# San Diego River Trail – Qualcomm Stadium Segment Project

**SAN DIEGO ASSOCIATION OF GOVERNMENTS**
**CITY OF SAN DIEGO**
**SAN DIEGO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA**

## ~~Draft~~ Final Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration

**Prepared by the San Diego Association of Governments**
401 B Street, Suite 800 • San Diego, CA 92101-4231 • (619) 699-1900

**~~November 2015~~ January 2016**

## Preface

This is a ~~Draft~~ Final Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND), prepared pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), addressing the potential environmental effects of the implementation of the San Diego River Trail – Qualcomm Stadium Segment Project. The Draft MND was circulated for a 30-day public review period from November 4, 2015 to December 4, 2015 (State Clearinghouse No. 2015111010). Comments received during the public review period, as well as responses to the environmental issues raised in the comments, are provided in Appendix H of the Final MND.

In response to comments received on the Draft MND, minor revisions and clarifications have been made to the Final MND, including the Initial Study. All revisions are shown in ~~strikeout~~ and underline in the Final MND.

The documents and other materials that constitute the record of proceedings on which SANDAG's Findings of Fact are based are located at 401 B Street, Suite 800, San Diego, California 92101. The custodian of these documents is Lauren Esposito, Environmental Planner II. This information is provided in compliance with Public Resources Code § 21081.6(a)(2) and CEQA Guidelines §15074(c). The documents and other materials that constitute the record of proceedings on which SANDAG's adoption of the Final Mitigated Negative Declaration is based consist of the following documents, at a minimum:

- All public notices issued by SANDAG in conjunction with the project.
- The Draft MND and Final MND, including all appendices and technical studies included or referenced in the Draft MND and Final MND.
- All comments submitted by agencies or members of the public during the 30-day public comment period on the Draft MND.
- All comments and correspondence submitted to SANDAG with respect to the project.
- The Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program for the project (contained in Appendix G of the Final MND).

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# 1.0 Introduction

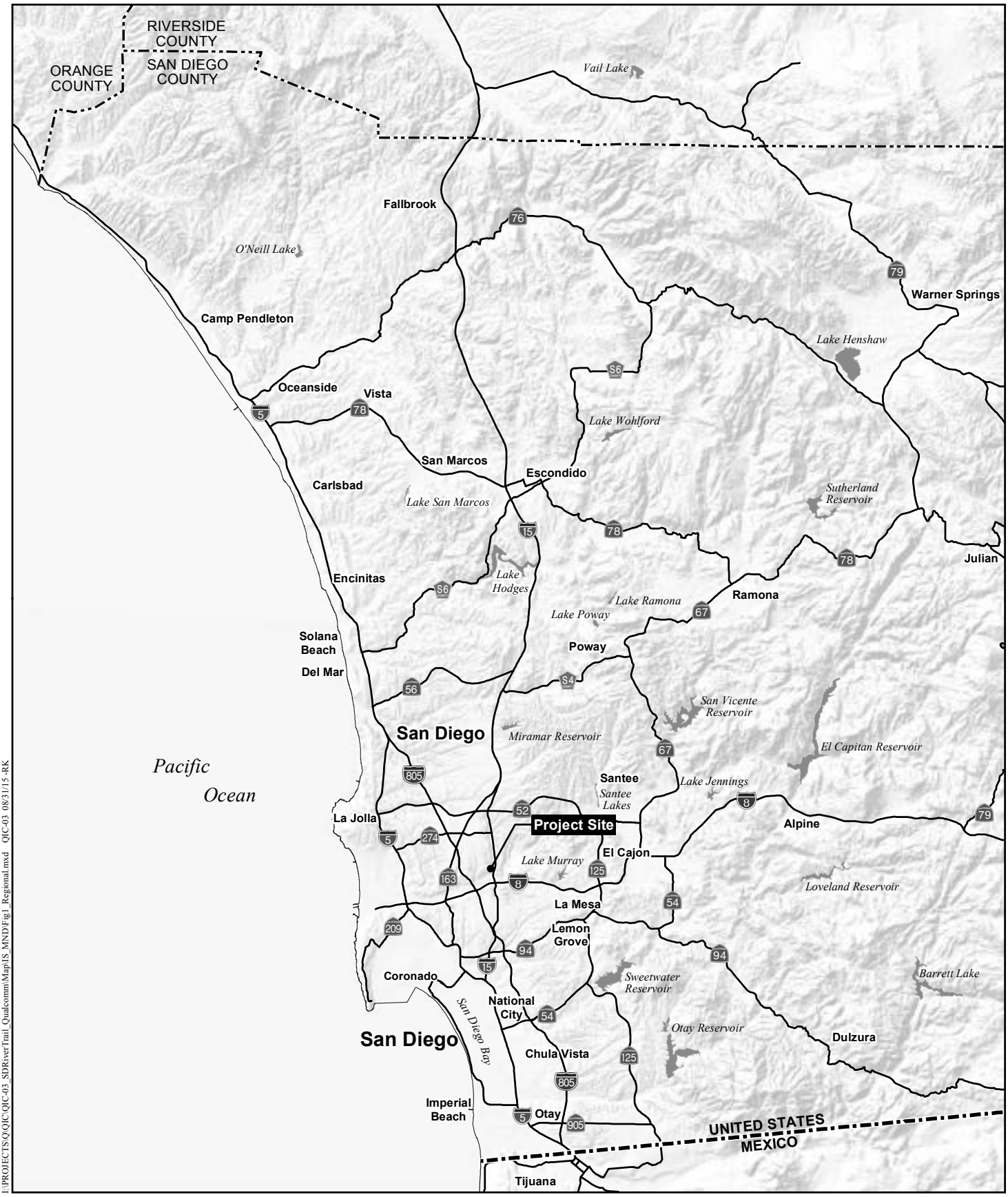
The San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) proposes to construct an approximately 0.8-mile segment of the San Diego River Trail (SDRT) through Qualcomm Stadium in the Mission Valley community of the City of San Diego. The proposed Qualcomm Stadium Segment of the SDRT (hereinafter referred to as the "proposed project" or "project") would extend eastward from the terminus of Fenton Parkway along a vegetated slope behind the Fenton Marketplace shopping center and through the southern portion of the Qualcomm Stadium parking lot to connect with Rancho Mission Road. Figure 1 depicts the regional location of the project site, and Figure 2 shows the location of the project site and surrounding areas on an aerial photograph.

The proposed project is located in a developed area with residential and commercial uses to the west, north, and east. The San Diego River is located adjacent to the proposed trail on the south, with commercial office development on the south side of the river. Most of the trail would occur on existing paved surfaces within the stadium parking lot, which is topographically flat. The western end of the proposed trail would occur on a slope behind the shopping center that contains some dense vegetation. The proposed trail would be a constructed as a Class I bikeway, which is a path that provides a separated right-of-way for the exclusive use of people walking and riding bikes.

As the Lead Agency for the proposed project under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), SANDAG has prepared an Initial Study (IS) to determine if the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment. The IS identifies potentially significant effects to biological resources, cultural resources, and hazards and hazardous materials, but mitigation measures incorporated into the proposed project by SANDAG before the IS and this Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) were circulated for public review would mitigate these effects to a point where no significant impacts would occur. There is no substantial evidence, in light of the whole record before the agency, that the project with the implementation of mitigation measures would have a significant effect on the environment. Therefore, pursuant to the *Guidelines for Implementation of the California Environmental Quality Act* (CEQA Guidelines) (§15070[b]]), SANDAG has prepared an MND for the proposed project.

The Draft MND ~~is~~ was available for a 30-day public review period pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15105. The public review period ~~will begin on~~ occurred from November 4, 2015 to ~~. Written comments regarding the adequacy of the Draft MND must be received by~~ December 4, 2015. All written comments received during this review period are included in Appendix H along with written responses from SANDAG. Comments ~~should be~~ were addressed or emailed to:

Lauren Esposito, Environmental Planner II
San Diego Association of Governments
401 B Street, Suite 800
San Diego, CA, 92101
Phone: (619) 595-5374
Email: lauren.esposito@sandag.org

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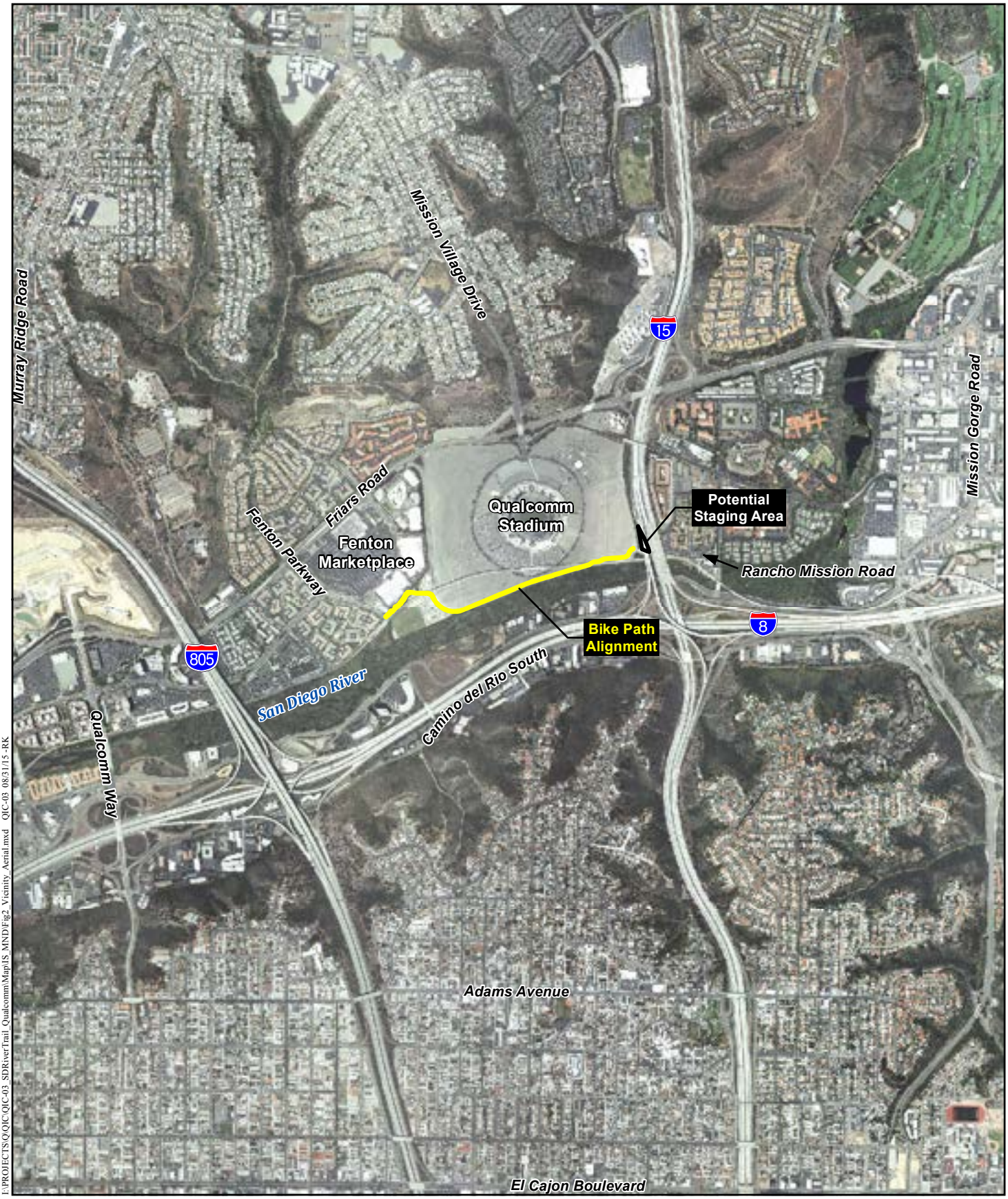
# Regional Location Map

SAN DIEGO RIVER TRAIL - QUALCOMM STADIUM SEGMENT

N 0 8 Miles

Figure 1

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# Project Vicinity Map (Aerial Photograph)

SAN DIEGO RIVER TRAIL - QUALCOMM STADIUM SEGMENT

N 0 2,000 Feet

Figure 2

~~SANDAG shall prepare written responses to comments on environmental issues received during the noticed public review period. Written comments received by SANDAG will be included in the public record.~~

Copies of the Draft MND and supporting materials ~~are~~ were available online at:

http://www.keepsandiegomoving.com/RegionalBikeProjects/SDRiverTrail_GetInvolved.aspx

and at the SANDAG offices at the address provided above. Copies of the Draft MND also ~~are~~ were available at the following public library:

Mission Valley Branch Library
2123 Fenton Parkway
San Diego, CA 92108

## 2.0 Project Description

### Project Background

The proposed project is a 0.8-mile-long segment of the planned regional SDRT. The SDRT is envisioned as a regional bikeway that extends along the San Diego River from the Pacific Ocean to its headwaters near Julian. The continuous trail would provide a transportation facility that extends between the beach communities and eastern suburbs along a scenic river corridor. The SDRT would provide access to employment centers, parks and open space areas, neighborhoods, and shopping centers along the river. The SDRT would also provide access to the San Diego Trolley Green Line that generally parallels the river within the Mission Valley area. In addition to functioning as a transportation facility, the proposed SDRT would also serve as recreational resource for people biking and walking.

