

State Clearinghouse #2011082032



RAINIER CROSS-TOWN CONNECTOR FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT MAY 2015

Prepared for

City of Petaluma
Planning and Building Department
11 English Street
Petaluma, CA
94952-2610

URS

Prepared by

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1333 Broadway, Suite 800
Oakland, CA 94612

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4. Councilmember Mike Healy
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1. INTRODUCTION

In accordance with Sections 15088, 15089, and 15132 of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, the City of Petaluma has prepared this Final Environmental Impact Report (Final EIR or FEIR) for the proposed Rainier Avenue Cross-Town Connector project. This FEIR includes the following chapters: 1) Introduction; 2) Responses to Comments; and 3) Corrections and Additions to the Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR or DEIR). The Mitigation Monitoring Program for the proposed project is included in Chapter 4.

1.1 LOCATION

The project is located in the City of Petaluma, north of East Washington Street and south of Corona Road. The project would extend the existing Rainier Avenue at its terminus with North McDowell Avenue westward, crossing under Highway 101, over the Sonoma-Marin Area Rail Transit (SMART) corridor and Petaluma River, and intersecting with Petaluma Boulevard North (see Figure 3-1, Rainier Avenue Cross-Town Connector Regional Location).

The project site is composed of portions of ten different parcels.¹ The project site is primarily undeveloped. Only three parcels contain any development—Assessor’s Parcel Number (APN) 007-380-002, which is developed with a small, City-owned pump station; the State-owned and developed Highway 101 right-of-way; and APN 048-142-016, which contains the SMART tracks. The project site intersects the Petaluma River on the west side of Highway 101. Riparian forest, shrubs, and grasses are located along the edge of the project site east of Highway 101, and along the Petaluma River and SMART tracks to the west of Highway 101. In addition, a church is located on APN 048-200-005-000, adjacent to and to the north of the project as it connects to Petaluma Boulevard North. This land is located in unincorporated Sonoma County.

Land uses outside the project corridor of Rainier Avenue to the east of North McDowell Boulevard include single- and multi-family residential uses and park uses. To the immediate north of the project between Highway 101 and North McDowell Boulevard, land uses consist of commercial office and light industrial uses. Land uses to the south consist of undeveloped land. Land uses to the west of Highway 101 include undeveloped lands, the Petaluma River, SMART Corridor train tracks, and commercial, light industrial, and scattered residential uses.

1.2 SUMMARY OF THE PROPOSED PROJECT

The Rainier Avenue Cross-Town Connector Project (project) consists of a new 0.65-mile long 4-lane arterial roadway connecting North McDowell Avenue on the eastern side of Highway 101 to Petaluma Boulevard North on the western side of the City. The Rainier Avenue Cross Town Connector would extend at grade from the signalized North McDowell Avenue intersection, cross under Highway 101 under an elevated portion of the freeway that will be constructed as part of the Marin-Sonoma Narrows High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes project, and would cross over the SMART Corridor and Petaluma River on a bridge. After crossing the Petaluma River, the elevated

¹ APN 007-380-002, 007-380-027, 007-390-005, 007-391-038, 048-142-013, 048-142-014, 048-142-015, 048-142-016, 136-100-025, and Highway 101 right-of-way.

bridge would return to at grade, and would terminate at a signalized T-intersection at Petaluma Boulevard North. Table 1-1 presents a summary of Key Project Components.

