

REGIONAL TRANSIT ISSUE PAPER

Agenda Item No.	Board Meeting Date	Open/Closed Session	Information/Action Item	Issue Date
12	05/14/18	Open	Action	05/03/18

Subject: Approving a Resolution Adopting a Categorical Exemption for the Horn Station Project

ISSUE

Whether or not to approve a Resolution adopting a Categorical Exemption for the Horn Light Rail Station Project.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Adopt Resolution No. 18-05-____, Adopting a Categorical Exemption for the Horn Light Rail Station Project

FISCAL IMPACT

None as a result of this action.

DISCUSSION

The Sacramento Regional Transit District (SacRT) proposes the Horn Light Rail Station (Horn Station) Project as a joint project between SacRT and the City of Rancho Cordova (City). The initial phases of the proposed project would be funded in part by a grant received through Sacramento Area Council of Governments (SACOG) Community Design Grants (funded by the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program) and in part from the use of developer fees.

Horn Station was included among the stations along the original SacRT Amtrak–Folsom (Gold Line) extension project that was completed in 2004 and was evaluated in the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS)/Environmental Impact Report (EIR) (FTA and SacRT 2000). However, because of budget constraints, construction of this station was deferred. If completed the Horn Station will serve to create a pedestrian/transit-oriented hub; serve surrounding development, including the adjacent business park and the Kassis Opportunity Site, which is projected to develop 42 acres of commercial and residential activity; provide convenient connection to civic amenities, including the library across the street and the nearby County social services office; and support the Folsom Boulevard Complete Streets program that encourages pedestrian and bicycle travel along Folsom Boulevard. The proposed project is included in the City's approved Capital Improvement Plan and is consistent with the City of Rancho Cordova Folsom Boulevard Specific Plan and Folsom Boulevard Complete Street Master Plan, both of which promote alternative modes of travel.

The Project requires environmental analysis in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). A Project Evaluation was prepared pursuant to CEQA, resulting in a determination that the project is consistent with a Class 32 Categorical Exemption under the Guidelines of the State Secretary for Resources, (Title 14, California Code of Regulations, Section

Approved:

Presented:

Final 05/09/18

General Manager/CEO

Director, Planning

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15332). A Notice of Exemption (Exhibit A) was prepared and submitted to the State Clearinghouse. The Project Evaluation is attached as Attachment A to Exhibit A.

Based on the Project Evaluation, staff recommends the Board adopt the Categorical Exemption.

Review and approval of the Project Evaluation may also be undertaken by the FTA for the Project for which it may provide funding. FTA has indicated that it will likely consider the Project using a Documented Categorical Exclusion (DCE) per 23 CFR 771.118, and SacRT has prepared and provided the DCE documentation for FTA's use.

Notice of Exemption

Appendix E

To: Office of Planning and Research
P.O. Box 3044, Room 113
Sacramento, CA 95812-3044
County Clerk
County of: Sacramento

From: (Public Agency):
Sacramento Regional Transit District
1400 29th Street, Sacramento, CA95816
(Address)

Project Title: Horn Light Rail Station

Project Applicant: Sacramento Regional Transit District

Project Location - Specific:
Intersection of Folsom Boulevard and Horn Road

Project Location - City: Rancho Cordova Project Location - County: Sacramento

Description of Nature, Purpose and Beneficiaries of Project:
The Project is consistent with the City of Rancho Cordova Folsom Boulevard Specific Plan and RT's long range planning. This Project would be a catalyst for in-fill development in the area, creating opportunities for transit oriented development, as well as offering light rail access to nearby students and residents.

Name of Public Agency Approving Project: Sacramento Regional Transit (RT)

Name of Person or Agency Carrying Out Project: Sacramento RT partnered with City of Rancho Cordova

Exempt Status: (check one):

- Ministerial (Sec. 21080(b)(1); 15268);
Declared Emergency (Sec. 21080(b)(3); 15269(a));
Emergency Project (Sec. 21080(b)(4); 15269(b)(c));
[X] Categorical Exemption. State type and section number: Class 32, Section 15332
Statutory Exemptions. State code number:

Reasons why project is exempt:
This project is exempt because the project is an in-fill development project surrounded by urban land uses. The project land use, a light rail station, would be consistent with the existing land use of the project site. The project site is currently used as a transportation corridor. A review of the Categorical Exemptions exceptions shows that no exceptions apply to the project. See Attachment A.

Lead Agency
Contact Person: Henry Li Area Code/Telephone/Extension: (916) 556-0441

If filed by applicant:

- 1. Attach certified document of exemption finding.
2. Has a Notice of Exemption been filed by the public agency approving the project? Yes No

Signature: Date: Title:

Signed by Lead Agency Signed by Applicant

Authority cited: Sections 21083 and 21110, Public Resources Code. Date Received for filing at OPR:
Reference: Sections 21108, 21152, and 21152.1, Public Resources Code.

Horn Light Rail Station

Notice of Exemption

Attachment A: Project Evaluation for Exemption

ATTACHMENT A

1. Introduction

This document provides a description of the Sacramento Regional Transit District (SacRT), proposed Horn Road Light Rail Project (project), and evaluates the applicability of a Categorical Exemption (CE) to the project, in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). This is a joint project between SacRT and the City of Rancho Cordova (City). The project would result in the construction and operation of a new light rail station south of Folsom Boulevard near the intersection of Folsom Boulevard and Horn Road.

As the lead agency under CEQA, SacRT is responsible for conducting the appropriate environmental review process and documentation, for coordination with responsible and trustee agencies, and for obtaining regulatory approvals and the appropriate permits.

2. Justification for a Categorical Exemption Class 32

According to 14 California Code of Regulations §15061(b)(3), “CEQA applies only to projects which have the potential for causing a significant effect on the environment.”[1] The Secretary of the State Resources Agency has designated classes of projects that the Secretary has found do not have a significant effect on the environment. The designated classes of projects are fully exempt from CEQA and are referred to as Categorical Exemptions. According to 14 California Code of Regulations §15332, a Class 32 Categorical Exemption applies to projects characterized as in-fill development meeting the conditions described in items (a) through (e):

- (a) The project is consistent with the applicable general plan designation and all applicable general plan policies as well as with applicable zoning designation and regulations.
- (b) The proposed development occurs within city limits on a project site of no more than five acres substantially surrounded by urban uses.
- (c) The project site has no value as habitat for endangered, rare or threatened species.
- (d) Approval of the project would not result in any significant effects relating to traffic, noise, air quality, or water quality.
- (e) The site can be adequately served by all required utilities and public services.

CEQA Statute defines ‘infill’ in §21061.3 as a site in an urbanized area that meets either of the following criteria:

- (a) The site has not been previously developed for urban uses and both of the following apply:
 - (1) The site is immediately adjacent to parcels that are developed with qualified urban uses, or at least 75 percent of the perimeter of the site adjoins parcels that are developed with qualified urban uses and the remaining 25 percent of the site adjoins parcels that have previously been developed for qualified urban uses.
 - (2) No parcel within the site has been created within the past 10 years unless the parcel was created as a result of the plan of a redevelopment agency.
- (b) The site has been previously developed for qualified urban uses.

3. Exceptions to Categorical Exemption Classes

Article 19, Categorical Exemptions, of the CEQA Guidelines provides the conditions and exceptions for applying a CE to a discretionary project. The exceptions outlined within the Article 19 describe the conditions in which a CE may not be used for a project's CEQA compliance document. The following exceptions are listed within CEQA Guidelines §15300.2, Exceptions:

(a) Location. Classes 3, 4, 5, 6, and 11 are qualified by consideration of where the project is to be located – a project that is ordinarily insignificant in its impact on the environment may in a particularly sensitive environment be significant. Therefore, these classes are considered to apply all instances, except where the project may impact on an environmental resource of hazardous or critical concern where designated, precisely mapped, and officially adopted pursuant to law by federal, state, or local agencies.