The urban portion of the SDRT is a collaborative effort among SANDAG, the San Diego River Conservancy (SDRC), and the cities of San Diego and Santee. Support for development and implementation of the trail also is provided by the San Diego River Park Foundation (SDRPF). SANDAG is leading the effort to implement the portion of the SDRT that is a component of the Regional Bike Network, including the portion from the ocean east through the City of Santee. The implementation of the SDRT would be constructed in segments with the proposed project being one of the first segments. The Qualcomm Stadium Segment is identified as a high priority project in Regional Bike Plan Early Action Program.

Planning for the proposed project began in 2008 when the SDRPF sponsored an alignment study for the Qualcomm Segment. The SDRC prepared a *San Diego River Trail Gaps Analysis* in 2010 that identified the Qualcomm Segment (named Fenton Parkway to I-15 Class I Path) as a high priority project. In 2014, an *Alternative Alignment Study* was prepared that built on the previous planning studies to develop potential alignments of the Qualcomm Segment. A preliminary alignment was presented to key stakeholders, including (among others) SDRC, Qualcomm Stadium Advisory Board, and the Mission Valley Community Planning Group. Based on input provided from the stakeholders, a preferred alignment was developed and

presented in the *Alternative Alignment Study*. The proposed project is generally consistent with, and would implement, the identified preferred alignment.

**Project Characteristics**

The proposed project would consist of Class I bikeway, which is a path that provides a separated right-of-way for the exclusive use of people walking and riding bikes, extending eastward from the terminus of Fenton Parkway along a vegetated slope behind the Fenton Marketplace shopping center and through the southern portion of the Qualcomm Stadium parking lot to connect with Rancho Mission Road. Most of the trail would occur on existing paved surfaces within the stadium parking lot. Some grading would be required along the vegetated slope behind the shopping center in the western extent of the trail. The San Diego River is located adjacent to the trail on the south; however, the trail would not encroach into the river corridor, but would be entirely within developed areas and the slope behind the Fenton Marketplace shopping center.

For the purposes of describing the proposed project, the proposed alignment is comprised of three segments (from west to east), including the West Segment, Stadium Parking Lot Segment, and East Segment. Figure 3 depicts the alignment of the proposed trail.

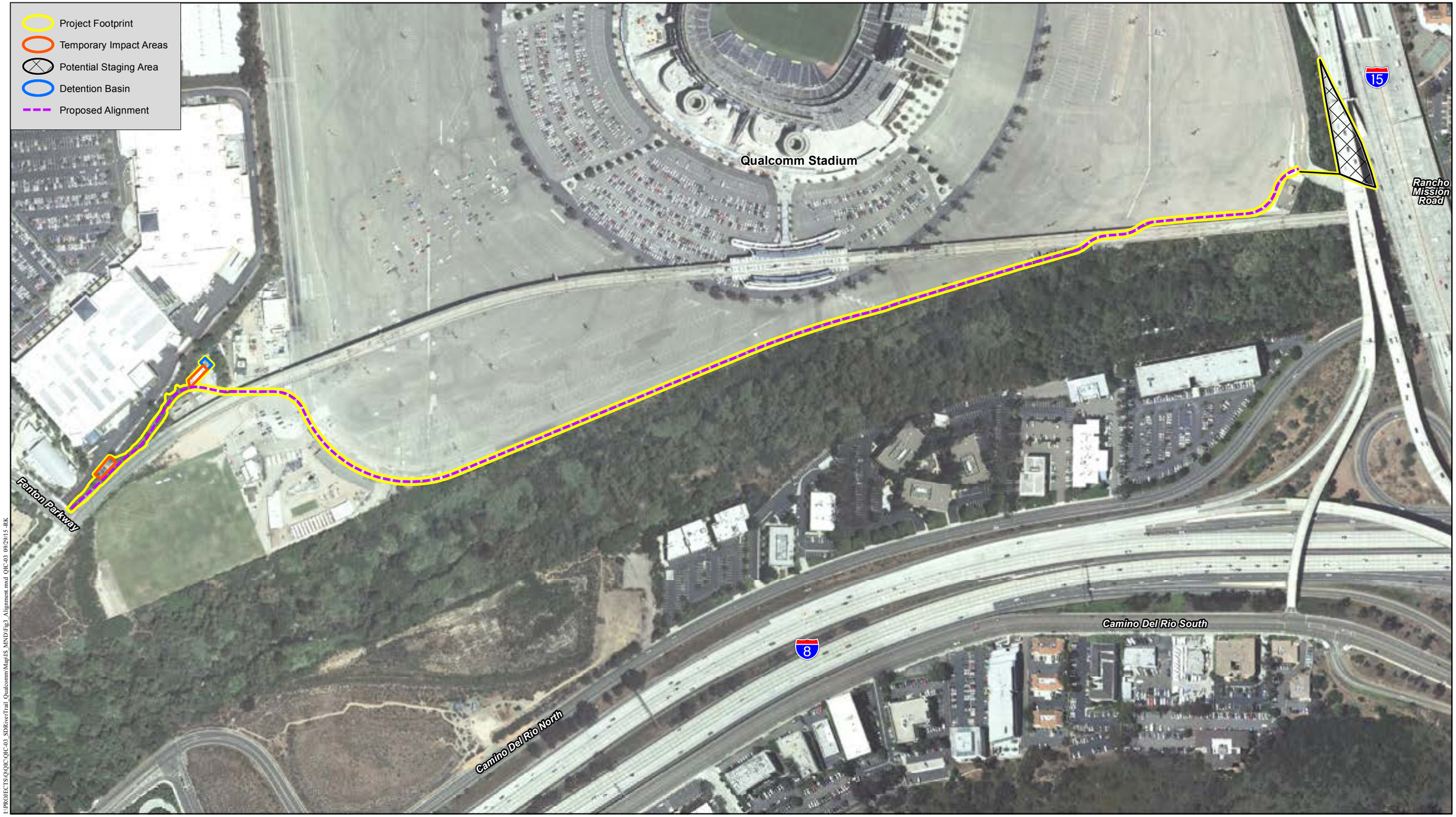
West Segment

The West Segment includes the portion that extends from the western extent of the alignment at the Fenton Parkway terminus and along the slope behind the Fenton Marketplace shopping center down to the Recycling Center within the Qualcomm Stadium parking lot (Station 10+00 to 15+37). The trail would start on the east side of Fenton Parkway from a new curb ramp between the service driveway to the shopping center and the trolley line. This segment includes a trail approximately 10 to 12 feet wide with 2-foot-wide shoulders with an asphalt concrete surface underlain with cement-treated base. A 2.5-foot-wide bioswale would be constructed adjacent, and parallel to, the shoulder along most of the north side of the trail along with a series of inlets and culverts to capture and convey runoff. One retaining wall would be constructed on the north side of the trail along the top of the slope in this segment, adjacent to the service driveway to the shopping center. Temporary impacts would occur due to installation of a retaining wall adjacent to the Fenton Marketplace service drive. In addition, a segmental block retaining wall would be constructed along the south side of the trail at the northwestern corner of the adjacent trolley power station. Proposed cut and fill slopes would be hydroseeded (with non-invasive species) for erosion control. Chain-link and/or tubular railing would be installed along several portions of the trail to serve as fall protection near the retaining walls.

Stadium Parking Lot Segment

The Stadium Parking Lot Segment includes the portion of the trail that extends from the bottom of the slope (where the West Segment ends) at the Qualcomm Stadium Recycling Center and through the stadium parking lot (Station 15+37 to 49+77).

The portion of the trail through the recycling center (Station 15+37 to 18+59) includes a trail approximately ~~10~~ 12 feet wide with 2-foot-wide shoulders on existing asphalt. The trail would extend through the recycling center, under the trolley overcrossing structure, and then continue

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# Proposed Alignment

SAN DIEGO RIVER TRAIL - QUALCOMM SEGMENT

N 0 275 Feet

Figure 3

within the stadium parking lot. Portions of the trail within the recycling center would be separated from existing adjacent operations by a barrier, such as portable concrete barriers (K rails) or chain-link fencing. A culvert and detention basin would also be constructed adjacent to the trail within the recycling center to capture runoff from the bioswale in the West Segment. Temporary impacts would occur due to trenching for installation of drainage pipelines between the bio-swale along the bikeway and the proposed detention basin.

The portion of the trail through the stadium parking lot (Station 18+59 to 49+77) would extend along the southern edge of the parking lot, south of the perimeter road, and would pass under the trolley overcrossing structure in the east end of the stadium parking lot. The trail would be approximately ~~10~~ 12 feet wide with 2-foot-wide shoulders on existing asphalt. A barrier (such as portable concrete barriers or chain-link fencing) would be placed adjacent to the shoulder on the northern side of the trail to separate people on the trail from vehicular traffic along the stadium perimeter road. A concrete dike would be placed adjacent to the southern shoulder in the eastern portion of this segment to direct runoff to existing inlets.

Construction of the trail would remove a total of approximately ~~56~~ 64 parking spaces within the Qualcomm Stadium parking lot. These spaces are not public parking spaces, but are utilized for events at the stadium.

East Segment

The East Segment includes the portion of the trail at the eastern end that connects to Rancho Mission Road (Station 49+77 to 52+66). This segment would include a trail approximately ~~10~~ 12 feet wide with 2-foot-wide shoulders with an asphalt concrete surface underlain with a cement treated base. In order to meet the existing grade of Rancho Mission Road, the trail would be built up from the existing grade; a retaining wall would be constructed along the northern side of the trail within this segment and a segmental block wall would be installed at the northwest corner of the adjacent trolley power station. Access to the adjacent trolley power station would be maintained. A new curb ramp would be provided on the sidewalk on the east side of Rancho Mission Road. Proposed drainage facilities include a concrete swale along the south side of the trail that would collect and convey runoff to the west along the proposed concrete dike in the Stadium Parking Lot Segment. Tubular railing would also be installed along portions of both sides of the trail.

**Lighting**

Lighting may be provided at select locations along the proposed trail to provide safety and security. Lighting types would include pole-based lighting consistent with the design guidelines contained within the *San Diego River Park Master Plan* and in accordance with the City of San Diego's Outdoor Lighting Regulations (Section 142.0740 in the San Diego Municipal Code). The lights would be shielded to minimize illumination into the adjacent San Diego River and would be directed towards the trail and away from the river.

**Signage**

Trail identification, way-finding, and/or interpretive signage would be provided at select locations along the proposed trail. The signs would be consistent with the design guidelines

contained within the *San Diego River Park Master Plan* and the SANDAG Regional Bike Program wayfinding strategy.

**Construction**

Construction of the project is anticipated to take approximately three months to complete. Construction would begin with clearing and grading of the slope at the West Segment followed by installation of retaining walls and drainage facilities. Subsequently, paving, striping, fencing and lighting/signage installation would occur. It is anticipated that construction activities would occur during daytime hours.

Grading would require approximately 1,310 cubic yards (cy) of earth. Approximately 560 cy would be excavated on the slope in the western end and would remain on site to build embankment, and an additional 750 cy is anticipated to be imported to the site for building embankment. Staging would occur either in the stadium parking lot or a nearby parcel located just east of the project site underneath an I-15 overpass. This off-site staging area is a Caltrans yard that has been graded. Refer to Figure 2 for the location of this potential staging location. Construction access would be provided via the stadium parking lot and Rancho Mission Road.