Table 1-1. Summary of Key Project Components

Component	Relevant Information
Roadway	
Lanes	4-lanes (2-lanes each direction)
Length	0.65 miles
Width	Approximately 113 feet
Median	Raised—variable from 14 to 24 feet wide
Landscaping Strip	8.5- foot wide, non-continuous
Signals	2 (modification to existing N. McDowell/Rainier, new Petaluma Boulevard North/Rainier)
Multi-Modal Facilities	
Bike Lanes	Class II, 6-foot wide
Sidewalk	6-foot wide
Highway 101 Undercrossing	
Width	Approximately 118 feet
Length	Approximately 166 feet
Vertical Clearance	16-foot minimum
Bike Lanes	Class II, 6-foot wide
Sidewalk	6-foot wide
Petaluma River/SMART Corridor Bridge	
Length	Approximately 508 feet
Height	Elevation 65 feet—highest point
Width	Approximately 88 feet
Bike Lanes	Class II, 6-foot wide
Sidewalk	6-foot wide
Piles	299 60 foot-long, cast-in steel shell piles
Pile Depth	50 feet
Utilities	
Storm Drainage	Underground pipes, inlets, swales and ditches
Storm Water Vegetated Swales	2 (approximately 540 and 780 square feet)
Street Lighting	City of Petaluma Standard street lights

1.3 CEQA PROCESS

Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15082, the City prepared and circulated a Notice of Preparation (NOP) of a DEIR for the proposed project to the State Clearinghouse and interested agencies and persons on August 11, 2011 for a 30-day review period. Comments received on the NOP and comments received at the public scoping meeting were both considered in the preparation of the DEIR.

The DEIR was made available to various public agencies, citizen groups, and interested individuals for a 45-day public review period from July 24 through September 8, 2014. The City of Petaluma Planning Commission and City Council held two public hearings to accept written and verbal comments on the DEIR on August 12 and September 8, 2014, respectively.

The DEIR was circulated to state agencies for review through the State Clearinghouse of the Governor's Office of Planning and Research. Copies of a Notice of Completion (NOC) form of the DEIR were also sent to businesses and residents within 500 feet of the project site, other interested groups and agencies, the County Clerk, and to individuals who commented on the NOP. In addition, on July 24, 2014 the Argus Courier included a notice regarding the availability of the DEIR. Copies of the DEIR were available for review at the City of Petaluma Community Development Department (CDD), the Petaluma Regional Library, the Petaluma Community Center, and online at the CDD website, <http://cityofpetaluma.net/cdd/major-projects.html>.

The purpose of the review period is to provide interested public agencies, groups and individuals the opportunity to comment on the adequacy of the DEIR and to submit testimony on the possible environmental effects of the proposed project.

This document, together with the DEIR, makes up the FEIR as defined in the CEQA Guidelines Section 15132 as follows:

The Final EIR shall consist of:

- (a) The Draft EIR or a revision of the draft.*
- (b) Comments and recommendations received on the Draft EIR either verbatim or in summary.*
- (c) A list of persons, organizations, and public agencies commenting on the Draft EIR.*
- (d) The responses of the Lead Agency to significant environmental points raised in the review and consultation process.*
- (e) Any other information added by the Lead Agency.*

As Lead Agency under CEQA, the City must provide each public agency that commented on the DEIR with a copy of its responses to comments at least 10 days before certifying the FEIR. In addition, the Lead Agency may also provide an opportunity for members of the public to review the FEIR before certification, although this is not a requirement of CEQA.

1.4 USE OF THIS DOCUMENT

The FEIR allows the public and Lead Agency to review revisions to the DEIR, comments, and responses to comments before consideration of project approval. This FEIR (which includes the DEIR, incorporated by reference) will serve as the environmental document used by the City when considering approval of the project. After completing the FEIR and before approving the project, the Lead Agency must make the following three certifications (CEQA Guidelines Section 15090).

- The FEIR has been completed in compliance with CEQA.
- The FEIR was presented to the decision-making body of the Lead Agency, and the decision-making body reviewed and considered the information in the FEIR prior to approving the project.
- The FEIR reflects the Lead Agency's independent judgment and analysis.

In addition, if an EIR that has been certified for a project identifies one or more significant environmental impacts, the Lead Agency must adopt findings of fact (CEQA Guidelines Section 15091[a]). For each significant impact, the Lead Agency must make one of the following findings.

- Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into, the project which avoid or substantially lessen the significant environmental effect as identified in the EIR.
- Such changes or alterations are within the responsibility and jurisdiction of another public agency and not the agency making the finding. Such changes have been adopted by such other agency or can and should be adopted by such other agency.
- Specific economic, legal, social, technological, or other considerations, including provision of employment opportunities for highly trained workers, make infeasible the mitigation measures or project alternatives identified in the FEIR.

Each finding must be accompanied by a brief explanation of the rationale for the finding. In addition, the Lead Agency must adopt, in conjunction with the findings, a program for reporting or monitoring the changes that it has either required in the project or made a condition of approval to avoid or substantially lessen impacts (CEQA Guidelines Section 15091[d]). These measures must be fully enforceable through permit conditions, agreements, or other measures. This program is referred to as the Mitigation Monitoring Program (MMP) and is provided in Chapter 4 herein.

In addition, when a Lead Agency approves a project that would result in significant and unavoidable impacts that are disclosed in the FEIR, the agency must state in writing its reasons for supporting the approved action (CEQA Guidelines Section 15093[b]). This statement of overriding considerations must be supported by substantial information in the record, including the FEIR. The DEIR concluded that the project would not result in any significant unavoidable impacts (Section 2.2.3, and impact findings in Section 4). An evaluation was also completed for cumulative impacts, which considered the findings of the City's General Plan 2025. Four resources were identified in the General Plan with potentially significant unavoidable cumulative impacts: Alteration of biological habitats, air quality (contribution to greenhouse gas emissions), noise, and traffic. The City adopted statements of overriding considerations at the time it approved the General Plan. This project would not change those original findings, or add any additional cumulatively significant impacts.

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2. RESPONSE TO COMMENTS

2.1 OVERVIEW

The purpose of the public review of the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) is to evaluate the adequacy of the environmental analysis in terms of compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Section 15151 of the CEQA Guidelines states the following regarding standards from which adequacy is judged:

An EIR should be prepared with a sufficient degree of analysis to provide decision-makers with information which enables them to make a decision which intelligently takes account of environmental consequences. An evaluation of the environmental effects of a proposed project need not be exhaustive, but the sufficiency of an EIR is to be reviewed in the light of what is reasonably feasible. Disagreement among experts does not make an EIR inadequate, but the EIR should summarize the main points of disagreement among experts. The courts have not looked for perfection but for adequacy, completeness, and a good faith effort at full disclosure.

The purpose of each response to a comment on the DEIR is to address the significant environmental issue(s) raised by each comment. This typically requires clarification of points contained in the DEIR. Section 15088(b) of the CEQA Guidelines describes the evaluation that CEQA requires in the response to comments by stating:

The written response shall describe the disposition of significant environmental issues raised (e.g., revisions to the proposed project to mitigate anticipated impacts or objections). In particular, the major environmental issues raised when the Lead Agency's position is at variance with recommendations and objections raised in the comments must be addressed in detail giving reasons why specific comments and suggestions were not accepted. There must be good faith, reasoned analysis in response. Conclusory statements unsupported by factual information will not suffice.

Section 15204(a) (Focus of Review) of the CEQA Guidelines helps the public and public agencies to focus their review of environmental documents and their comments to lead agencies. Case law has held that the Lead Agency is not obligated to undertake every suggestion given them, provided that the agency responds to significant environmental issues and makes a good faith effort at disclosure. Section 15204.5(a) of the CEQA Guidelines clarifies this for reviewers by stating:

In reviewing draft EIRs, persons and public agencies should focus on the sufficiency of the document in identifying and analyzing the possible impacts on the environment and ways in which the significant effects of the project might be avoided or mitigated. Comments are most helpful when they suggest additional specific alternatives or mitigation measures that would provide better ways to avoid or mitigate the significant environmental effects. At the same time, reviewers should be aware that the adequacy of an EIR is determined in terms of what is reasonably feasible, in light of factors such as the magnitude of the project at issue, the severity of its likely environmental impacts, and the geographic scope of the project. CEQA does not require a Lead Agency to conduct

every test or perform all research, study, and experimentation recommended or demanded by commenters. When responding to comments, lead agencies need only respond to significant environmental issues and do not need to provide all information requested by reviewers, as long as a good faith effort at full disclosure is made in the EIR.