(b) Cumulative Impact. All exemptions for these classes are inapplicable when the cumulative impact of successive projects of the same type in the same place, over time is significant.

(c) Significant Effect. A categorical exemption shall not be used for an activity where there is a reasonable possibility that the activity will have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances.

(d) Scenic Highways. A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project which may result in damage to scenic resources, including but not limited to, trees, historic buildings, rock outcroppings, or similar resources, within a highway officially designated as a state scenic highway. This does not apply to improvements which are required as mitigation by an adopted negative declaration or certified EIR.

(e) Hazardous Waste Sites. A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project located on a site which is included on any list compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code.

(f) Historical Resources. A categorical exemption shall not be used for a project which may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource.

The following subsections contain a review for each exception from CEQA Guidelines §15300.2 in regards to the project.

Location

CEQA Guidelines §15300.2 (a) exception conditions are applied to Classes 3, 4, 5, 6, and 11. Classes 3, 4, 5, 6, and 11 are qualified by consideration of where the project is to be located. The project is exempt under Class 32, Infill Project. Therefore, the location exception does not apply to this project; the project may proceed with a CEQA CE.

Cumulative Impact

All exemptions for these classes are inapplicable when the cumulative impact of successive projects of the same type in the same place, over time is significant. The project would result in a new light rail station adjacent to an existing light rail line within an existing transportation corridor. Once the new light rail station is emplaced, any subsequent work at the same place would be confined to maintenance and operation of the light rail station. Therefore, there would not be a succession of projects of the

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same type in the same place. In addition, the project's footprint, location, and type do not result in construction or operational activity that would substantially contribute to any significant cumulative impacts. Therefore, the cumulative impact exception does not apply; the project may proceed with a CEQA CE.

Significant Effect due to Unusual Circumstances

A CE shall not be used for an activity where there is a reasonable possibility that the activity will have a significant effect on the environment due to unusual circumstances.

The court decision for *Berkeley Hillside Preservation v. City of Berkeley* (2015) 60 Cal. 4th 1086 provides the following one of two alternative approaches in determining if unusual circumstances exception may be established for a particular project.

1. The project has some feature that distinguishes it from others in the exempt class, such as its size or location (conditions in the project vicinity may be relevant); and
2. Due to that unusual circumstance, there is a "reasonable possibility [fair argument] of a significant effect.

The first step in reviewing this exception is to determine if there are unusual circumstances as a result of the project design or size, or in the surrounding environment. The second step is to identify if there would be a significant effect due to an identified unusual circumstance. The analysis of Unusual Circumstances is contained in Section 3 of this document. As detailed in Section 3, there are no unusual circumstances as a result of project design, size, or location that would result in a significant environmental effect. Therefore, the significant effect due to unusual circumstances exception does not apply; the project may proceed with a CEQA CE.

Hazardous Waste Sites

A CE shall not be used for a project located on a site which is included on any list compiled pursuant to Section 65962.5 of the Government Code. Preliminary information on potential hazardous waste materials contamination was obtained using the State Water Resources Control Board GeoTracker website. The project site is not included on a list of hazardous waste sites. The database search identified one recorded instances of hazardous materials use, contamination, or cleanup within 0.5 mile of the project site. Specifically, existing Kinder Morgan Bradshaw Terminal (Bradshaw Terminal) is located within 0.5 mile of the project site and is currently undergoing remediation (cleanup) action. The Bradshaw Terminal above-ground tanks are located approximately 0.38 mile from the site. The Bradshaw Terminal loading docks are approximately 0.35 mile from the site. Both the Bradshaw Terminal and loading docks are at an elevation of approximately 65 feet, compared to the project site at an elevation of approximately 70 feet. Because the proposed site's elevation would be higher than the Bradshaw Terminal and loading docks, contamination at the Bradshaw Terminal and loading docks would be unlikely to flow upgradient toward the site. In addition, operation and clean-up of the Bradshaw Terminal is regulated by multiple federal and State requirements, including the existing Sacramento County Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (Sacramento County 2016), which reduces risks from hazards and serves as a tool to help decision makers direct mitigation activities and resources.

Therefore, the hazardous waste sites exception does not apply; the project may proceed with a CEQA CE.

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Historical Resources

A CE shall not be used for a project that may cause a substantial adverse change in the significance of a historical resource. A records search was conducted at the North Central Information Center (NCIC File No.: SAC-17-159, on October 13, 2017) and supplemental research included review of the 2006 City General Plan EIR (Rancho Cordova 2006b) to identify known cultural, historic, or archaeological resources in the immediate project vicinity. Results of the record search revealed one historic resource within the project site, eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP): the Sacramento Valley Railroad/Southern Pacific Railroad (now UPRR).

The more than 20-mile segment of the SPTCJPA-owned and UPRR-operated railroad (formerly the Southern Pacific Railroad and Sacramento Valley Railroad [SVRR]) from downtown Sacramento to Folsom was determined eligible for listing in the NRHP with SHPO concurrence in September 1993 (Jones & Stokes Associates, Inc. 1993: C-30). SHPO concurred in 1999 for the Downtown Sacramento Amtrak and Folsom Corridor Double Tracking Project (OHP 1999) that the railroad previously was determined eligible for the NRHP. The segment of the SPTCJPA/UPRR/SVRR that traverses the project site was previously studied in 1993 for construction of the double track light rail line, which displaced the original alignment of the SPTCJPA/UPRR/SVRR. For that rail project, the proposed track modifications was determined not to result in a significant effect on historic properties, because it would not disturb, destroy, or otherwise substantially affect the elements of the SPTCJPA/UPRR/SVRR line that contribute to its significance. That project relocated the existing tracks, which did not date to the period of significance (nineteenth century), slightly to the south within the original ROW. The integrity of location for the SPTCJPA/UPRR/SVRR property is that of the ROW, not the actual location of the tracks, which, as noted, are not in their original location for more than half of the 20-mile line from Folsom to Sacramento. The small segment of the UPRR line proposed to be relocated within the existing ROW for the proposed project already was relocated and will continue to operate within the original ROW. The elements of the line that retain the integrity of location and design would not be adversely affected. All other elements of historic integrity— including materials, workmanship, feeling, association, and setting— no longer exist. In summary, the proposed project would not adversely affect the SPTCJPA/UPRR/SVRR property.

The records search indicated a historic-age former winery property, south of and outside the railroad ROW and project area, that previously was inventoried and evaluated in 1993 and found to be ineligible for listing in the NRHP. Based on review of the previous recordation and evaluation of the property on file at the NCIC, combined with a reconnaissance-level survey of the property on October 19, 2017 by an architectural historian who meets the Secretary of the Interiors' Professional Qualification Standards for history and architectural history, the conclusion was reaffirmed that the property remains ineligible for listing in the NRHP because of lack of historic integrity, and it is not a historic property. The site is not within or near an existing historic district. Therefore, the project, as proposed would not result in a substantial adverse change to a historical resource. The historical resources exception does not apply; the project may proceed with a CEQA CE.

4. Unusual Circumstances Evaluation

The following subsections contain a review each environmental impact category from CEQA Guidelines Appendix G in regards to the project. Specifically, the subsections review the project's features, size, and

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surrounding environment for unusual circumstances that would result in a significant impact, per CEQA Guidelines §15300.2 (c) and *Berkeley Hillside Preservation v. City of Berkeley* (2015) 60 Cal. 4th 1086.

I. Aesthetics

No Unusual Circumstances

The project is located within an existing transportation corridor in an urban area. The site is, surrounded by trees, commercial development, roadways, and other urban uses. The nearest scenic vista, the American River, is located approximately 0.17 mile from the project boundary and is not visible from the project site. In addition, the project site is not visible from the American River. There are no designated state scenic highways in the vicinity of the project. The project would improve the visual character of the site by developing aesthetically-appealing light rail station amenities and landscaping. Nighttime lighting would occur, but at a similar level to existing light rail stations located along the transportation corridor. The project's design will incorporate the existing character of the adjacent structures at the intersection of Horn Road and Folsom Boulevard and will be consistent with the City's complete streets project that extends through this section of Folsom Boulevard.

