或 **711** 與加州殘障轉接服務 TTY 和/或語音熱線聯絡。