This guideline encourages reviewers to examine the sufficiency of the environmental document, particularly in regard to significant effects, and to suggest specific mitigation measures and project alternatives. Given that an effect is not considered significant in the absence of substantial evidence, subsection (c) advises reviewers that comments should be accompanied by factual support. Section 15204(c) of the CEQA Guidelines states:

Reviewers should explain the basis for their comments, and, should submit data or references offering facts, reasonable assumptions based on facts, or expert opinion supported by facts in support of the comments. Pursuant to Section 15064, an effect shall not be considered significant in the absence of substantial evidence.

2.2 LIST OF COMMENTERS ON THE DRAFT EIR

The City of Petaluma received a total of ten (10) written comment letters on the DEIR. In addition to the written comment letters, the City conducted a public Planning Commission hearing to accept written and verbal comments on the DEIR on August 12, 2014. A City Council public hearing was also held on September 8, 2014 to accept written and verbal comments on the DEIR. Each comment letter has been assigned a corresponding number, and comments within each comment letter are also numbered. The comments subsequently follow the following format, “1-1, 1-2, etc.” in this Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR).

Written comments made during and after the public review of the DEIR intermixed points and opinions relevant to the project’s merits with points and opinions relevant to the potentially significant environmental effects of the project. The responses acknowledge or note comments addressing points and opinions relevant to the project’s merits, and discuss as necessary the points relevant to the environmental review required by CEQA. Table 2-1 lists the organizations and persons who provided written and/or oral comments on the DEIR to the City during the 45-day public review period.

Written Comments

1. California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW)
2. California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)
3. Planning Commissioner Jennifer Pierre
4. Councilmember Mike Healy
5. Dennis Kelly
6. David Keller, Petaluma River Council
7. David Libchitz

8. Frederick Etzel
9. Sonoma-Marín Area Rail Trail (SMART)
10. Wayne Leach, Simon Premium Outlets

Oral Comments

11. Planning Commission Transcript

David Libchitz

Jennifer Pierre

12. City Council Transcript

Wayne Leach

John Chaney

David Keller

Teresa Barrett, Councilmember

Kathy Miller, Councilmember

Table A: Public Commenters

Corresponding Number	Date of Correspondence/ Oral Comment	Commenter
Written Comments		
State Agencies		
CL 1	August 27, 2014	CDFW
CL 2	September 5, 2014	Caltrans
City Council and Planning Commission		
CL 3	August 12, 2014	Jennifer Pierre, Planning Commissioner
CL 4	August 24, 2014	Mike Healy, City Council Member
Community Members		
CL 5	September 1, 2014	Dennis Kelly
CL 6	September 8, 2014	David Keller, Petaluma River Council
CL 7	September 8, 2014	David Libchitz
CL 8	September 8, 2014	Frederick Etzel
CL 10	September 8, 2014	Wayne F. Leach, Simon Premium Outlets
Regional Organizations		
CL 9	September 8, 2014	SMART
Oral Comments		
Planning Commission Meeting, August 12, 2014		
Transcript 1	August 12, 2014	Planning Commission
		David Libchitz
		Jennifer Pierre
City Council Meeting, September 8, 2014		
Transcript 2	September 8, 2014	City Council
		Wayne Leach
		John Chaney
		David Keller
		Teresa Barrett, Councilmember
		Kathy Miller, Councilmember
Notes: CL = Comment Letter CDFW = California Department of Fish and Wildlife Caltrans = California Department of Transportation SMART = Sonoma Marin Area Rapid Transit		

2.3 MASTER RESPONSES

The following Master Responses have been prepared to address comments that were raised by multiple commenters. The issues addressed by each Master Response are summarized. Following each issue summary is a response. The order of the following Master Responses does not reflect the importance of any single issue in relation to all of the others.