II. Agriculture and Forestry Resources

No Unusual Circumstances

The project area is urban and disturbed. There are no agricultural and forestry resources to impact.

III. Air Quality

No Unusual Circumstances

Construction and operational activity for the project would be substantially similar to that conducted for other light rail stations along the existing transportation corridor. In addition, the anticipated construction and operational activity for the project were compared to the Sacramento Metropolitan Air Quality Management District's (AQMD's) screening guidance for CEQA air quality impact analysis. The AQMD has developed screening guidance to assist a project proponent or lead agency in determining if construction and operational emissions from a project in Sacramento County would exceed the AQMD's significance thresholds. Anticipated construction and operational activities of a project that do not exceed the screening level and meets all the screening parameters will be considered to have a less-than-significant impact on air quality. The project's construction and operational activity would not exceed the AQMD's screening guidance; therefore, project construction and operation would emit less-than-significant levels of air pollutants. Surrounding land uses are primarily commercial and roadways; the nearest location of sensitive receptors is approximately 35 meters to the north of the project site; there are no unusual circumstances related to impacts to sensitive receptors.

IV. Biological Resources

No Unusual Circumstances

The project area is urban and disturbed. Atkins biologists performed a desktop review of available data and conducted a field site visit in order to determine the potential for

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sensitive species to occur on or near the project site. The full results of the investigation, along with recommendations to satisfy regulatory requirements pertaining to biological resources, are provided in Appendix A.

Atkins biologists specifically reviewed the available data pertaining to the project location, near the intersection of Horn Road and Folsom Boulevard in the City. Atkins research included: 1) a query of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Information, Planning, and Conservation System (IPaC) and receipt of an IPaC Trust Resource Report and USFWS Official Species List for the project; 2) a query of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) California Natural Diversity Database (RareFind 5) and Biogeographic Information and Observation System (CNDDDB/BIOS) for records of sensitive resources within two miles of the project; 3) review of the City's General Plan (2006) and associated Environmental Impact Report policies and ordinances; and 4) review of the California Wildlife Habitat Relationship (CWHR) system for vertebrate species with the potential to occur at the project location.

Atkins biology staff also conducted a field reconnaissance at the project location on October 22, 2015. A pedestrian survey of the project site and immediate surrounding area was performed to document existing habitat and biological resources of concern to the regulatory agencies. These observations were then used to provide baseline information to determine the potential for sensitive plants and wildlife to occur onsite.

The CNDDDB/BIOS reported Northern Hardpan Vernal Pool, a sensitive habitat, within two miles of the project site. No vernal pools or swales were observed onsite during the field visit. There are no critical habitats within the project area.

The project site, design, or location do not present unusual circumstances related to biological resources impacts. The recommendations identified by the Atkins biologists to satisfy regulatory requirements pertaining to biological resources are standard for development projects.

See Appendix A: Biological Resources Technical Memo

V. Cultural Resources

No Unusual Circumstances

As discussed above, no historic property would be adversely affected by the proposed project. The project would be consistent with existing land use and not result in a substantial adverse impact. There are no known archeological resources, paleontological resources, or human remains in the project area.

See Appendix B: Cultural Resources Technical Memo

VI. **Geology and Soils**

No Unusual Circumstances

Project area is not on or near a known fault. An earthquake occurring at the nearest fault could result in shaking at the project area, but the project would not result in habitable structures or increase in population. The project would not result in long-term erosion. The project area is flat, not susceptible to landslides, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction, or collapse. The project would not include the installation or use of septic tanks or alternative wastewater disposal systems.

VII. **Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

No Unusual Circumstances

Construction and operational activity for the project would be substantially similar to that conducted for other light rail stations along the existing transportation corridor.

Construction of the new facility and associated accoutrements would be limited in scope and duration. Operation of the new light rail station is intended to assist existing ridership by improving access to SacRT's light rail system. The project would not result in a new or substantial source of greenhouse gas pollutants.

VIII. **Hazards and Hazardous Materials**

No Unusual Circumstances

The project would not include routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials, nor would it emit hazardous emissions. Project construction would utilize hazardous substances (diesel); however, construction activities would not generate significant risk of release with basic/routine equipment maintenance. The project area would be located more than 0.25 miles from the nearest recorded instance of hazardous material use, contamination or cleanup. The project site would be within 2 miles from Mather Park, a former Air Force Base that was subject to base realignment and is now a local airfield that serves cargo and some passenger services but is more than 2 miles of a private airstrip. However, there are no unusual circumstances resulting from the project's design features, size, or location.

IX. **Hydrology and Water Quality**

No Unusual Circumstances

Project construction would require a SWPPP and operation would comply with the SWPPP. The project would increase in impervious surfaces; however, impacts to groundwater would be minimal, increase in runoff would not result in flooding on- or off-site, and the project would not exceed the capacity of existing or planning stormwater drainage systems in the project's vicinity. The project would not alter the course of a stream or river. The project Area is located outside of the 100-year floodplain and the American River/Sacramento River Flood Zones, as well as any hazard zones for seiche, tsunami, or mudflow.

X. **Land Use Planning**

No Unusual Circumstances

The project would be consistent with General Plan designation, zoning, and current land use. The project site is located on an existing transportation corridor adjacent to roadways and commercial land uses. Therefore, the project would not have unusual circumstances

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related to dividing an established community or land use planning consistency. In addition, the project area is urban and disturbed, and outside of the draft South Sacramento Habitat Conservation Plan Area.

XI. Mineral Resources

No Unusual Circumstances

The project area is urban and disturbed; the site is not identified as being within a mineral resource area.

XII. Noise

No Unusual Circumstances

Atkins staff performed a review of available data and prepared a ground-borne vibration and ground-borne noise sensitivity analysis for the project. The full results of the analysis are provided in Appendix C.

The project site is bounded by Folsom Boulevard to the north and the UPRR freight track to the south. Commercial and office uses are located south of the UPRR freight track. Residential uses and public uses, including the Rancho Cordova Library and the County Social Services Office, are north of Folsom Boulevard. Ambient noise in the vicinity of the project area is dominated by existing rail traffic, existing vehicular traffic along Folsom Boulevard, and by Mather Airport which is approximately two (2) miles southeast of the project area.

The nearest sensitive noise receptor is the Rancho Cordova Library located north of Folsom Boulevard approximately 140 feet from the site. The nearest residential receptors are more than 300 feet west of the site, across both Folsom Boulevard and Horn Road.

The project area currently supports transportation land uses. The project would not increase the train frequency of existing light rail or freight operations. Construction activity for the project would be substantially similar to construction activity for other light rail stations along the existing transportation corridor. Project implementation would result in moderate increase in operational noise from announcements and start/stops; however the operational noise would be consistent with that occurring at other SacRT light rail stations along this corridor, as result this is not unusual. In addition, the distance between the project site and sensitive receptors is substantially similar to the distance between other existing light rail stations along the transportation corridor and their adjacent receptors. Therefore, there are no unusual circumstances related to construction noise or operational noise.

The project would relocate existing UPRR freight tracks closer to existing office buildings. It is anticipated that the freight track would be relocated approximately 15 feet south of the current alignment, and closer to the existing offices south of the project site. It is estimated that the freight track realignment would place with freight track centerline approximately 25 feet from the nearby offices. The freight track realignment would move this noise source farther away from the nearest sensitive land uses (the library and residences to the north

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and northwest of the project site), resulting in a beneficial reduction in the noise exposure for these noise-sensitive uses. The realigned freight track would be closer to the office building to the south, which is not a sensitive receptor and office employees would not be adversely affected. Therefore, there are no unusual circumstances that would result in a significant impact related to project-generated construction or operational vibration.

XIII. Population and Housing

No Unusual Circumstances

The project would not result in new housing or businesses, nor new roads or other growth-inducing infrastructure. The project area currently supports transportation land uses. The project would not change surrounding land uses.