## 3.0 SANDAG Discretionary Actions

SANDAG is the Lead Agency under CEQA and is responsible for reviewing and adopting this IS/MND. SANDAG discretionary actions include:

- Adoption of the Final IS/MND for the proposed project
- Direct staff to proceed with final design and construction

## 4.0 Other Agency Permits and Approvals

California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)

- Encroachment Permit

State Water Resources Control Board/Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB)

- National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) General Construction Activity Permit

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

- Section 7 Consultation

## 5.0 Environmental Factors Potentially Affected

The environmental factors checked below would potentially be affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is a "Less than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated." The other environmental factors would involve impacts that are "Less Than Significant" or "No Impact." Please see the CEQA IS checklist (Section 7.0) for supporting information.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| ☐ Aesthetics | ☐ Agriculture and Forestry Resources | ☐ Air Quality |
| ■ Biological Resources | ■ Cultural Resources | ☐ Geology/Soils |
| ☐ Greenhouse Gas Emissions | ■ Hazards & Hazardous Materials | ☐ Hydrology/Water Quality |
| ☐ Land Use/Planning | ☐ Mineral Resources | ■ Noise |
| ☐ Population/Housing | ☐ Public Services | ■ Recreation |
| ☐ Transportation/Traffic | ☐ Utilities/Service Systems | ■ Mandatory Findings of Significance |

## 6.0 Determination

On the basis of this initial evaluation that follows:

- ☐ The proposed project is exempt from CEQA pursuant to the general exemption (CEQA Guidelines, 15061 (b)(3)), a statutory exemption, and/or a categorical exemption, and that if a categorical exemption, none of the exceptions to the exemption apply. A NOTICE OF EXEMPTION will be prepared.
- ☐ I find that the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
- ■ I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will not be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
- ☐ I find that the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.
- ☐ I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, no further environmental document is required. FINDINGS consistent with this determination will be prepared.

Signature
Rob Rundle, Principal Regional Planner

1-11-16
Date
For: San Diego Association of Governments

## 7.0 CEQA Initial Study Checklist

This IS checklist identified potentially significant effects with respect to cultural resources, biological resources and hazards and hazardous materials for the proposed project. The implementation of mitigation measures BIO-1, BIO-2, BIO-3, CUL-1, HAZ-1, and NOI-1 identified in this IS/MND would ensure potentially significant effects remain below a level of significance. All other environmental impacts would be less than significant or no impact would occur. The following significance thresholds for each environmental issue are from Appendix-G of the CEQA Guidelines.

A. "Potentially Significant Impact" is appropriate if there is substantial evidence that an effect may be significant. If there are one or more "Potentially Significant Impact" entries when the determination is made, an EIR is required.

B. "Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated" applies where the incorporation of mitigation measures has reduced an effect from "Potentially Significant Impact" to a "Less Than Significant Impact." The lead agency must describe the mitigation measures and briefly explain how they reduce the effect to a less than significant level (mitigation measures from earlier analyses may be cross-referenced).

C. "Less Than Significant Impact" applies where the project creates no significant impacts, only less than significant impacts.

D. "No Impact" applies where a project does not create an impact in that category. "No Impact" answers do not require an explanation if they are adequately supported by the information sources cited by the lead agency which show that the impact simply does not apply to projects like the one involved (e.g., the project falls outside a fault rupture zone). A "No Impact" answer should be explained where it is based on project-specific factors as well as general standards (e.g., the project would not expose sensitive receptors to pollutants, based on a project specific screening analysis).

## 7.1 Aesthetics

| Environmental Issue | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Would the proposed 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 that would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area? | □ | □ | ■ | □ |

**a. Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?**

**Less Than Significant Impact.** The *Mission Valley Community Plan* identifies the San Diego River corridor as a prominent visual resource and contains policies to protect views of the river. The *Mission Valley Community Plan* also identifies the stadium as a landmark within the community. The proposed bike path would occur on relatively level topography in an area that is not highly visible from surrounding public vantage points. Views would be provided primarily from motorists on I-15, Rancho Mission Road, and Fenton Parkway, and from transit riders on the trolley Green Line that runs through the stadium parking lot.

The proposed project would traverse a portion of the paved parking lot within Qualcomm Stadium adjacent to the San Diego River. Views of the river corridor and the stadium would not be adversely affected from off-site locations because no large structures or dominant visual elements would be introduced into the visual environment. The project would include surface improvements (trail bed, striping, and drainage swales) and non-obtrusive vertical elements, such as a safety barrier, railing, and light poles. A few retaining walls would be constructed at the west and east ends of the bike path, but these would not be highly visible due to their location on a slope and/or adjacency to other developed features associated with the trolley line and stadium. Qualcomm Stadium is a local landmark and is characterized as a large dominant structure that is highly visible from many areas within the surrounding community. Construction of a bike path adjacent to the stadium would not detract from the prominence of this landmark due to the scale of proposed improvements compared to the stadium. Project elements would be visually consistent with surrounding development and would not obstruct views of designated scenic vistas or landmarks. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

**b. Would the project substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?**

**No Impact.** There are no designated State Scenic Highways located in the project vicinity. Therefore, the project would not substantially damage scenic resources within a state scenic highway and there would be no impact.

**c. Would the project substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?**

**Less Than Significant Impact.** The following visual analysis is generally based on Federal Highway Administration's methodology and guidelines (*Visual Impact Assessment for Highway Projects*, March 1981), which is a widely utilized methodology for evaluating visual effects of transportation projects.

The visual character of the project vicinity encompasses a combination of man-made and natural features, including commercial and residential development, the developed Qualcomm Stadium, trolley facilities (rail corridor and transit stations), roadways and freeways, and the San Diego River corridor. The project site contains developed land comprised of a paved parking lot and recycling center associated with the stadium, as well as a vegetated slope between developments, with mostly flat topography. The adjacent San Diego River contains dense, verdant riparian vegetation along a linear corridor.

The visual quality of the project site and surrounding area is moderately low in terms of visual unity. Existing uses have a varied visual pattern of a large stadium, urban residential development, commercial retail uses, and open space. The San Diego River corridor provides some degree of unity, but the surrounding development on both sides of the river in the immediate project vicinity reduces the unity that the river provides. The intactness of the area currently is moderately low due to the variety of structure types and competing visual elements of the natural and built environment that encroach upon each other. The site setting is memorable given the scale and prominence of Qualcomm Stadium as a local recognizable landmark that dominates views and provides a distinctive focal point. In terms of vividness, the visual quality of the project site is moderately high.

Project elements would not substantially change the existing visual environment. The new elements introduced would be similar in appearance to features in the existing visual environment; they would not be highly memorable or vivid, and would not detract from the vividness of the area. They would be visually similar to the existing developed features and its immediately surrounding area, and would not visually encroach into the adjacent river corridor. Proposed retaining walls generally would not be visible from adjacent roadways. Although the retaining walls may be visible from motorists on I-15, and to transit riders, it would not result in a substantial change in their view since the line elements, textures, and forms would be similar to those in the adjacent viewscape. The visual intactness and unity of the area, therefore, would not be reduced.

Overall, the change to visual character and quality resulting from the proposed project would be minimal. Visual pattern elements (e.g., form, line, color, texture) and character (e.g., dominance and scale) that make up the existing visual environment are similar to the proposed project elements. In summary, the proposed project would not result in a substantial change to the visual character or quality of the project area, and impacts would be less than significant.

**d. Would the project create a new source of substantial light or glare, which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?**

**Less Than Significant Impact.** The proposed project potentially would include the installation of safety lighting along the bike path at select locations. The addition of lighting along the bike path alignment would contribute incrementally to urban light sources, but would not create a new source of substantial light or glare. In the unlikely event that construction activities would occur at night, temporary lighting may be required, but it would be directed onto the construction site and would not illuminate adjacent areas. Proposed lighting (permanent safety lighting or temporary construction lighting) would be directional and/or shielded to minimize spillover onto surrounding land uses. Project elements also would not include highly reflective surfaces or materials that would create adverse glare effects on surrounding roadways or uses. Therefore, impacts to day or nighttime views would be less than significant.

## 7.2 Agriculture and Forestry Resources

| Environmental Issue | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Would the proposed 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 Public Resources Code section 12220(g)), timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526), or timberland zoned Timberland Production (as defined by Government Code section 51104(g))? | □ | □ | □ | ■ |
| 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? | □ | □ | □ | ■ |

**a. Would the project 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?**

**No Impact**. The California Department of Conservation Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program indicates that no Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance is mapped on the project site or in the project vicinity. No impacts related to loss of farmland would occur.

**b. Would the project conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?**

**No Impact.** The project site is not the subject of a Williamson Act contract and is not zoned for agricultural use.

**c. Conflict with existing zoning for or cause rezoning of forest land, timberland, or timberland zoned Timberland Production?**

**No Impact.** The project site is not zoned for forest land or timber land uses.

**d. Result in the loss of forest land or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?**

**No Impact.** No forest land occurs within or adjacent to the project site. No impacts to forest land would occur.

**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?**

**No Impact.** No Farmland or forest land is present in the project vicinity. Therefore, no project-related changes to the existing environment would result in the conversion of Farmland to non-agricultural uses or forest land to non-forest uses.

## 7.3 Air Quality

| Environmental Issue | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Would the proposed 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 that exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)? | □ | □ | ■ | □ |
| d. Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations? | □ | □ | ■ | □ |
| e. Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people? | □ | □ | ■ | □ |

The following discussion is based on an Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Impact Assessment prepared for the project by HELIX Environmental Planning, Inc. (HELIX), which is included as Appendix A of this IS.

**a. Would the project conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?**

**Less Than Significant Impact.** The project site is located within the San Diego Air Basin (SDAB). The San Diego Air Pollution Control District (SDAPCD) manages air quality in the SDAB. Air quality plans applicable to the SDAB include the San Diego Regional Air Quality Strategy (RAQS) and applicable portions of the State Implementation Plan (SIP). The RAQS and SIP outline the SDAPCD's plans and control measures designed to attain state and federal air quality standards. Projects that propose development consistent with the growth anticipated by the applicable general plan(s) are consistent with the RAQS and applicable portions of the SIP. The proposed project is included in *Riding to 2050, the San Diego Regional Bicycle Plan* (SANDAG 2010), which supports implementation of both the Regional Comprehensive Plan (RCP) and Regional Transportation Plan (RTP; 2030 and 2050) and is, therefore, accounted for in the RAQS and SIP. Operation of the project would not generate substantial air quality emissions since the facility would be used for biking and walking. As a result, it would not conflict with or obstruct implementation of applicable air quality plan. Furthermore, the project would help reduce emissions and promote air quality policies by reducing the reliance on the automobile and encouraging alternative modes of transportation. Air quality impacts resulting from construction activities would be short-term and temporary and would not obstruct implementation of the RAQS. Therefore, impacts are considered less than significant.

**b. Would the project violate any air quality standard or contribute substantially to an existing or projected air quality violation?**

**Less Than Significant Impact.** Under the federal Clean Air Act of 1970 and its subsequent amendments, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) established the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for criteria pollutants, including carbon monoxide (CO), sulfur dioxide ($SO_2$), nitrogen dioxide ($NO_2$), ozone ($O_3$), particulate matter of less than 10 microns in size ($PM_{10}$), particulate matter of less than 2.5 microns in size ($PM_{2.5}$), and lead (Pb). Ozone is not emitted directly, but is formed from a complex set of reactions involving ozone precursors, such as nitrogen oxides ($NO_X$) and reactive organic gases (ROG). The California Air Resources Board (CARB) subsequently established more stringent California Ambient Air Quality Standards (CAAQS) for these pollutants, as well as for sulfates, hydrogen sulfide, vinyl chloride, and visibility-reducing particles. Areas that do not meet the NAAQS or CAAQS for a particular pollutant are considered to be "non-attainment areas" for that pollutant. On April 30, 2012, the SDAB was classified as a marginal non-attainment area for the 8-hour NAAQS for ozone. The SDAB is an attainment area for the NAAQS for all other criteria pollutants. The SDAB currently falls under a national "maintenance plan" for CO, following a 1998 redesignation as a CO attainment area. The SDAB is currently classified as a non-attainment area under the CAAQS for ozone (serious nonattainment), $PM_{10}$, and $PM_{2.5}$.

**Construction Emissions**

Construction activities associated with the project would generate short-term emissions of ROG, $NO_X$, CO, $PM_{10}$, and $PM_{2.5}$. Emissions would originate from off-street diesel equipment exhaust, employee and material delivery vehicle exhaust, re-entrained paved road dust, fugitive dust from land clearing, and off-gassing from paving activities. The proposed project would comply with applicable SDAPCD emissions and fugitive dust measures, and would implement best management practices (BMPs) to reduce the emission of criteria pollutants during construction. These BMPs would include routine dust control and use of construction equipment fitted with appropriate air emission controls. Standard fugitive dust control measures in compliance with local dust control requirements would include regular watering of the active construction areas and unpaved surfaces and/or use of chemical control. Project construction emissions are anticipated to be minimal and would be temporary and localized within the immediate project vicinity.