XIV. Public Services

No Unusual Circumstances

The project would not result in a substantial increase in fire or police protection needs, nor would it affect emergency access. The project would include short-term and temporary construction activities that may affect other public facilities for the duration of constructing activities; however, there are no unusual circumstances concerning the project's construction activity, project size, or location that would result in significant impact. The project would not result in an increase in population; therefore, the project would not affect school or park capacities. The project's operation would not result in an adverse physical impact for other public facilities.

XV. Recreation

No Unusual Circumstances

The project would not result in an increase in population; therefore, the project would not affect existing recreational facilities. The project would not include or require construction or expansion of local recreational facilities.

XVI. Transportation/Traffic

No Unusual Circumstances

The project would provide improved access to existing transit services and is consistent with the City's Folsom Boulevard Specific Plan and SacRT's long-range planning. The project would include short-term and temporary construction activities that may result in minor alterations to traffic flow for the duration of constructing activities; however, there are no unusual circumstances concerning the project's construction activity, project size, or location that would result in significant impact. The project would not increase traffic along local roadways or reduce Level of Service of adjacent roadways. Nor would it alter or hinder emergency access of adjacent roads or parking lots. Access and safety would be consistent with SacRT Standards. The project would not alter air traffic patterns or levels.

XVII. Utilities and Service Systems

No Unusual Circumstances

The project would not result in wastewater requiring treatment. The project would require nominal amounts of water for irrigation purposes on site and result in minimal increase in impervious surfaces. Storm drain facilities would be constructed to the City of Rancho

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Cordova Standards. The project would collect nominal amount of trash on site and would comply with applicable statutes and regulations related to solid waste. The utilities and service systems requirements for the project would be substantially similar to other light rail stations along the transportation corridor.

5. Determination

As CEQA lead agency, SacRT reviewed the project for consistency with exemption Class 32 and unusual circumstances. SacRT, in its review process reasoned that no known environmental resources are expected to be adversely impacted within the project area. Therefore, SacRT has determined the appropriate document for the project will be a CE, pursuant to 14 California Code of Regulations §15332.

It is the determination of SacRT that the project conforms to the description of Class 32 projects under 14 California Code of Regulations §15332 because the project as in-fill development meeting the conditions described in items (a) through (e) listed above. The project would have no significant environmental impact(s), and the project is categorically exempt under CEQA Guidelines Sections 15332 (a – e).

Technical note

Project:	Sacramento Regional Transit District - Horn Road Light Rail Station Project	To:	Traci Canfield, Long Range Planner
Subject:	Biological Resource Investigations	From:	Jessica A. Nadolski, Senior Biologist
Date:	28 Oct 2015	cc:	Chryss Meier

The Sacramento Regional Transit (RT) District engaged Atkins to prepare National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) documentation for the Horn Road Light Rail Station Project. This memorandum provides biological resources information and recommendations in support of the environmental review.

Investigations

Atkins biology staff reviewed available data pertaining to the project location, near the intersection of Horn Road and Folsom Boulevard in Rancho Cordova. Research included: 1) a query of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Information, Planning, and Conservation System (IPaC) and receipt of an IPaC Trust Resource Report and USFWS Official Species List for the project; 2) a query of the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) California Natural Diversity Database (RareFind 5) and Biogeographic Information and Observation System (CNDDDB/BIOS) for records of sensitive resources within two miles of the project; 3) review of the City of Rancho Cordova General Plan (2006) policies and ordinances; and 4) review of the California Wildlife Habitat Relationship (CWHR) system for vertebrate species with the potential to occur at the project location.

Atkins biology staff also conducted a field reconnaissance at the project location on October 22, 2015. A pedestrian survey of the proposed station site and immediate surrounding area was performed to document existing habitat and biological resources of concern to the regulatory agencies. These observations were then used to provide baseline information to determine the potential for sensitive plants and wildlife to occur onsite.

Results

The following provides general habitat, sensitive species, and biological resources policy information for the project.

Habitat

Habitat at the project location is predominantly urban and categorized as High Density Development by the City of Rancho Cordova. According to the CWHR, urban habitat is distinguished by the presence of both native and exotic species maintained in a relatively static composition within a downtown, residential, or suburbia setting. Species richness in these areas depends greatly upon community design (i.e., open space considerations) and proximity to the natural environment.

The CWHR database classifies urban habitat into five different vegetation types: tree grove, street strip, shade tree/lawn, lawn, and shrub cover. Tree groves refer to conditions typically found in city parks, green belts, and cemeteries. These areas vary in tree height, spacing, crown shape, and understory conditions; however, they have a continuous canopy. Street strip vegetation, located roadside, varies with species type, but typically includes a ground cover of grass. Shade trees and lawns refer to characteristic residential landscape, which is reminiscent of natural savannas. Lawns are composed of a variety of grasses, maintained at a uniform height with continuous ground cover through irrigation and fertilization. Shrub cover refers to areas commonly landscaped and maintained with hedges, as typically found in commercial districts. All five types of urban habitat are generally found in combination, as is the case at the project location, creating considerable edge effect that can be more valuable to wildlife than any one individual unit. Wildlife observed during the site reconnaissance included: western fence lizard (*Sceloporus occidentalis*), western scrub jay (*Aphelocoma californica*), American goldfinch (*Carduelis tristis*), American crow (*Corvus*

Technical note

brachyrhynchos), northern mockingbird (*Mimus polyglottos*), house sparrow (*Passer domesticus*), and California ground squirrel (*Spermophilus beecheyi*).

Vegetation onsite consists of various natives and non-natives, including oaks (*Quercus* spp.), pines (*Pinus* spp.), palms (*Phoenix* spp. and *Washingtonia* spp.), tamarisk (*Tamarix* spp.), oleander (*Nerium oleander*), and various annual grasses as well as lawn. The proposed station site is developed with an existing rail line situated between a commercial business park (to the south) and Folsom Boulevard (to the north). The immediate vicinity is a patchwork of typical urban vegetation types that provide both closed and open canopies with various ground covers. A line of vegetation beneath power lines between the existing rail line and Folsom Boulevard includes several oak trees intermingled with remnant riparian and exotic species. Large trees noted during the field visit provide potential nest habitat for various birds and the undeveloped, open lots to the northeast and southwest provide potential forage areas. Also, burrows that could provide nest and cover habitat for sensitive species, such as the burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*), were observed along the southwest corner of the intersection between Horn Road and Folsom Boulevard.

An unnamed creek or drainage is situated in a north-south direction about 300 feet east of the proposed station. This waterway appears to collect mainly urban runoff and proceeds from Mather Field Road (southeast of the site) to the American River (north of the site). Riparian vegetation interspersed with exotic species borders the drainage, which currently allows for water flows beneath the existing rail line and Folsom Boulevard via culvert.

The CNDDDB/BIOS reported Northern Hardpan Vernal Pool, a sensitive habitat, within two miles of the project site. No vernal pools or swales were observed onsite during the field visit.

There are no critical habitats within the project area.

Sensitive Species

Several sensitive species were identified by the USFWS and CDFW as having the potential to occur at or near the project site. These species are listed and evaluated in the table provided as Attachment 1. As discussed in the table, although the project site is unlikely to support most species that require consideration by the regulatory agencies, habitat at the site has the potential to support a variety of sensitive and listed birds. No sensitive plant or wildlife species were observed during the field reconnaissance.

In addition to the sensitive species discussed in Attachment 1, the IPaC identified USFWS birds of conservation concern for the project area that are protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (BGEPA). These species include: tricolored blackbird (*Agelaius tricolor*), short-eared owl (*Asio flammeus*), oak titmouse (*Baeolophus inornatus*), Costa's hummingbird (*Calypte costae*), mountain plover (*Charadrius montanus*), peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus*), bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*), loggerhead shrike (*Lanius ludovicianus*), Lewis's woodpecker (*Melanerpes lewis*), long-billed curlew (*Numenius americanus*), fox sparrow (*Passerella iliaca*), yellow-billed magpie (*Pica nuttalli*), Nuttall's woodpecker (*Picoides nuttallii*), and Williamson's sapsucker (*Sphyrapicus thyroideus*).

Policy Information

The proposed project must comply with the Federal Endangered Species Act (FESA) and the California Endangered Species Act (CESA) that prohibit "take" of any species listed as threatened or endangered without approval from the USFWS and CDFW, respectively. Take includes any activity that would harass, harm, wound, trap, or kill a listed species. Harm refers to significant habitat modification or degradation that kills or injures wildlife by significantly impairing essential behaviour patterns, including breeding, feeding, or sheltering. Migratory birds, bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*), and golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*) are afforded additional Federal protection under the MBTA and BGEPA. The CDFW also enforces and permits actions regulated by the California Fish and Game Code that offers additional protections for plants and certain wildlife throughout the State.

The City of Rancho Cordova outlines local goals, policies, and actions for biological resources in their General Plan (2006). Local regulations with particular relevance to the proposed project are as follows:

Goal NR.1 – Protect and preserve diverse wildlife and plant habitats, including habitat for special status species

Technical note

Policy NR.1.1 – Protect rare, threatened, and endangered species and their habitats in accordance with State and Federal law.

Action NR.1.1.4 – Prior to the approval of any public or private development project in areas containing trees, the City shall require that a determinate survey be conducted during the nesting season (March 1st through August 31st) to identify if active nesting by birds protected under the MBTA is taking place. If all site disturbance is to occur outside this time, the actions described in this mitigation measure are not required. If nesting activity is observed, consultation with the City of Rancho Cordova Planning Department shall be conducted in order to determine the appropriate mitigation, if any, required to minimize impacts to nesting birds. No activity may occur within 100 feet of any nesting activity or as otherwise required following consultation with the CDFW.

Goal NR.4 – Encourage the planting and preservation of high-quality trees throughout the City.

Policy NR.4.4 – Prior to the approval of any public or private development project in areas identified or assumed to contain trees, the City shall require that a determinate survey of trees species and size be performed. If any native oaks or other native trees six inches or more in diameter at breast height (dbh), multitrunk native oaks or native trees of 10 inches or greater dbh, or non-native trees of 18 inches or greater dbh that have been determined by a certified arborist to be in good health are found to occur, such trees shall be avoided if feasible. If such trees cannot be avoided, the project applicant shall do one of the following:

- All such trees shall be replaced at an inch-for-inch ratio. A replacement tree planting plan shall be prepared by a certified arborist or licensed landscape architect and shall be submitted to the City of Rancho Cordova for approval prior to removal of trees.
- The project applicant shall submit a mitigation plan that provides for complete mitigation of the removal of such trees in coordination with the City of Rancho Cordova. The mitigation plan shall be subject to the approval of the City.
- If the City of Rancho Cordova adopts a tree preservation ordinance at any time in the future, any future development activities shall be subject to that ordinance instead.

Recommendations

Based on review of available information and observations during the site reconnaissance, Atkins is providing three recommendations to Sacramento RT to satisfy regulatory requirements pertaining to biological resources for the Horn Road Light Rail Station.

1. Completely avoid the unnamed creek or drainage east of the proposed station site.

The final project design should position the new station a minimum distance of 100 feet from the unnamed creek and associated vegetation. Best management practices should also be implemented during construction to ensure that no fill material or other discharge enters the waterway. If a discharge is anticipated, compliance with additional regulations (beyond the Policy Information provided above) will be required and the appropriate permits obtained.

2. Perform pre-construction surveys for nesting birds.

Habitat for nesting birds, both arboreal and subterranean, occurs at and immediately surrounding the proposed station site. Nesting birds are protected under Federal, State, and local regulations. Therefore, a pre-construction survey for nesting birds is recommended (between March 1st and August 31st) to be performed at the project site and within 500 feet of the project approximately three days prior to the onset of construction activities. If active nests are found, no project activity shall occur within 100 feet of the nest until the appropriate agencies have been consulted and an approval to proceed has been received.

3. Obtain a certified arborist report of the trees to be removed during construction.

Technical note

Several trees, including oaks, occur along the rail line at the proposed station site. A certified arborist report detailing the species and size of any tree to be removed for the project is recommended at least 60 days prior to the onset of construction. Sacramento RT must then submit this report with a tree permit application for permission to remove any protected trees, such as street trees, native oaks, and prominent or stately trees, on private or public property within the City of Rancho Cordova. Additional replacement or mitigation plans (per the General Plan) may also be required by the City.

Please do not hesitate to contact me at (916) 325-1410 or Jessica.Nadolski@atkinsglobal.com should you have questions about any of the information presented in this memorandum.

Technical note

Attachment 1: Sensitive Species that Should Be Considered as Part of an Effect Analysis for the Horn Light Rail Station Project

Scientific Name	Common Name	Status Federal/ State	Source	General Habitat	Potential for Occurrence Onsite
PLANTS					
<i>Orcuttia viscida</i>	Sacramento Orcutt grass	FE/CE/ 1B.1	IPaC	Vernal pools (30-100 meters) Blooms: April - September	Unlikely; no vernal pools were observed near the proposed station.
<i>Orcuttia tenuis</i>	slender Orcutt grass	FT/CE/ 1B.1	IPaC	Vernal pools, often in gravelly pools (35-1,760 meters) Blooms: May - October	Unlikely; no vernal pools were observed near the proposed station.
<i>Sagittaria sanfordii</i>	Sanford's arrowhead	--/--/1B.2	CNDDDB	Marshes and swamps; in standing or slow-moving freshwater ponds, marshes, and ditches (0-650 meters) Blooms: May - November	Unlikely; no waterways are expected to be impacted by the project.
INSECTS AND CRUSTACEANS					
<i>Branchinecta conservatio</i>	conservancy fairy shrimp	FE/--	IPaC	Endemic to the grasslands of the northern two-thirds of the Central Valley found in large, turbid pools; inhabit astatic pools located in swales formed by old, braided alluvium, filled by winter/spring rains, last until June	Unlikely; no vernal pools or similar waters were observed near the proposed station.
<i>Branchinecta lynchi</i>	vernal pool fairy shrimp	FT/--	CNDDDB; IPaC	Endemic to the grasslands of the Central Valley, Central Coast Mountains, and South Coast Mountains, in astatic rain-filled pools; inhabit small, clear-water sandstone-depression pools and grassed swale, earth slump, or basalt-flow depression pools	Unlikely; no vernal pools or similar waters were observed near the proposed station.

Technical note

Scientific Name	Common Name	Status Federal/ State	Source	General Habitat	Potential for Occurrence Onsite
<i>Desmocerus californicus dimorphus</i>	valley elderberry longhorn beetle	FT/--	CNDDDB; IPaC	Occurs only in the Central Valley of California, in association with blue elderberry (<i>Sambucus mexicana</i>); prefers to lay eggs in elderberries 2-8 inches in diameter, some preference shown for 'stressed' elderberries	Unlikely; no elderberry were observed near the proposed station.
<i>Dumontia oregonensis</i>	hairy water flea	--/--	CNDDDB	Vernal pools, in California known only from Mather Field	Unlikely; no vernal pools were observed near the proposed station.
<i>Lepidurus packardi</i>	vernal pool tadpole shrimp	FE/--	CNDDDB; IPaC	Inhabits vernal pools and swales in the Sacramento Valley containing clear to highly turbid water; pools commonly found in grass bottomed swales of unplowed grasslands, some pools are mud-bottomed and highly turbid	Unlikely; no vernal pools or swales were observed near the proposed station.
<i>Linderiella occidentalis</i>	California linderiella	--/--	CNDDDB	Seasonal pools in unplowed grasslands with alluvial soils underlain by hardpan or in sandstone depressions; water in the pools has very low alkalinity, conductivity, and total dissolved solids	Unlikely; no vernal pools or similar waters were observed near the proposed station.
FISHES					
<i>Hypomesus transpacificus</i>	Delta smelt	FT/CE	IPaC	Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta, seasonally in the Suisun Bay, Carquinez Strait and San Pablo Bay; seldom found at salinities greater than ten parts per thousand most often at salinities less than two parts per thousand	Unlikely; no waterways or tributaries are expected to be impacted by the project.
<i>Oncorhynchus (=salmo) mykiss</i>	steelhead – northern California DPS	FT/--	IPaC	Coastal basins from Redwood Creek south to the Gualala River, inclusive (does not include summer-run steelhead)	Unlikely; no waterways or tributaries are expected to be impacted by the project.