An estimate of the maximum daily construction emissions associated with construction of the project is presented in Table 1. Project construction emissions were compared to the SDAPCD's Air Quality Impact Analysis (AQIA) Trigger Levels as contained within SDAPCD Regulation II, Rule 20.2. As shown in Table 1, criteria pollutant emissions associated with project construction would be below the applicable SDAPCD's AQIA Trigger Levels. Therefore, project construction emissions of criteria pollutants would not violate applicable air quality standards or substantially contribute to an existing or projected air quality violation, and impacts would be less than significant.

**Table 1**
**ESTIMATED MAXIMUM DAILY CONSTRUCTION EMISSIONS**

| Construction Activity | Pollutant Emissions (pounds per day) | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **ROG** | **$NO_X$** | **CO** | **$PM_{10}$** | **$PM_{2.5}$** |
| Grubbing/Land Clearing | 1.2 | 14.8 | 8.2 | 6.9 | 1.9 |
| Grading/Excavation | 2.7 | 27.9 | 16.5 | 7.6 | 2.5 |
| Drainage/Utilities/ Sub-Grade/Retaining Walls | 4.5 | 38.5 | 21.7 | 8.7 | 3.5 |
| Paving/K-Rail Placement | 2.4 | 23.1 | 13.6 | 1.3 | 1.2 |
| Maximum Daily Emissions | 4.5 | 38.5 | 21.7 | 8.7 | 3.5 |
| SDAPCD Thresholds | 137 | 250 | 550 | 100 | 55 |
| ***Significant Impact?*** | ***No*** | ***No*** | ***No*** | ***No*** | ***No*** |

Source: Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Impact Assessment for the San Diego River Trail Qualcomm Stadium Segment (HELIX 2015a).

**Operational Emissions**

With the exception of the infrequent operation of maintenance vehicles along the bikeway, the proposed bicycle facility would not be used by motorized vehicles. Thus, minimal operational emissions would be expected. As a result, operation of the proposed facility would not violate applicable air quality standards or substantially contribute to an existing or projected air quality violation. Impacts from operational emissions would, therefore, be less than significant.

**c. Would the project 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)?**

**Less Than Significant Impact.** The SDAB is currently classified as non-attainment for certain federal- and state-designated criteria pollutants including ozone, $PM_{10}$, and $PM_{2.5}$. As discussed above, emissions from project-related construction activities would be minimal, short-term, and localized. Project operation is anticipated to lower cumulative emissions by encouraging alternative modes of transportation such as walking and biking. The project would therefore not result in a cumulatively considerable net increase in criteria pollutants, and impacts are considered less than significant.

**d. Would the project expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?**

**Less Than Significant Impact.** Sensitive receptors are facilities and structures where people live or spend considerable amounts of time, including hospitals, retirement homes, residences, schools, and childcare centers. Project construction would be located near some residences and schools. The nearest public school (Juarez Elementary School) is located approximately 0.75 mile to the north from the nearest proposed construction area. A private school, the Nazareth School at the Mission San Diego, is located approximately 0.5 mile to the northeast. Other public schools are located more than one mile from the project site. The nearest residences include the Del Rio apartment homes located approximately 100 feet west of the project site. Several multi-family residential complexes are located on both sides of Friars Road and east of I-805 in the general vicinity of the project site. Project construction activities would be minimal, and the project would comply with all SDAPCD emissions and fugitive dust standards. Additionally, as previously discussed, with the exception of the infrequent operation of maintenance vehicles along the bikeway, operation of the project would not generate direct air quality emissions, and would, therefore, not impact sensitive receptors. Consequently, impacts to sensitive receptors would be less than significant.

**e. Would the project create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?**

**Less Than Significant Impact.** Project construction (specifically, the use of diesel construction equipment and vehicles) could generate odors associated with fuel combustion. However, these odors would dissipate into the atmosphere upon release, and would only temporarily remain in proximity to the construction equipment and vehicles. Potential odors would be temporary and localized within the immediate project vicinity and would not affect a substantial number of people. In addition, operation of the project would not generate substantial odors, as fuel combustion would only occur through equipment used for occasional maintenance. Therefore, the potential for adverse odor impacts associated with the proposed project would be less than significant.

## 7.4 Biological Resources

| Environmental Issue | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Would the proposed 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, regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. 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? | □ | ■ | □ | □ |

The following discussion is based on a Biological Resources Letter Report prepared for the project by HELIX, which is included as Appendix B of this IS.

**a. Would the project 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?**

**Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated.** A search of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDB), and California Native Plant Society (CNPS) species records reported in the project vicinity (within five miles) did not result in any point records for sensitive plant species on or immediately adjacent to the project impact limits. No sensitive plants were observed during general biological surveys conducted within the Biological Study Area (BSA). The impact area is characterized by non-native vegetation, and disturbed and developed areas. No sensitive plant species have a high potential to occur within the project impact limits due to lack of suitable habitat, inappropriate soil conditions, inappropriate elevations, existing disturbances, and prevalence of non-native plant species.

A search of the USFWS and CNDDB species records reported in the project vicinity (within 5 miles) did not result in any point records for sensitive animal species on or immediately adjacent to the project site. Special-status animal species were not observed during the general biological resources surveys conducted within the BSA. The federally- and state-endangered least Bell's vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*) has the potential to occur within the BSA in habitat located in the immediate vicinity (i.e., at locations within 500 feet) but outside the proposed project's impact limits within southern riparian forest habitat associated with the San Diego River located south of the proposed bike path. Surveys for least Bell's vireo were previously conducted along the San Diego River for the United States Geological Survey (USGS) ~~in~~ between 2008 and 2012, and for the City of San Diego Public Utilities Department in 2013. ~~Both survey results were negative;~~ The least Bell's vireo was not observed ~~along~~ within the adjacent San Diego River corridor or within the proposed project impact boundary during the USGS 2008 or the 2013 Public Utilities Department surveys. However, the least Bell's vireo was observed during 2009, 2010, 2011, and 2012 USGS surveys within the adjacent river corridor at some locations within 500 feet of the project site, but outside of the proposed project's impact limits. Given the absence of special status species and appropriate habitat within the project impact footprint, no direct impacts to special status species would occur.

Potential indirect effects on least Bell's vireo from project construction could include those resulting from temporary increases in noise during the species' breeding season. Adverse indirect effects could occur if construction noise exceeds 60 decibels (dBA) within suitable habitat during the breeding season of March 15 to September 15. In addition, lighting may be installed along the proposed bike path to provide security, which could potentially result in indirect adverse effects on the least Bell's vireo should this species move into adjacent habitat. Similarly, temporary lighting potentially could be utilized in the unlikely event that construction activities would occur at night, which could also adversely affect this sensitive species should it move into the adjacent habitat. Implementation of mitigation measures BIO-1 and BIO-2 would reduce potential indirect impacts to least Bell's vireos to below a level of significance.

**BIO-1** If construction occurs between March 15 and September 15, the project applicant shall retain a qualified biologist to conduct pre-construction surveys to determine the presence or absence of least Bell's vireo within adjacent habitat. The pre-construction surveys would consist of 3 surveys spaced one week apart, with the final survey conducted within 10 calendar days prior to the start of construction, and the results must be submitted to SANDAG for review and approval prior to initiating any construction activities. If least Bell's vireo are detected within or adjacent to the construction zone, a letter report or mitigation plan, as deemed appropriate by SANDAG, shall be prepared and include proposed measures to be implemented during construction to ensure that disturbance of breeding activities is avoided. The report or mitigation plan shall be submitted to SANDAG for review and approval.

**BIO-2** Project lighting, including permanent safety lighting or temporary lighting used in the event of nighttime construction shall be selectively placed, shielded, and directed away from the habitat along the San Diego River.

**b. Would the project have a substantial adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, and regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?**

**No Impact.** The BSA is characterized by southern riparian woodland, non-native vegetation, disturbed habitat, and urban/developed land. Of these, only southern riparian woodland is considered a sensitive vegetation community. No impacts, however, would occur to this sensitive habitat as a result of the project. As identified in Table 2, project impacts (temporary and permanent) would occur to non-native vegetation, disturbed habitat, and urban/developed land. These habitats are not considered sensitive. Therefore, no impacts to sensitive natural communities would occur.

**Table 2**
**VEGETATION COMMUNITIES WITHIN THE BSA AND PROJECT IMPACTS**

| Vegetation Community | BSA (acres) | Impacts (acres) | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | Temporary | Permanent |
| **Wetland Habitats** | | | |
| Southern Riparian Woodland (SRW) | 32.2 | 0 | 0 |
| **Upland Habitats** | | | |
| Non-Native Vegetation (NNV) | 1.4 | 0 | 0.3 |
| Disturbed Habitat | 0.5 | 0 | 0.5 |
| Urban/Developed | 20.8 | 0.1 | 1.6 |
| **TOTAL** | **54.9** | **0.1** | **2.4** |

Source: Biological Resources Letter Report for the San Diego River Trail Qualcomm Stadium Segment Project (HELIX 2015b).

**c. Would the project 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?**

**No Impact.** Southern riparian woodland has potential to be classified as jurisdictional habitat under USACE and CDFW. In addition to southern riparian woodland mapped along the San Diego River, an additional potential jurisdictional habitat was mapped north of the proposed trail in the western portion of the BSA, but outside the impact footprint of the proposed trail. This area is not directly connected to the San Diego River, and consists mainly of cottonwood trees leading downhill to a patch of willow trees. There are additional cottonwood tree individuals among the non-native vegetation within the BSA, but they are not connected to any drainage and would not constitute a jurisdictional habitat under USACE or CDFW. As identified in 7.4.b above, the project would not impact southern riparian woodland and, therefore, no impacts to wetlands would occur.

**d. Would the project 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?**

**Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated.** The project site is located adjacent to the San Diego River, which is a wildlife corridor and part of the City of San Diego's Multi-Habitat Planning Area (MHPA) biological preserve. The MHPA is intended to link all core biological areas into a regional open space. The project, however, would not interfere with the function of this wildlife corridor because no direct impacts would occur within the river corridor and the project would not encroach into the MHPA. The proposed bike path would be constructed on the north side of the river within developed areas. In addition, an existing chain link fence occurs along the northern side of the river, which would remain upon project implementation such that direct access into the river corridor from the bike path would be deterred.

The adjacent wildlife corridor, as well as the vegetated slope in the western portion of the project site (near the proposed detention basin), contains trees that could provide suitable nesting habitat for raptors and/or a variety of common (non-sensitive) bird species that occur in urban environments. Potential indirect effects to the function of the adjacent river as a wildlife corridor could potentially occur during construction activities as a result of temporary increases in noise during the general bird breeding season (January 15 to September 15). Implementation of mitigation measure BIO-3 would reduce indirect impacts to below a level of significance:

**BIO-3** If construction occurs between January 15 and September 15, the project applicant shall retain a qualified biologist to conduct a pre-construction survey to determine the presence or absence of nesting birds within the project site or adjacent habitat. The pre-construction survey must be conducted within 10 calendar days prior to the start of construction, and the results must be submitted to SANDAG for review and approval prior to initiating any construction activities. If nesting birds are detected within or adjacent to the construction zone, a letter report or mitigation plan, as deemed appropriate by SANDAG, shall be prepared and include proposed measures to be implemented during construction to ensure that disturbance of

breeding activities is avoided. The report or mitigation plan shall be submitted to SANDAG for review and approval.

**e. Would the project conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?**

**No Impact.** The project would not conflict with any local policies/ordinances protecting biological resources. The City of San Diego has adopted Habitat Conservation Plans as part of the Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP); the project would not conflict with the conservation goals of these plans. Thus, no impacts would occur.

**f. Would the project conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Community Conservation Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?**

**Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated.** The project alignment is located outside the MHPA; however, it is adjacent to the MHPA, south of the proposed project site along the San Diego River. As such, MSCP land use adjacency guidelines for water quality, noise, invasive species, and lighting are applicable due to the presence of sensitive vegetation within the BSA.