Technical note

Scientific Name	Common Name	Status Federal/ State	Source	General Habitat	Potential for Occurrence Onsite
<i>Oncorhynchus mykiss irideus</i>	steelhead – Central Valley DPS	FT/--	CNDDDB	Populations in the Sacramento and San Joaquin Rivers and their tributaries	Unlikely; no waterways or tributaries are expected to be impacted by the project.
AMPHIBIANS AND REPTILES					
<i>Ambystoma californiense</i>	California tiger salamander – central California DPS	FT/CT	IPaC	Central Valley DPS federally listed as threatened, Santa Barbara and Sonoma Counties DPS federally listed as endangered; need underground refuges, especially ground squirrel (<i>Spermophilus</i> spp.) and vernal pools or other seasonal water sources for breeding	Unlikely; the proposed station is situated along an existing rail line within a developed, commercial area. Also, no vernal pools or similar waters were observed near the proposed station.
<i>Rana draytonii</i>	California red-legged frog	FT/--	IPaC	Lowlands and foothills in or near permanent sources of deep water with dense, shrubby or emergent riparian vegetation; requires 11-20 weeks of permanent water for larval development and must have access to estivation habitat	Unlikely; the proposed station is situated along an existing rail line within a developed, commercial area. Also, water sources typical of this species presence was not observed near the proposed station.
<i>Thamnophis gigas</i>	giant garter snake	FT/CT	IPaC	Prefers freshwater marsh and low gradient streams, has adapted to drainage canals and irrigation ditches; this is the most aquatic of the garter snakes in California	Unlikely; no waterways or tributaries are expected to be impacted by the project.
BIRDS					

Technical note

Scientific Name	Common Name	Status Federal/ State	Source	General Habitat	Potential for Occurrence Onsite
<i>Accipiter cooperii</i>	Cooper's hawk	--/WL	CNDDDB	Woodland, chiefly of open, interrupted or marginal type; nest sites mainly in riparian growths of deciduous trees, as in canyon bottoms on river floodplains, also in live oaks (<i>Quercus</i> spp.)	Possible; the proposed site with the nearness of the American River could support reproduction, and provide cover or forage for Cooper's hawk.
<i>Ardea alba</i>	great egret	--/--	CNDDDB	Colonial nester in large trees; rookery sites located near marshes, tide-flats, irrigated pastures, and margins of rivers and lakes	Possible; the proposed site could provide cover or forage for great egret. However, nests onsite are unlikely.
<i>Ardea herodias</i>	great blue heron	--/--	CNDDDB	Colonial nester in tall trees, cliff sides, and sequestered spots on marshes; rookery sites in close proximity to foraging areas: marshes, lake margins, tide-flats, rivers and streams, wet meadows	Possible; the proposed site with the nearness of the American River could support reproduction, and provide cover or forage for great blue heron. The City of Rancho Cordova General Plan EIR also shows occurrence of this species directly northwest of the project site in association with the American River.
<i>Athene cunicularia</i>	burrowing owl	--/SSC	CNDDDB	Open, dry annual or perennial grasslands, deserts and scrublands characterized by low-growing vegetation; subterranean nester, dependent upon burrowing mammals, most notably, the California ground squirrel (<i>Spermophilus beecheyi</i>)	Possible; the proposed site and burrows in the immediate area could support reproduction, and provide cover or forage for burrowing owl.

Technical note

Scientific Name	Common Name	Status Federal/ State	Source	General Habitat	Potential for Occurrence Onsite
<i>Buteo swainsoni</i>	Swainson's hawk	--/CT	CNDDDB	Breeds in grasslands with scattered trees, juniper-sage flats, riparian areas, savannahs, and agricultural or ranch lands with groves or lines of trees; requires adjacent suitable foraging areas such as grasslands, or alfalfa or grain fields supporting rodent populations	Possible; the proposed site with the nearness of the American River could support reproduction, and provide cover or forage for Swainson's hawk.
<i>Elanus leucurus</i>	white-tailed kite	--/FP	CNDDDB	Rolling foothills and valley margins with scattered oaks and river bottomlands or marshes next to deciduous woodland; open grasslands, meadows, or marshes for foraging close to isolated, dense-topped trees for nesting and perching	Possible; the proposed site with the nearness of the American River could support reproduction, and provide cover or forage for white-tailed kite.

Notes:	
--	No official listing to date; not applicable
1B.1	California rare plant rank for plants rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere; seriously threatened in California
1B.2	California rare plant rank for plants rare, threatened, or endangered in California and elsewhere; moderately threatened in California
CNDDDB	California Natural Diversity Database
CE	Listed as endangered under the California Endangered Species Act
CT	Listed as threatened under the California Endangered Species Act
DPS	Distinct Population Segment
EIR	Environmental Impact Report
FE	Listed as endangered under the Federal Endangered Species Act
FP	California Department of Fish and Wildlife Fully Protected
FT	Listed as threatened under the Federal Endangered Species Act
IPaC	Information, Planning, and Conservation System
SSC	California Department of Fish and Wildlife Species of Special Concern
WL	California Department of Fish and Wildlife Watch List



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Memorandum

To: Traci Canfield, Planner
Sacramento Regional Transit

From: Atkins

Subject: Horn Light Rail (LR) Station, Cultural Resources Document Approach

Date: April 6, 2015

This memorandum (memo) describes the activities conducted as part of Atkins' scope of work for environmental support services for the Horn Light Rail (LR) Station. This memo provides a framework for the Cultural Resources approach for compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (NHPA), the cultural resources found, and our recommended approach to documenting Section 106 compliance.

Atkins contacted the North Central Information Center (NCIC) of the Historical Resource Information System to determine the presence or absence of cultural resources within the project's Area of Potential Effect (APE). The following is a brief summary of NCIC consultation results:

- No cultural resources were identified within the project site.
- Ten (10) cultural resources were identified within 0.25 mile of the project site.
- The closest cultural resource is the Silva Brothers Winery located south of the project site; the office buildings immediately south of the project site are part of the Silva Brothers Winery.
- The Silva Brothers Winery was evaluated for eligibility for the National Register of Historic Places. The winery complex does not retain the integrity of design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, or association and, therefore, is not eligible for the National Register of Historic Places.

Due to the lack of cultural resources on the project site, the urban and developed condition of the project site, and the ineligibility status of the adjacent Silva Brothers Winery, the Horn LR Station project has a low potential to adversely impact known cultural resources. Therefore, Atkins recommends a focused Technical Letter Report as the appropriate level of documentation for Section 106 compliance. Please let us know if RT concurs with this assessment. Upon your approval and direction, Atkins will prepare a draft Technical Letter Report for your review. Preparation of the Technical Letter Report would be covered under existing Task 3.1.2 of approved Work Order No. 11.



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Technical Memorandum

To: Traci Canfield, Planner
Sacramento Regional Transit

From: Atkins

Subject: Horn Light Rail (LR) Station, Freight Line Relocation Ground-borne Vibration and Ground-borne Noise Sensitivity Analysis

Date: March 20, 2015

This technical memorandum (memo) describes Atkins' ground-borne vibration and ground-borne noise sensitivity analysis for the proposed Horn Light Rail Station project (Project). Specifically, this memo contains a sensitivity analysis for an array of potential land uses, such as recording studios and medical offices, at the existing office building location south of the Project's proposed freight line realignment. In addition, this memo estimates the Project's potential to result in structural damage at the adjacent office buildings.