Decreased water quality could occur during construction (as discussed in 7.9.a). Conformance with regulatory requirements, such as the NPDES General Permit For Storm Water Discharges Associated with Construction and Land Disturbance Activities (Construction General Permit; Order No. 2009-0009-DWQ as amended by 2010-0014-DWQ) and implementation of a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), would ensure that water quality violations would not occur during construction. Long-term water quality impacts associated with pollutants in storm water discharge would be addressed through compliance with the NPDES Regional Municipal Storm Water Permit.

Noise generated during construction could affect nesting birds if construction occurs during the avian breeding season. Implementation of mitigation measures BIO-1 and BIO-3 would avoid indirect impacts to nesting birds due to construction noise. No adverse operational noise effects would occur because the proposed trail would accommodate non-motorized transportation modes that do not generate nuisance noise levels.

Non-native plant species could colonize previously undisturbed areas as a result of vegetation removal from project activities. Numerous non-native plant species already occur in the BSA and no further invasion resulting from the project is anticipated because (1) the bikeway would occur mostly within developed areas with impervious cover; (2) no landscaping is proposed; and (3) hydroseeded slopes within the western portion of the alignment (for erosion control) would not include invasive species in the seed mix.

Night lighting may interfere with wildlife movement or provide predators an unnatural advantage over their prey. Implementation of mitigation measure BIO-2 would minimize indirect impacts to nesting birds due to project lighting.

While SANDAG is not a signatory party to the MSCP, for the reasons summarized above, the project would conform to MHPA adjacency guidelines and would not conflict with adopted habitat conservation plans with implementation of identified mitigation.

## 7.5 Cultural Resources

| Environmental Issue | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Would the proposed project: | | | | |
| a. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in Section 15064.5? | □ | □ | □ | ■ |
| b. Cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to Section 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? | □ | □ | ■ | □ |

The following discussion is based on a Cultural Resources Study prepared for the project by HELIX, which is included as Appendix C of this IS.

**a. Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource as defined in CEQA Guidelines §15064.5?**

**No Impact.** To determine the potential presence of historical resources in the project area, a records and literature search for archaeological and historical records was conducted at the South Coastal Information Center (SCIC) at San Diego State University on July 8, 2015. The search area was defined as a one-mile radius around the project area. In addition, the state Office of Historic Preservation (OHP) historic properties directory was reviewed.

Nine previously identified historical resources have been recorded within the search area, including the Mission San Diego de Alcala building and eight other historic properties. The Mission is located approximately 0.5 mile to the northeast and the other historic properties are located in the hills north and south of the project site. None of these sites are located within or adjacent to the impact footprint. No historical resources were identified within the project area of potential effects (APE) during a field survey conducted on July 13, 2015. No impacts would occur to previously identified historical resources as a result of project implementation.

**b. Would the project cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5?**

**Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated.** The archaeological records search identified seven previously recorded archaeological resources within a one-mile radius, but none are located within the project area (in addition to the nine historical resources discussed in 7.5.a above). Table 3 describes these previously recorded archaeological resources. Because these sites are located at least 0.5 mile away, project implementation would not impact previously recorded sites. In addition, no resources were identified within the APE during the field survey conducted on July 13, 2015.

| Table 3<br>PREVIOUSLY RECORDED RESOURCES WITHIN ONE MILE | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Resource Number (CA-SDI-#)** | **Resource Number (P-37-#)** | **Description** |
| 35 | 000035 | Prehistoric village of *Nipaguay*/Protohistoric and historic Mission San Diego de Alcalá: Multicomponent site with Spanish, Mexican, and American period historic refuse deposits including glass, ceramics, beads, marbles, nails, and modern trash; prehistoric lithics, shells, and Tizon brown ware ceramics; features include the original Mission |
| 202 | 000202 | None noted |
| 239 | 000239 | Prehistoric artifact scatter including pottery, obsidian and chert flakes, bone, and shell |
| 11056 | 011056 | Prehistoric artifact and shell scatter in midden soil, artifacts include lithics |
| -- | 014959 | Prehistoric isolated flake |
| -- | 024379 | Historic refuse deposit including bottles, jars, tableware, and bones dating to the 1940s |
| -- | 024380 | Historic refuse deposit including mostly bone and metal dating to the 1940s-1950s |

Source: San Diego River Trail Qualcomm Stadium Segment Project - Cultural Resources Study (HELIX 2015c).

The vast majority of the proposed trail would be constructed on existing pavement and the remainder would be on manufactured slopes and areas that have been subject to extensive impacts from the development of stadium uses, the library, trolley, and commercial uses at Fenton Marketplace. If fencing is installed within the parking lot, minimal ground disturbance would be required. Although no impacts to cultural resources are anticipated due to the disturbed and developed nature of the project site, there is a possibility that construction grading could expose, encounter, or accidentally discover cultural resources because (1) portions of the project site were not accessible as permission to enter private property was not granted; (2) ground visibility was poor in portions of the project site that are heavily vegetated (along the slope in the western portion of the site); (3) small areas within the paved parking lot could potentially be disturbed if fencing is installed as a safety barrier; and (4) the project area is located within lands that have traditionally been inhabited by the Kumeyaay people. Potential impacts of the project to undetected subsurface resources would be reduced to a less than significant level through implementation of mitigation measure CUL-1.

**CUL-1** Prior to construction, contractors will receive an archaeological orientation from a professional archaeologist regarding the types of resources that could be uncovered during construction activities and the identification of these resources. The orientation also will cover procedures to follow in the case of any archaeological discovery.

**c. Would the project directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?**

**Less Than Significant Impact.** The project area is underlain by fill materials and Quatenary alluvium. Fill materials generally extend to depths between 10 and 20 feet below the surface along the entire trail alignment, and alluvium occurs below the fill. Both of these geologic units exhibit low paleontological resource sensitivity. Therefore, the proposed project would not directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature and impacts would be less than significant.

**d. Would the project disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?**

**Less Than Significant Impact.** The Native American Heritage Commission conducted a Sacred Lands File search for the project area, and no known sacred lands were identified within the project area. Native American tribal representatives were contacted by SANDAG regarding cultural resource heritage sites within the project area and to

inquire interest in initiating a Native American consultation. No responses for consultation were received. Due to the limited extent of ground disturbing activities associated with project construction, there is a very low potential for encountering human remains. Impacts associated with unanticipated discovery of human remains would be less than significant.

## 7.6 Geology and Soils

| Environmental Issue | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Would the proposed 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? | □ | □ | ■ | □ |
| b. Result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil? | □ | □ | ■ | □ |
| c. Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse? | □ | □ | ■ | □ |
| d. Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property? | □ | □ | ■ | □ |
| e. Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water? | □ | □ | □ | ■ |

The following discussion is based on a Geotechnical Desktop Study prepared for the project by Allied Geotechnical Engineers, Inc., which is included as Appendix D of this IS.

**a. Would the project 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.)**

**Less Than Significant Impact.** No active faults traverse the project area. The nearest mapped potentially active fault[1] to the project alignment is the La Nacion fault zone. The closest major active fault to the project site is the Rose Canyon fault zone (RCFZ), approximately four miles west of the project site. Several fault strands within the RCFZ have been classified as active faults, and are included in Alquist-Priolo Special Studies Zones. Additional mapped active faults in the region include the Coronado Bank, Vallecitos-San Miguel, and Elsinore fault zones.

The project would comply with current seismic design standards in accordance with the California Building Code, where applicable, to avoid adverse effects related to fault rupture. In addition, the project is not expected to result in the congregation of large numbers of people at any one time. The combination of project measures and seismic design criteria would reduce the seismic safety risk. Thus, bicyclists and pedestrians using the bikeway would not be significantly impacted by a potential seismic event as a result of project features and impacts would be less than significant.

**(ii) Strong seismic ground shaking?**

**Less Than Significant Impact.** The project site is located in a seismically active region, and is likely to be subjected to moderate to severe seismic ground shaking in response to a major earthquake occurring on the RCFZ or another major regional active fault. An earthquake along any of these known active fault zones could result in severe ground shaking, and consequently cause injury and/or property damage in the project vicinity. However, the proposed project would be designed to comply with current seismic design standards in accordance with the California Building Code, where applicable, to avoid adverse effects related to strong seismic ground shaking. In addition, the bike path is less susceptible to the hazards of strong seismic ground shaking than would other structures such as a building. For this reason, potential impacts associated with strong seismic ground shaking would be less than significant.

**(iii) Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?**

**Less Than Significant Impact.** Seismic-induced soil liquefaction is a phenomenon during which loose, saturated granular materials undergo matrix rearrangement, develop high pore water pressure, and lose shear strength due to cyclic ground vibrations induced by earthquakes. Manifestations of soil liquefaction can include loss of bearing capacity below foundations, surface settlements and tilting in level ground, and instabilities in areas of sloping ground. Soil liquefaction can also result in increased lateral and uplift pressures on buried structures. Underlying geologic formations include fill materials and alluvial deposits. Fill materials have low to moderate liquefaction potential whereas alluvial deposits have low to high potential for liquefaction. However, as stated above, the project would be designed in accordance with current seismic design standards in accordance with the California Building Code to avoid adverse effects related to seismic-related ground failure such as liquefaction. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

**(iv) Landslides?**

**Less than Significant Impact.** A review of published geologic maps indicates that the project site is not located on or below any known ancient landslides. The State of California Seismic Hazard Zones San Diego Seismic Safety Study Geologic Hazards and Faults map indicates the project site is not located in an area that is susceptible to landslide hazards. In addition, the project site occurs within a developed area that is mostly characterized by flat

[1] Potentially active means that it has documented evidence of movement within Pleistocene time (the last 1.5 to 2 million years) but no movement in Holocene time.

topography within Mission Valley. Thus, impacts from exposure to people and structures from landslides would be less than significant.

**b. Would the project result in substantial soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?**

**Less Than Significant Impact.** Erosion potential within the project site is considered low due to the generally level topography and the proposed drainage system. During construction, substantial soil erosion would be avoided through conformance with a NPDES Construction General Permit. This permit would include the preparation and implementation of a SWPPP, which would incorporate BMPs to prevent soil erosion and the loss of topsoil. During operation, substantial soil erosion would be avoided through project design features such as retaining walls, paving, and drainage systems designed by a licensed civil engineer incorporated into the bikeway. Therefore, impacts related to erosion would be less than significant.

**c. Would the project 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?**

**Less Than Significant Impact.** As discussed in 7.6.a.iii and 7.6.a.iv, the project site is not located within an area prone to landslides, but is located within an area that could be potentially susceptible to liquefaction. However, the proposed project does not include the construction of habitable structures, and construction of the proposed bikeway would incorporate standard engineering procedures. Therefore, potential impacts related to unstable geologic units or soils would be less than significant.

**d. Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating substantial risks to life or property?**

**Less Than Significant Impact**. Expansive soils are generally high in clays or silts that shrink or swell with variation in moisture content. Underlying soils in the project area have a low expansion potential. In addition, the project would incorporate standard engineering techniques in accordance with the California Building Code to avoid adverse effects of expansive soils. Therefore, impacts related to expansive soils would be less than significant.

**e. Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?**

**No Impact.** No wastewater disposal would be required by the project. No associated impacts would occur.

## 7.7 Greenhouse Gas Emissions

| Environmental Issue | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Would the proposed project: | | | | |
| a. Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment? | □ | □ | ■ | □ |
| b. Conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases? | □ | □ | □ | ■ |

The following discussion is based on an Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Impact Assessment prepared for the project by HELIX, which is included as Appendix A of this IS.

**a. Would the project generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?**

**Less Than Significant Impact.** GHG emissions associated with the project include those from construction and operations, as discussed below.

**Construction**

Construction emissions would be associated with off-street diesel equipment exhaust, and from worker and truck trips to and from the project site. The primary emissions would be $CO_2$ from gasoline and diesel combustion, with more limited vehicle tailpipe emissions of nitrous oxides and methane. Guidance from the County recommends amortizing construction emissions to account for the annual contribution of GHG emissions over a project's lifetime. As shown in Table 4, amortized construction emissions (over 50 years) would be substantially below the annual 900 MT of $CO_2$ equivalents screening level threshold. Thus, the construction of the proposed project would not generate GHG emissions that would have a significant direct or indirect impact on the environment.

**Table 4**
**CONSTRUCTION GHG EMISSIONS (MT/yr)**

| Construction Activity | $CO_2e$ |
|---|---|
| Grubbing/Land Clearing | 4 |
| Grading/Excavation | 35 |
| Drainage/Utilities/Sub-Grade/Retaining Walls | 42 |
| Paving/K-Rail Placement | 6 |
| **TOTAL** | **87** |
| Amortized Construction Emissions | 2 |
| **County of San Diego Threshold** | **900** |
| ***Significant Impact?*** | ***No*** |

Source: Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions Impact Assessment for the San Diego River Trail Qualcomm Stadium Segment Project (HELIX 2015a).