Sacramento Regional Transit District (Sac RT) proposes the new Horn Light Rail Station as a joint project between Sac RT and the City of Rancho Cordova (City). The Project would result in the construction and operation of a new light rail station south of Folsom Boulevard near the intersection of Folsom Boulevard and Horn Road. The Project would not alter the alignment of the existing light rail line or change the frequency of use. However, the existing Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) freight track adjacent to the new station would be realigned to maintain required setback and clear sight distances. It is anticipated that the freight track would be relocated approximately 15 feet south of the current alignment, and closer to the existing offices south of the Project location. It is estimated that the freight track realignment would place with freight track centerline approximately 25 feet from the nearby offices.

Objectives of this Technical Memo

- 1) Summarize the realigned UPRR freight track's estimated ground-borne vibration and ground-borne noise generation.
- 2) Identify the potential for land use-ground-borne vibration sensitivities (if any) at the adjacent office building location.
- 3) Identify the potential for land use-ground-borne noise sensitivities (if any) at the adjacent office building location.
- 4) Identify the potential for vibration-induced structural damage (if any) at the adjacent office buildings.

Limitations of this Technical Memo

This memo was not prepared for California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) or National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) compliance purposes. The sole purpose of this memo is to provide an analysis to substantiate discussion of ground-borne noise and vibration sensitivities for a variety of land uses at the adjacent office building location in relation to the Project's proposed UPRR freight line realignment. Ground-born vibration and noise generation of the LR line is not assessed within this memo. This memo was prepared using the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment guidance (FTA 2006).

Vibration and Noise Generation of Realigned UPRR Freight Track

As stated above, it is anticipated that the freight track would be relocated approximately 15 feet south of the current alignment, and closer to the existing offices south of the Project location. It is estimated that the freight track realignment would place with freight track centerline approximately 25 feet from the nearby offices. Freight track operations are infrequent, with trains usually running at night. The rail design has a maximum speed capacity of 10 miles per hour (mph). It is estimated that the majority of trains operate at 5 mph at the Project site. Ground-borne vibration may result in feelable movement as well as ground-borne noise, which is caused by the vibration of room surfaces. The generation of ground-borne vibration and ground-borne noise was estimated for the realigned freight track, as detailed below.

Ground-borne Vibration

Ground-borne vibration, expressed as VdB, was estimated for the realigned freight track. Using FTA's generalized ground surface vibration curve for locomotive-powered freight at a distance of 25 feet, and the appropriate speed and suspension-type adjustments, it is estimated that the realigned freight track would generate approximately 78 VdB at the existing office buildings.

The following assumptions and adjustments were used in estimating the level of ground-borne vibration generated by the realigned freight track.

Vibration Curve:	90 VdB	Figure 10-1. Generalized Ground Surface Curves (FTA 2006), Locomotive Powered Passenger or Freight (50 mph) at a distance of 25 feet from the receptor.
Train Speed:	-20 VdB	Vehicle speed was adjusted to 5 mph from a reference speed of 50 mph.
Stiff Primary Suspension:	+8 VdB	Transit vehicles with stiff primary suspensions have been shown to create high vibration levels.
Jointed Track:	+5 VdB	Jointed track can cause higher vibration levels than welded track.

Building Type: **-7 VdB** Coupling loss to building foundation for a 1-2 story Masonry Building. The general rule is the heavier the building construction, the greater the coupling loss.

Adjusted Vibration = **76 VdB.**

Ground-borne Noise

FTA's guidance provides adjustments for translating ground-borne vibration into ground-borne noise. The noise level, expressed in dBA, depends on the frequency of the vibration. Specifically, the FTA provides conversion factors for Low Frequency, Typical Frequency, and High Frequency characteristics. Each frequency range is described below:

Low Frequency: Low-frequency vibration characteristics can be assumed for subways surrounded by cohesiveless sandy soil or whenever a vibration isolation track support system will be used. Low-frequency characteristics can be assumed for most surface track.

Typical Frequency: The typical vibration characteristic is the default assumption for subways. It should be assumed for subways until there is information indicating that one of the other assumptions is appropriate. It should be used for surface track when the soil is very stiff with a high clay content.

High Frequency: High-frequency characteristics should be assumed for subways whenever the transit structure is founded in rock or when there is very stiff clayey soil.

The realigned freight track is assumed to generate vibration within the typical frequency range. The following assumptions and adjustments were used in estimating the level of ground-borne noise generated by the realigned freight track.

Adjusted Vibration: **78 VdB** (see Ground-borne Vibration section above)

Resonance: **+6 dB** Amplification due to resonances of floors, walls, and ceilings.

Typical Frequency: **-35 dB** Adjustment to estimate the A-weighted sound level given the average vibration velocity level of the room surfaces.

Ground-borne Noise: **47 dBA**

Sensitive-Use Use Categories

FTA's guidance identifies the following sensitive-use categories:

Vibration Category 1 - High Sensitivity: Included in Category 1 are buildings where vibration would interfere with operations within the building, including levels that may be well below

those associated with human annoyance. Concert halls and other special-use facilities are covered separately (see below). Typical land uses covered by Category 1 are: vibration-sensitive research and manufacturing, hospitals with vibration-sensitive equipment, and university research operations.

Vibration Category 2 - Residential: This category covers all residential land uses and any buildings where people sleep, such as hotels and hospitals.

Vibration Category 3 - Institutional: Vibration Category 3 includes schools, churches, other institutions, and quiet offices that do not have vibration-sensitive equipment, but still have the potential for activity interference.

The existing office buildings are considered a Vibration Category 3 land use. However, other land uses may be located within the office buildings at a future date. Special-use facilities are covered separately under FTA Guidance and include: concert halls, TV studios, recording studios, auditoriums, and theaters.

Land Use - Vibration Sensitivity Analysis

The realigned freight track is estimated to generate up to 78 VdB at the adjacent office buildings. Freight activity would occur at night. However, for the purposes of a conservative analysis, it was assumed that the activity would occur while sensitive land uses are also in-use. Table 1 contains the FTA’s sensitive land use ground-borne vibration impact levels and analysis of the realigned freight track’s estimated vibration relative to the impact levels.

Table 1. Land Use – Vibration Sensitivity Analysis

<i>Land Use Type</i>	<i>Ground-borne Vibration Impact Level</i>	<i>Realigned Freight Track’s Vibration Exceed Impact Level?</i>
Category 1: High Sensitivity	65 VdB	No
Category 2: Residential	80 VdB	No
Category 3: Institutional	83 VdB	No
Concert Hall	65 VdB	Yes
TV Studio	65 VdB	Yes
Recording Studios	65 VdB	Yes

Auditoriums	80 VdB	No
Theaters	80 VdB	No

Sources: Table 8-1. Ground-Borne Vibration (GBV) and Ground-Borne Noise (GBN) Impact Criteria for General Assessment and Table 8-2. Ground-Borne Vibration and Noise Impact Criteria for Special Buildings (FTA 2006)

As shown in Table 1, the realigned freight track would not exceed the FTA’s identified vibration impact levels for Category 1, Category 2, or Category 3 land uses. In addition, the realigned freight track would not exceed the vibration impact levels for auditoriums or theaters. However, the realigned freight track would exceed the FTA’s vibration impact levels for concert halls, TV studios, and recording studios.

Land Use – Ground-borne Noise Sensitive Analysis

The realigned freight track is estimated to generate up to 47 dBA from ground-borne noise within the adjacent office buildings. Freight activity would occur at night. However, for the purposes of a conservative analysis, it was assumed that the activity would occur while sensitive land uses are also in-use. Table 2 contains the FTA’s sensitive land use ground-borne noise impact levels and analysis of the realigned freight track’s estimated vibration relative to the impact levels.