**Operations**

The project could result in operational emissions associated with production of energy consumed by the lighting that may be installed along the bikeway and the operation of maintenance vehicles. These emissions, however, would be very minor as the lighting for this project (should it be installed) would be minimal and maintenance activities would be infrequent. Additionally, the project would encourage the use of bicycles and walking as alternatives to driving, and is therefore anticipated to result in a net decrease in GHG emissions over the project's lifetime. As described in *San Diego Forward: The Regional Plan*, bicycle improvements are part of an adopted regional strategy to achieve reductions in GHG emissions from on-street transportation sources by decreasing the number of vehicle trips and vehicle miles traveled. GHG reduction strategies, such as the proposed project, would achieve concomitant reductions in air pollutant emissions from on-street transportation sources. Therefore, implementation of the proposed project would represent a positive impact on long-term GHG emissions, and impacts would be less than significant.

**b. Would the project conflict with an applicable plan, policy or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?**

**No Impact.** As discussed above in 7.7.a, the proposed project would not constitute a significant source of GHG emissions and would aid in the reduction of regional GHG emissions through encouraging the use of alternative transportation. As such, the project would be consistent with SANDAG's *Climate Action Strategy*, *Regional Energy Strategy*, and *Sustainable Region Program Action Plan*, all of which contain goals associated with the reduction of transportation-related GHG emissions through reducing regional vehicle miles traveled and automobile reliance, as well as promoting walking and biking as viable transportation alternatives. Additionally, the project would be consistent with the RTP, which is the regional transportation planning document that includes future transportation

projects (the proposed project included) and addresses how the region will reduce GHG emissions to state-mandated levels over time. Implementation of the project would therefore not conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of GHGs. No associated impacts would occur.

## 7.8 Hazards and Hazardous Materials

| Environmental Issue | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Would the proposed 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? | □ | □ | ■ | □ |

The following discussion is based on a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA) completed for the project by Allied Geotechnical Engineers, Inc., which is included as Appendix E of this IS.

**a. Would the project create a significant hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?**

**Less Than Significant Impact.** During the project construction period, hazardous substances used to maintain and operate construction equipment, such as fuel and lubricants, would be present. The transport, use, and disposal of

such hazardous materials would be conducted in accordance with applicable state and federal laws. Additionally, implementation of a SWPPP and standard construction BMPs would prevent the use of these materials from causing a significant hazard to the public or environment. Operation of the bicycle facility, including infrequent operation of maintenance vehicles, would not involve acutely hazardous substances or materials. Thus, the proposed project would not result in a significant public health risk related to the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials.

**b. Would the project 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?**

**Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated.** Past unauthorized releases of hydrocarbons at a fuel storage facility northeast of Qualcomm Stadium have resulted in contamination of soil and groundwater beneath the project site. Construction of proposed retaining walls at the eastern end of the project site would require removal of existing asphalt concrete pavement and disturbance of underlying soils within the stadium parking lot. Additionally, a barrier would be installed within the stadium parking lot to separate people on the trail from vehicular traffic along the stadium perimeter road. Depending on the type of barrier, ground disturbance within the parking lot could occur during installation of the barrier. As a result, there is the potential to encounter contaminated soil and/or groundwater during construction activities, which is considered a potentially significant impact. Implementation of mitigation measure HAZ-1 would reduce impacts to less than significant.

**HAZ-1** Prior to ground disturbance within the Qualcomm Stadium parking lot, the project proponent or construction contractor shall retain a qualified hazardous materials professional to conduct a subsurface soil and groundwater investigation within the Qualcomm Stadium parking lot to assess the presence/absence of contaminated soil and groundwater. If the subsurface soil and groundwater investigation identifies underlying contaminants that potentially would be encountered during project construction activities and the extent of encountered contaminants are at concentrations above applicable California Human Health Screening Levels, the project proponent or construction contractor shall (1) prepare a soil, groundwater, and vapor management plan that shall be implemented during ground disturbing activities within the Qualcomm Stadium parking lot and (2) complete any necessary remediation identified by the subsurface soil and groundwater investigation prior to commencement of construction ground disturbing activities within the Qualcomm Stadium parking lot.

Long-term operation of the proposed bicycle facility would not involve the use or transport of hazardous materials. Infrequent operation of maintenance vehicles may involve the use of cleaning agents or other chemicals typically used for maintenance, but the types of such agents transported in maintenance vehicles would not be considered acutely hazardous substances. Thus, during operation the project would not 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. Would the project emit hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?**

**No Impact.** The nearest public school to the project site, Juarez Elementary School, is located approximately 0.75 mile to the north and a private school, Nazareth School at the Mission San Diego, is located approximately 0.5 mile to the northeast. Other schools are located over one mile from the project site. Therefore, the project would not emit or handle hazardous emissions or materials within 0.25 mile of an existing school, and no impacts would occur.

**d. Would the project 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?**

**Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated.** Based on a review of federal, state, and local regulatory agency databases, a total of 20 sites/cases of Historical and Controlled Recognized Environmental Conditions (RECs) were identified within the project vicinity that are considered to pose a minimal health and safety risk to the

project site. Only one REC site/case within the project vicinity was identified as having the potential to pose a potentially significant health and safety risk to the project site. This site consists of a fuel storage facility northeast of Qualcomm Stadium and adjacent to I-15. As discussed in 7.8.b, unauthorized releases of hydrocarbons occurred at this facility, which resulted in contamination of soil and groundwater beneath the project site. As a result, contaminated soil and/or groundwater could potentially be encountered during ground disturbing activities within the Qualcomm Stadium parking lot, which is considered a potentially significant impact. Implementation of mitigation measure HAZ-1 (identified in 7.8.b) would reduce impacts to below a level of significance.

**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?**

**No Impact.** The *Montgomery Field Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan* identifies the project site as being located within the Airport Influence Area (AIA) of Montgomery Field, which is located approximately 2.5 miles to the northwest. The Montgomery Field AIA is divided into Review Area 1 and Review Area 2. Review Area 1 encompasses locations where noise and safety concerns may necessitate limitations on the types of land use actions. Review Area 2 encompasses locations beyond Review Area 1, but within airspace protection and overflight notification areas. Limits on the heights of structures, particularly in areas of high terrain, are the only restrictions on land uses within Review Area 2. The project site is located within Review Area 2, but not within any safety zones designated in the *Montgomery Field Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan*. No tall structures or other vertical elements are proposed that would pose a safety hazard associated with airport operations to people using the bike path. Proposed lighting would not be at a height that would create potential aircraft safety hazards. Therefore, no safety hazards impacts would occur.

**f. For a project located within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?**

**No Impact.** The proposed project is not located within the vicinity of a private airstrip. Thus, the project would not pose a safety hazard to people using the bikeway.

**g. Would the project impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?**

**No Impact.** The proposed project would not impair or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response or evacuation plan. Primary access to all major roads and Qualcomm Stadium would be maintained during construction and operation of the proposed project. Therefore, no associated impacts would occur.

**h. Would the project 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?**

**Less Than Significant Impact.** The project site is located in an urbanized area, and is surrounded by developed land, with the exception of the San Diego River to the immediate south. A portion of the proposed alignment and the river corridor is located within an area designated as a Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zone by the City of San Diego Fire-Rescue Department. However, the project does not propose any habitable structures or other combustible components that would increase the potential for wildfires within the San Diego River corridor. In addition, the project is not expected to result in the congregation of large numbers of people at any one time. Impacts related to the exposure of people or structures to wildfires would be less than significant.

## 7.9 Hydrology and Water Quality

| Environmental Issue | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Would the proposed 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., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)? | □ | □ | ■ | □ |
| c. Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on or off site? | □ | □ | ■ | □ |
| 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 seiche, tsunami, or mudflow? | □ | □ | □ | ■ |

The following discussion is based on a Water Quality Technical Report (WQTR) completed for the project by Quality Infrastructure Corporation, which is included as Appendix F of this IS.

**a. Would the project violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?**

**Less Than Significant Impact.** The proposed bikeway is not expected to violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements. As discussed in Section 7.6.b, construction of the bikeway could result in short-term erosion and sedimentation. However, substantial soil erosion would be avoided through conformance with a NPDES Construction General Permit and the BMPs identified in the project WQTR. The WQTR requires temporary erosion control methods such as the use of fiber rolls.

Unlike other transportation facilities, long-term contaminants related to oil and gas are not associated with bicycle facilities, with the exception of the infrequent operation of maintenance vehicles along the bikeway. Therefore, potential contaminants associated with the proposed bikeway would be generally related to trash and debris from bikeway users. The WQTR contains a number of actions which would reduce water quality impacts from operation of the bikeway. All proposed storm drain system catch basins must be labeled with prohibitive storm water dumping language such as, "No Dumping Drains to Ocean." Where practical, signage with prohibitive storm water dumping language will also be posted near storm drain system catch basins and at intermediate points along the project limits. Pet waste collection dispensers and trash receptacles may also be provided at locations along the bike path. Grading on the vegetated slope in the western end of the bike path would be hydroseeded with native plant material to minimize erosion.

Compliance with the requirements of the NPDES Construction General Permit and the WQTR would ensure that impacts of the proposed project on water quality standards and waste discharge requirements would be less than significant.

**b. Would the project substantially deplete groundwater supplies or interfere substantially with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level which would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?**

**Less Than Significant Impact.** The project does not propose the use of groundwater. Much of the proposed bike path would be constructed within existing paved areas that are currently covered with impervious surfaces. While the proposed project would result in the addition of some impervious surfaces, the new impervious surfaces proposed as part of the project would encompass a small area (approximately 7,700 square feet or 0.18 acre). The project would not significantly impact local groundwater recharge due to the relatively small development area involved and the fact that the project would not substantially increase the impervious surface area. Therefore, no impacts would be less than significant.

**c. Would the project substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner which would result in substantial erosion or siltation on or off site?**

**d. Would the project 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?**

**c-d. Less Than Significant Impact.** The proposed project would not alter drainage patterns in the area. Currently, site runoff flows to the south and west along the Qualcomm Stadium parking lot and into the San Diego River. Post-construction runoff would continue to flow to the south and west, but the addition of a minimal amount of impervious surfaces (7,700 square feet) would slightly increase runoff rates. The change in runoff would be negligible and would not result in substantial erosion or siltation or flooding. In addition, the project would comply with applicable storm water regulations and would be required to prepare a SWPPP that would further reduce the potential for substantial erosion and siltation during construction and project operation.

**e. Would the project 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?**

**Less Than Significant Impact.** As discussed under 7.9.c-d, there would not be a substantial increase in runoff from the proposed project and thus, runoff volumes would not exceed the capacity of existing and proposed storm drain facilities. As discussed in 7.9.a, the project could result in polluted runoff; however, the potential for water quality impacts would be minimized through compliance with the requirements of the NPDES Regional Municipal Storm Water Permit and General Construction Activity Storm Water Permit. Therefore, water quality impacts from polluted runoff would be less than significant.

**f. Would the project otherwise substantially degrade water quality?**

**Less Than Significant Impact.** As discussed in Section 7.9a, the project would not substantially degrade water quality through compliance with the NPDES Regional Municipal Storm Water Permit and General Construction Activity Storm Water Permit. Thus, impacts would be less than significant.

**g. Would the project 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?**

**No Impact.** The proposed project does not involve construction of residential units or any structures that could contain housing. There would be no impact regarding placing housing within a 100-year flood hazard area.

**h. Would the project place within a 100-year flood hazard area, structures which would impede or redirect flood flows?**

**Less Than Significant Impact.** Portions of the project would be located within a 100-year flood hazard area (Federal Emergency Management Agency [FEMA] 2012). These portions include some areas within the Qualcomm Stadium parking lot that are already developed with pavement. The project would not add structures within these areas. Proposed project elements within these mapped flood hazard zones would include surface improvements, including re-striping, barriers, curbs, fencing, and lighting. Such elements would not impede or redirect flood flows and impacts would be less than significant.

**i. Would the project 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?**

**Less Than Significant Impact.** Portions of the bikeway within the stadium parking lot would be within the 100-year floodplain zone and this area is prone to flood conditions during high rainfall storms. During a 100-year flood event, the bikeway would be several feet underwater and essentially inaccessible and out of service. During and immediately following large storm events, portions of the bikeway could be temporarily flooded which may result in portions being out of service. However, no permanent habitable structures would be placed within the bikeway. Additionally, the project would not expose people or structures to flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam. There are no dams immediately upstream of the proposed project, and the project is not located near any levees. Accordingly, flood-related impacts to people or structures would be less than significant.

**j. Would the project expose people or structures to inundation by seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?**

**No Impact.** The proposed project is not within the risk zone from a tsunami due to its inland location (over seven miles from the coast). The project is not located in an enclosed or partially enclosed body of water, such as a bay or lake, where a seiche could occur. Lastly, the project would not subject people or structures to mudflow based upon the topography of the project area. Therefore, there would be no exposure of people or structures to a seiche, tsunami, or mudflow and no impacts would occur.

## 7.10 Land Use and Planning

| Environmental Issue | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Would the proposed 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? | □ | □ | □ | ■ |

**a. Would the project physically divide an established community?**

**No Impact.** The proposed project would include the construction of a bicycle facility that would connect two public roadways (Fenton Parkway and Rancho Mission Road) and is a segment of the overall SDRT that will eventually provide a multi-use trail between the ocean communities and the eastern suburban communities. The proposed project does not include the construction of public roads, structures, or other improvements that would physically divide or separate neighborhoods within the established community. In fact, the proposed bicycle facility would help connect existing land uses in the area by facilitating bicycle movement. Thus, no associated land use impacts related to the division of an establish community would occur.

**b. Would the project 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?**

**No impact.** The proposed project area is located within the Mission Valley neighborhood of the City of San Diego. The proposed project would not conflict with applicable land use plans, policies, or regulations, including the *City of San Diego General Plan*, *Mission Valley Community Plan*, *2050 Regional Bike Plan*, *San Diego Bicycle Master Plan*, and *San Diego River Park Master Plan*. The proposed project would be consistent with applicable goals and guidelines contained in these land use plans. The project is not located within the Coastal Zone and is not subject to conformance with applicable certified Local Coastal Programs.

The proposed bikeway would be consistent with policies pertaining to bicycles in the Mobility Element (Section F, Bicycling) of the *City of San Diego General Plan*.

The *Mission Valley Community Plan's* objectives include creating an intra-community bikeway system which would provide access to the various land use developments within Mission Valley and connect to the regional system. It also specifically identifies the SDRT through the objective to "create the San Diego River Park Pathway that would provide for a bicycle and pedestrian access along the San Diego River and would also connect to other regional bicycle and pedestrian trails." The project would be consistent with these community plan objectives in that it would implement a segment of the larger SDRT.

The project would be consistent with the goal of the 2050 Regional Bike Plan to increase the number of people who bike by providing an interconnected network of bicycle corridors that would enable residents to bicycle with greater

safety, directness, and convenience within and between major regional destinations and activity centers. The SDRT is identified in the 2050 Regional Bike Plan as a major regional bicycle facility.

The proposed project would be consistent with the goals of the *San Diego Bicycle Master Plan*, including helping to provide a viable alternative travel choice for residents, adding to a safe and comprehensive local and regional bikeway network (specifically, the SDRT), and providing benefits from increased bicycling to environmental quality, public health, recreation, and mobility.

The proposed bike path would be constructed in an area within the boundaries of the portion of the San Diego River Park addressed in the *San Diego River Park Master Plan*. One of the guiding principles of the *San Diego River Park Master Plan* is to "create a connected continuum, with a sequence of unique places and experiences." The master plan also recommends the creation of a continuous multi-use San Diego River Pathway from the Pacific Ocean to the City of Santee. Although the project is not implementing the *San Diego River Park Master Plan* and, thus, is not subject to the design criteria and guidelines contained in the *San Diego River Park Master Plan*, ~~The project~~ it would be consistent with the *San Diego River Park Master Plan* in that it would implement a portion of the overall SDRT envisioned in the master plan. It should be noted, however, that the proposed alignment through the Qualcomm Stadium parking lot is anticipated to be an interim alignment until such time the *San Diego River Park Master Plan* can be implemented.

In sum, the proposed bike path would support the goals, objectives, and policies to increase the use of bicycles in adopted land use plans, and also would implement a segment of the planned SDRT that is identified in adopted land use plans. Thus, there would be no land use policy impacts associated with the proposed project.

**c. Would the project conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan?**

**No Impact.** The proposed bikeway alignment is located within the planning boundary of the City of San Diego's MSCP Subarea Plan. As discussed in Section 7.4.f, the project would conform with MHPA adjacency guidelines. Therefore, the proposed project would not conflict with the City of San Diego's MSCP Subarea Plan.

## 7.11 Mineral Resources

| Environmental Issue | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Would the proposed 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? | □ | □ | □ | ■ |

**a. Would the project 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. Would the project 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?**

**a-b. No Impact.** The project site is located within areas identified as Mineral Resource Classification Zone Category 2 (MRZ-2), which are areas designated for the managed production of mineral resources (City of San

Diego 2008). Sand and gravel extraction has occurred in Mission Valley since the early 1900s with some operations previously along the San Diego River. The project site is developed with commercial uses and a sports stadium that was built in 1967 and is not used for mineral resource recovery. It is not delineated as a mineral resource recovery site on any land use plans. As the project site is not currently used, or planned for use, as a mineral resource recovery site, no impacts to mineral resources would occur as a result of project implementation.

## 7.12 Noise

| Environmental Issue | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Would the proposed 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 ground-borne vibration or ground-borne 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? | □ | □ | □ | ■ |
| f. For a project within the vicinity of a private airstrip, would the project expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels? | □ | □ | □ | ■ |

**a. Would the project result in 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?**

**Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated.** Noise-sensitive land uses are associated with indoor and/or outdoor activities that may be subject to stress and/or substantial interference from noise, and often include residential dwellings, mobile homes, hotels, motels, hospitals, nursing homes, educational facilities, libraries, parks, and nature/wildlife preserves. Industrial, commercial, and agricultural land uses are generally not considered sensitive to noise. Surrounding developed land uses are comprised of commercial and residential development, and transportation facilities (trolley and freeways). The nearest residential use area is located approximately 100 feet west of the project site on the west side of Fenton Parkway, and a public library is located approximately 50 feet north of the project site on the east side of Fenton Parkway.

**Construction Noise**

The City of San Diego limits construction noise to between the hours of 7:00 AM and 7:00 PM, as specified in Section 21.04 of the San Diego Municipal Code. Project construction activities are expected to comply with this restriction. Construction noise during that 12-hour period is limited to a maximum average of 75 dBA equivalent sound level ($L_{EQ}$) at residential uses. The loudest equipment that may be used during construction of the portions of

the proposed project located closest to residential receptors would be a small excavator or backhoe, which would be utilized to dig the bench for the bike path along the slope in the west extent of the project site. The Federal Highway Administration Roadway Construction Noise Model lists the noise level of a backhoe as 73.6 dBA at 50 feet. The nearest residential receiver is located approximately 100 feet to the west. The noise level of a small excavator would be reduced to approximately 68 dBA at a distance of 100 feet (assuming an attenuation factor of 6 dBA per doubling of distance with direct line of sight between the noise source and receiver). The noise level at the library would be approximately 74 dBA. As construction noise is anticipated to be less than 75 dBA $L_{EQ}$ at these noise-sensitive uses, no significant noise impacts would occur from construction of the proposed project.

Construction is anticipated to occur during daytime hours; however, in the unlikely event that construction activities are required to occur at night, such activities would produce elevated short-term noise levels that could potentially impact nearby properties. As discussed above, construction noise levels at the nearest residential receptor would be approximately 68 dBA due to operation of a small excavator or backhoe. Although this is not an excessively loud level and use of this type of equipment would be intermittent with a generally limited duration, community receptors are more sensitive to noise at night. Nearby residents could be exposed to elevated noise levels during the night as a result of nighttime construction activities, which could be considered adverse and represents a potentially significant impact. Implementation of mitigation measure NOI-1 would reduce impacts to less than significant.

**NOI-1** If construction activities are required to occur at night between the hours of 9:00 pm and 7:00 am, the construction contractor shall implement measures to minimize short-term noise levels caused by construction activities. Measures to reduce construction noise shall be listed in contractor specifications and shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Construction equipment shall be properly outfitted and maintained with manufacturer-recommended mufflers to minimize construction-generated noise.
- To minimize noise from idling engines, idling of vehicles and construction equipment shall be minimized when not in use.
- Operation times of construction vehicles and equipment shall be minimized to the extent practicable.
- Construction equipment shall be placed and operated away from noise sensitive receptors to the extent feasible.

**Project Operations**

The proposed facility would be used by people walking and biking. Noise would be primarily related to conversations by persons using the path and would be short-term in nature as users are moving through the area. The high levels of the existing ambient freeway and trolley noise would likely mask these conversations at nearby noise-sensitive receptors. As a result, operational noise from use of the bikeway would not have an adverse impact on nearby noise-sensitive land uses, and impacts would be less than significant.

**b. Would the project result in exposure of persons to or generation of excessive ground-borne vibration or ground-borne noise levels?**

**Less Than Significant Impact.** The proposed project does not include any components that would generate excessive ground-borne vibration or ground-borne noise levels. While equipment used during project construction may result in the generation of minimal levels of ground-borne vibration, these would be temporary and transitory in nature. Therefore, impacts related to ground-borne vibration and noise would be less than significant.

**c. Would the project result in a substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?**

**Less Than Significant Impact**. Bicyclists and pedestrians using the proposed bikeway would not create or contribute to a substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing

without the project. As discussed in Section 7.12.a, bikeway user's conversations would be masked by freeway and trolley noise and users would be in the area for a short timeframe. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

**d. Would the project result in a substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?**

**Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated**. As discussed in 7.12.a, construction would temporarily elevate ambient noise levels in the project vicinity, but the construction noise would conform to the City's noise regulations for construction. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant during daytime hours. However, in the unlikely event that construction activities are required to occur during nighttime, nearby residents could be exposed to elevated noise levels during the night as a result of nighttime construction activities, which could be considered adverse and represents a potentially significant impact. Implementation of mitigation measure NOI-1 identified in 7.12.a would reduce impacts to less than significant.

**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?**

**No Impact.** As discussed in Section 7.7.e, the project site is located in the AIA of Montgomery Field Airport, which is located approximately 2.5 miles to the northwest. The site, however, is not located within any of the noise contours identified on the Noise Compatibility Policy Map contained in the *Montgomery Field Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan*. Thus, no impacts related to airport noise from a public airport or public use airport would occur.

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

**No Impact.** The project is not located within the vicinity of a private airstrip. Therefore, persons using the proposed bikeway would not be exposed to noise from a private airstrip and no impact would occur.

## 7.13 Population and Housing

| Environmental Issue | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Would the proposed 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? | □ | □ | □ | ■ |

**a. Would the project 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)?**

**No Impact**. Implementation of the proposed project would not directly induce population growth because no housing or new businesses are proposed. The project area is already developed, and bikeway users not living in the

vicinity of the bikeway would be expected to visit the bikeway rather than permanently relocate. Furthermore, the project would not result in the extension of roads or utilities that would promote growth. Therefore, the project would not directly or indirectly induce population growth and no impact would occur.

**b. Would the project displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?**

**No Impact.** The project would not result in the removal of any existing homes. Therefore, no impact would occur.

**c. Would the project displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?**

**No Impact.** The project would not result in the removal of any existing homes or the displacement of any residents or businesses. Therefore, no impact would occur.

## 7.14 Public Services

| Environmental Issue | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Would the proposed project: | | | | |
| a. 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: | | | | |
| i. Fire protection? | □ | □ | □ | ■ |
| ii. Police protection? | □ | □ | □ | ■ |
| iii. Schools? | □ | □ | □ | ■ |
| iv. Parks? | □ | □ | ■ | □ |
| v. Other public facilities? | □ | □ | □ | ■ |

**a. i–v. Would the proposed 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 fire protection, police protection, schools, parks, or other public facilities?**

**Fire and Police Protection**

**No Impact.** The project site is located in a developed urban area currently served by existing public services, including fire and police protection. The project would not increase population in the project area or cause increased traffic congestion on streets in the project area, or otherwise interfere with the ability of police and fire services to maintain acceptable service ratios, meet target response times, or other performance objectives for fire or police protection. Therefore, no new facilities would be required which could result in adverse physical changes in the environment.