Table 2. Land Use – Ground-borne Noise Sensitivity Analysis

<i>Land Use Type</i>	<i>Ground-borne Noise Impact Level</i>	<i>Realigned Freight Track’s Ground-borne Noise Exceed Impact Level?</i>
Category 1: High Sensitivity	Not Applicable	No
Category 2: Residential	43 dBA	Yes
Category 3: Institutional	48 dBA	No
Concert Hall	25 dBA	Yes
TV Studio	25 dBA	Yes
Recording Studios	25 dBA	Yes

Auditoriums	38 dBA	Yes
Theaters	43 dBA	Yes

Sources: Table 8-1. Ground-Borne Vibration (GBV) and Ground-Borne Noise (GBN) Impact Criteria for General Assessment and Table 8-2. Ground-Borne Vibration and Noise Impact Criteria for Special Buildings (FTA 2006)

As shown in Table 2, the realigned freight track would not exceed the FTA's identified ground-borne noise impact levels for Category 1 or Category 3 land uses. However, the realigned freight track would exceed the FTA's ground-borne noise impact levels for Category 2 land uses, concert halls, TV studios, recording studios, auditoriums, and theaters.

Vibration-induced Structural Damage

The FTA's identified threshold for structural damage include the following (based on type of structure):

94 VdB - Building Category III, Non-engineered Timber and Masonry Buildings

90 VdB - Building Category IV, Buildings extremely susceptible to Vibration Damage

It is estimated that the realigned freight track would generate approximately 76 VdB at the existing office. This estimated vibration is well below the FTA's threshold for structural damage, even for extremely fragile buildings. Therefore, the freight track realignment does not have the potential to result in structural damage to the adjacent office building.

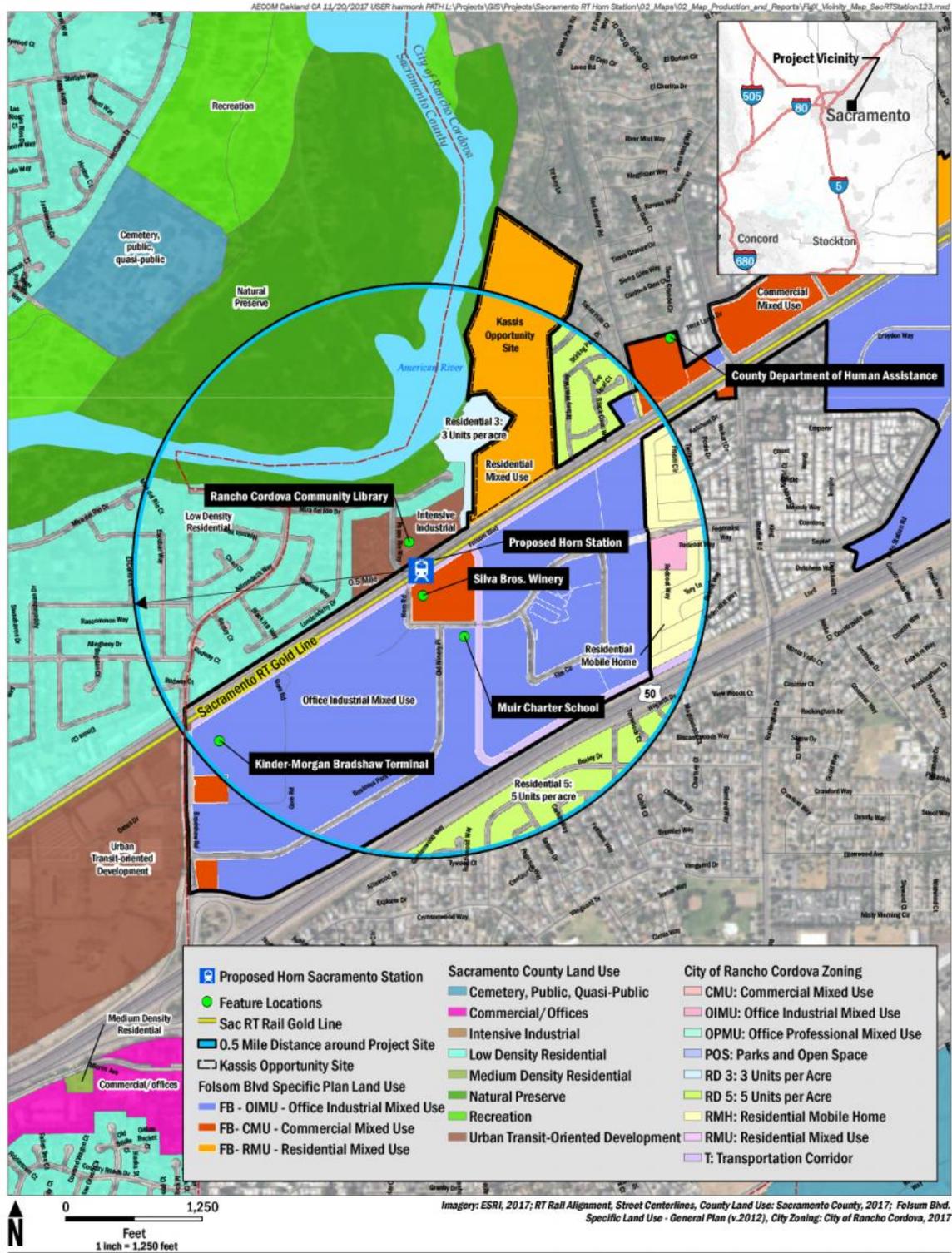
REFERENCES

Federal Trade Administration. 2006. Transit Noise and Vibration Impact Assessment (doc number).
Month

 **Regional Transit** **CONCEPTUAL SITE PLAN - SCHEME D**



Figure 1. Site Diagram



AECOM

SACRAMENTO RT HORN STATION

Project Vicinity Map

Figure 2. Vicinity Map

RESOLUTION NO. 18-05-_____

Adopted by the Board of Directors of the Sacramento Regional Transit District on this date:

May 14, 2018

ADOPTING A CATEGORICAL EXEMPTION FOR THE HORN LIGHT RAIL STATION PROJECT

WHEREAS, a Project Evaluation was prepared by and for the Sacramento Regional Transit District (SacRT) for the proposed Horn Light Rail Station (the Project) under the Guidelines of the State Secretary for Resources, (Title 14, California Code of Regulations, Section 15332); and

WHEREAS, the Project Evaluation determined that the Project is consistent with a Class 32 Categorical Exemption.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that this Board does hereby adopt the following findings, which this Board finds are supported by substantial evidence in light of the whole record:

- A. THAT, a Notice of Exemption has been prepared pursuant to California Environmental Quality act (CEQA);
- B. THAT, the Project is Categorically Exempt consistent with state and SacRT guidelines implementing CEQA;
- C. THAT, the Project would not trigger any exceptions to the application of a Categorical Exemption and would not have unusual circumstances that may result in a significant impact on the environment;
- D. THAT, the Board certifies the Categorical Exemption has been completed and is in compliance with CEQA and is consistent with state and SacRT guidelines implementing CEQA;
- E. THAT, the Board has reviewed and considered the Categorical Exemption;
- F. THAT, the Board has before it all of the necessary environmental information required by CEQA to properly analyze and evaluate any and all of the potential environmental effects of the proposed Project;
- G. THAT, the Board has reviewed and considered the Categorical Exemption, which reflects the Board's independent judgment;
- H. THAT, based on the evidence presented and the records and files herein, the Board determines that the Project will not have a significant effect on the environment;

RESOLVED FURTHER THAT, the Board approves and adopts a Categorical Exemption for the Horn Light Rail Station; and

RESOLVED FURTHER THAT, the Board approves the Project and directs staff to file a Notice of Exemption within five working days of this approval; and

RESOLVED FURTHER THAT, the Board designates the Director, Project Management, or his/her designee, located at 1400 29th Street, Sacramento, CA 95816, as the custodian of the records in this matter.

PATRICK KENNEDY, Chair

A T T E S T:

HENRY LI, Secretary

By: _____
Cindy Brooks, Assistant Secretary