**Schools**

**No Impact.** The proposed project would not increase or contribute to an increase in the existing student population in the project area. Therefore, no new facilities would be required which could result in adverse physical changes in the environment.

**Parks**

**Less than Significant Impact**. The proposed project would not introduce a new population to the area. However, the proposed project would increase bicycle and pedestrian connectivity through the area, which may indirectly increase access to existing parks. This increase in park use resulting from indirectly increased access would not substantially affect the performance of existing park such that new or altered facilities would be required. Therefore, impacts would be less than significant.

**Other Public Facilities**

**No Impact.** Development of the proposed project would not increase population or otherwise affect demand for other public facilities, such as libraries, within the project area. Therefore, no new facilities would be required which could result in adverse physical changes in the environment.

## 7.15 Recreation

| Environmental Issue | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Would the proposed project: | | | | |
| a. 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. Include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities which might have an adverse physical effect on the environment? | □ | ■ | □ | □ |

**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?**

**Less Than Significant Impact.** There are no neighborhood or regional parks located in the project vicinity. Although the bikeway is considered a transportation facility, it is expected to encourage recreational bicyclists to use the bikeway to obtain access to recreational facilities within the project area, including other constructed segments of the SDRT (non-contiguous), Qualcomm Stadium, and other areas served by the City's bicycle system. However, recreational bicyclists can currently access these recreation facilities from other areas. Given the absence of public parks in the areas and lack of direct connectivity to existing segments of the SDRT, the project would not result in a substantial increase in the use of existing recreational facilities. Therefore, the proposed bikeway would not result in a substantial physical deterioration of existing parks or recreational facilities and impacts would be less than significant.

**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?**

**Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated.** The proposed project entails the construction of a bikeway that would serve as a transportation facility with recreational value. Potential environmental effects resulting from the proposed bike path are analyzed in this document. As discussed in this IS, the proposed project could result in potentially significant impacts related to biological resources, cultural resources, hazards and hazardous materials, and construction-related noise (if it were to occur at night). Implementation of the mitigation measures identified in this IS would reduce impacts to below a level of significance.

## 7.16 Transportation/Traffic

| Environmental Issue | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Would the proposed 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 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? | □ | □ | □ | ■ |

**a. Would the project 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?**

**No Impact.** The project would not adversely affect the performance of the local roadway system. The proposed bikeway would improve the performance of the circulation system by increasing the amount of Class I bikeways

within the Mission Valley community and constructing a segment of the overall SDRT that will eventually provide a contiguous multi-use trail connecting beach communities with east county communities. The City of San Diego's General Plan Mobility Element and Bicycle Master Plan, as well as SANDAG's *2050 Regional Bike Plan*, emphasize making bicycling a viable travel choice to improve circulation efficiency in the area, and the project would be consistent with this goal.

In addition, the project would not impact existing transportation systems through project improvements. The project does not include any components that would result in substantial long-term traffic generation. Some additional trips may occur in the project area from maintenance vehicles and vehicles driving to the area to use the proposed facility. These additional trips, however, would not contribute to a substantial traffic increase such that roadway capacities would be exceeded. While construction activities would likely generate a small number of trips associated with construction equipment and worker vehicles, these trips would be temporary during the construction period, and would not be considered substantial in relation to the existing traffic load in the project vicinity. For this reason, no impacts would occur.

**b. Would the project conflict with an applicable congestion management program, including, but not limited to level of service standards and travel demand measures, or other standards established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways?**

**No Impact.** The applicable congestion management program for the San Diego region is SANDAG's Final 2008 Congestion Management Program (CMP) Update. As discussed above in 7.16.a, the bikeway would not adversely affect the performance of the local roadway system and, therefore, would not conflict with the CMP's level of service standards. In addition, the CMP emphasizes bike facilities as a measure to reduce vehicle congestion. Thus, the project would not impact the applicable congestion management program.

**c. Would the project 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?**

**No Impact.** The proposed project would not include any aviation components or structures where height would be an aviation concern. Thus, the proposed project would not affect air traffic patterns.

**d. Would the project substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?**

**Less Than Significant Impact.** The proposed bicycle facility would not increase hazards along nearby roadways. The trail would be constructed as a Class I facility, which entails a path within an exclusive right-of-way and separated from motorists. The portion of the bike path within the stadium parking lot would be separated from motorists within the parking lot by barriers to provide for the safety of people using the bike path. Curb ramps would be installed at the western and eastern ends of the proposed facility where the bike path intersects with public roadways. A crosswalk would also be installed at the eastern end across Rancho Mission Road and within the stadium parking lot between the bike path and the trolley station. Based on these design considerations, traffic hazard impacts would be less than significant.

**e. Would the project result in inadequate emergency access?**

**No Impact.** Primary access to all major roads and Qualcomm Stadium would be maintained during construction and operation of the proposed project. No impacts related to emergency access impacts would occur.

**f. Would the project conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs regarding public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities, or otherwise decrease the performance or safety of such facilities?**

**No Impact.** The project would not conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs regarding public transit, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities, and in many ways would support such programs. As discussed under Section 7.10, the *City of San Diego General Plan*, *2050 Regional Bike Plan*, *City of San Diego Bicycle Master Plan*, *Mission Valley Community Plan*, and *San Diego River Park Master Plan* all support the development of bikeways that

improve connectivity and provide a viable travel alternative choice. In addition, the project would improve bicyclist and pedestrian safety by providing a separated path from the roadway. The proposed project would contribute toward achieving the goals of adopted policies, plans, and programs supporting public transit, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities within the area. No associated impacts would occur.

## 7.17 Utilities and Service Systems

| Environmental Issue | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Would the proposed 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? | □ | □ | □ | ■ |

**a. Would the project exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?**

**No Impact.** The proposed project would not generate wastewater. Thus, the project would not affect existing wastewater treatment standards established by the RWQCB and no impact would occur.

**b. Would the project 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?**

**No Impact.** Construction of the proposed bicycle facility would involve minimal water use associated with watering for dust control and soil compaction associated with grading activities. Operation of the bikeway may require minimal water use for infrequent maintenance activities of the bike path, such as street sweeping and cleanout of the proposed bioswales and detention basin. The limited demand for water would not be sufficient to require construction of new water treatment facilities. As the project would not generate wastewater, it would not require the construction of new wastewater treatment facilities. Therefore, no new facilities would be required which could result in adverse physical changes in the environment.

**c. Would the project 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?**

**Less Than Significant Impact.** The project would include a number of inlets and pipes, a bioswale, drainage ditch, and a detention basin along the proposed alignment to efficiently convey runoff from the bike path to the existing municipal storm drain system. Construction of these new drainage facilities would not result in significant environmental impacts.

**d. Would the project have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed?**

**Less Than Significant Impact.** Operation of the bikeway would not generate a substantial demand for water. The only long-term operational demand for water would be related to infrequent maintenance activities of the bike path, such as street sweeping and cleanout of the proposed bioswales and detention basin. The limited demand for water would not be sufficient to require construction or expansion of existing water supply facilities or entitlements. Thus, impacts would be less than significant.

**e. Would the project 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?**

**No Impact.** The project would not have any impact on an existing wastewater treatment provider, as the project would not generate wastewater.

**f. Would the project be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?**

**Less Than Significant Impact.** Construction activities may generate solid waste. However, the contractor would be required to dispose of any waste through appropriate coordination with local landfills on a short-term basis. While some users of the bike path may have solid waste to dispose of while using the facility (e.g., food wrappers, beverage bottles, etc.), no significant quantity of trash would be generated and thus, the project would not significantly impact regional landfills. Therefore, less than significant impacts would occur.

**g. Would the project comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?**

**No Impact.** The proposed project would comply with all applicable federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste. Therefore, no associated impacts would occur.

## 7.18 Mandatory Findings of Significance

| Environmental Issue | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Would the proposed project: | | | | |
| 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? | □ | ■ | □ | □ |

| Environmental Issue | Potentially Significant Impact | Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated | Less Than Significant Impact | No Impact |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 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? | □ | ■ | □ | □ |

**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?**

**Less Than Significant With Mitigation Incorporated.** Project development would occur on developed and disturbed areas that do not contain sensitive biological resources or known cultural resources**.** No direct impacts to sensitive habitat or special status species would occur. Indirect impacts to biological resources would be less than significant with implementation of mitigation measures described under Section 7.4. No historical or archaeological sites have been recorded within or adjacent to the project site. Impacts related to unexpected discovery of cultural artifacts during construction activities would be avoided through implementation of mitigation identified in Section 7.5. Given the developed nature of the project site and lack of resources along with identified mitigation, the project does not 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)?**

**Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation Incorporated.** The proposed project could incrementally contribute to cumulative impacts associated with lighting, water quality, air quality and GHG emissions (during construction), and biology. Lighting impacts would be minimized through project design features such as proper placement and shielding of the lights. Incremental water quality impacts would be reduced through compliance with applicable storm water regulations and project BMPs identified in the WQTR. Air quality and GHG emissions would be incremental but temporary as they would only occur during project construction. In addition, the bikeway would reduce reliance on the private automobile, resulting in a reduction in air emissions. Indirect impacts to biological resources would be less than significant with implementation of mitigation measures described under Section 7.4. In combination with other existing and proposed projects in the area, the project's contribution would not be cumulatively considerable.

**c. Does the project have environmental effects which will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?**

**Less Than Significant Impact With Mitigation**. There is the potential to encounter contaminated soil and/or groundwater in underlying soils within Qualcomm Stadium. During construction of proposed retaining walls in the

parking lot, mitigation measure HAZ-1 would be implemented to reduce impacts to a below a level of significance (as discussed under Section 7.8). No other serious safety hazard risks would result from construction or operation of the project. Additionally, in the unlikely event that construction activities are required to occur during nighttime, nearby residents could be exposed to elevated noise levels during the night as a result of nighttime construction activities, which could be considered adverse. Implementation of mitigation measure NOI-1 as discussed under Section 7.12) would reduce impacts to less than significant. Thus, no substantial adverse direct or indirect effects on human beings would be related to the project.

## 8.0 Distribution List

### FEDERAL AGENCIES

United States Army Corps of Engineers
911 Wilshire Blvd
Los Angeles, CA 90017

United States Fish and Wildlife Service
Attn: Sally Brown
2177 Salk Avenue, Suite 250
Carlsbad, California 92008

### STATE AGENCIES

State Clearinghouse
Office of Planning and Research
State Clearinghouse
P.O. Box 3044
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044

California Department of Fish and Wildlife
3883 Ruffin Rd
San Diego, CA 92123

Native American Heritage Commission
1550 Harbor Blvd
Suite 100
Sacramento, CA 95691

California Regional Water Quality Control Board, San Diego Region 9
2375 Northside Dr #100
San Diego, CA 92108

Caltrans
4050 Taylor Street
San Diego, CA 92110

### LOCAL AGENCIES/ORGANIZATIONS

City of San Diego, Planning Department
202 C Street
San Diego, CA 92101

Mission Valley Branch Library
2123 Fenton Parkway
San Diego, CA 92108

MTS
Attn: Sharon Cooney
1255 Imperial Avenue
San Diego, CA 92101

San Diego River Park Foundation
PO Box 80126
San Diego, CA 92138-0126

San Diego River Conservancy
1350 Front Street, Suite 3024
San Diego, CA 92101

Qualcomm Stadium
9449 Friars Road
San Diego, CA 92108

Mission Valley Planning Group
Attn: Dottie Surdi
9215 Piantino Way
San Diego, CA 92108

Fenton Marketplace
Sudberry Properties
5465 Morehouse Drive, Suite 260
San Diego, CA 92121

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Federal Highway Administration

1981 Visual Impact Assessment for Highway Projects. March.

HELIX Environmental Planning, Inc. (HELIX)

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2015b Biological Resources Letter Report for the San Diego River Trail Qualcomm Stadium Segment Project. October 21.

2015c San Diego River Trail Qualcomm Stadium Segment Project – Cultural Resources Study. October 29.

Quality Infrastructure Corporation

2015 Water Quality Technical Report for the San Diego River Trail Qualcomm Stadium Segment. October 20.

San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG)
2015 San Diego Forward: The Regional Plan. October.

2010 Riding to 2050, the San Diego Regional Bicycle Plan.

San Diego County Regional Airport Authority
2010 Montgomery Field Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan. January.

San Diego River Park Conservancy
2014 Qualcomm Segment of the San Diego River Trail Alternative Alignment Study.

2010 San Diego River Trail Gaps Analysis