Master Response 1: Cumulative Analysis Approach

Summary of comments: The cumulative analysis prepared in the DEIR was incomplete or inadequate.

Response: The cumulative analysis was prepared using the General Plan method as described in CEQA Guidelines Section 15130(b)(1)(B):

A summary of projections contained in an adopted local, regional or statewide plan, or related planning document, that describes or evaluates conditions contributing to the cumulative effect. Such plans may include: a general plan, regional transportation plan, or plans for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions. A summary of projections may also be contained in an adopted or certified prior environmental document for such a plan. Such projections may be supplemented with additional information such as a regional modeling program. Any such document shall be referenced and made available to the public at a location specified by the lead agency.

The cumulative analysis considers full implementation of the City's 2025 General Plan including but not limited to the following specific projects:

- Shasta Avenue extension to Rainier (seen in Figure 3.2-4 of the General Plan EIR)
- Sid Commons
- Petaluma Outlet Works Expansion

The 2025 General Plan assumed an increase of 27 percent in housing units and an increase of 36 percent in non-residential building area would be developed by 2025. However, growth in the city of Petaluma slowed after the adoption of the General Plan in May of 2008. A full buildout of the General Plan may occur later than the originally anticipated 2025 date.

The project cumulative impacts analysis is consistent with the assumption used to assess impacts from buildout of the General Plan, as presented in the General Plan EIR. The development assumptions include an increase in housing and non-housing buildings, a new land use map, and an extension of the existing urban growth boundary for the City of Petaluma. For most resources, the project cumulative impacts analysis found no cumulatively considerable impacts from the project.

Two sections of particular concern in the public comments, the cumulative analysis of traffic and the cumulative analysis of hydrology, are addressed in more detail below. The cumulative impact

analysis and the General Plan EIR it references thoroughly analyzed these impacts at the full General Plan buildout, including the project, to determine if the project would contribute to a cumulatively considerable impact.

Cumulative Traffic Analysis

The Rainier Cross-Town Connector traffic study included evaluation of the cumulative traffic impacts resulting from buildout of the City's General Plan, including the project. This section provides a brief overview of the methods used to analyze cumulative traffic impacts. Master Response 5 provides a more detailed description of the findings from the analysis. As described in Section 6.4.1.12, the Cumulative No Project and Cumulative With Project traffic analysis are based on traffic generated from full buildout of the General Plan. The only difference between Cumulative No Project and Cumulative With Project is that under Cumulative No Project, the project is *not assumed* to be in place, while under Cumulative With Project the project *is assumed* to be in place. This allows for the evaluation of the cumulatively considerable impact that is associated with the project.

The buildout of the General Plan includes development projects in the vicinity of the Rainier Avenue Extension such as the Deer Creek Village, Petaluma Outlet Works Expansion, and Sid Commons, among others. Major roadway improvements included in the cumulative traffic analysis are consistent with the proposed roadway network in the General Plan, and include the widening of Highway 101 to provide HOV vehicle lanes in both directions, the widening of Old Redwood Highway Interchange, improvements to the Washington Street Interchange, and completion of the North Petaluma Boulevard street grid, including the Shasta Avenue Extension and southward extension of Industrial Avenue. These roadway expansions are identified, and would have to be funded through the City of Petaluma's Traffic Impact Fee Program, or other available sources.

As described in Section 6.4.1.12, under Cumulative No Project Conditions neither the Rainier Avenue Extension nor the Shasta Avenue Extension would be built, and access to Sid Commons and Petaluma Outlet Mall Expansion would be provided through other nearby roadways such as Graylawn Avenue, Burlington Drive, and the existing Petaluma Outlet Mall to ensure consistency with the land use plans in the Petaluma General Plan. Under Cumulative Plus Project Conditions, the Rainier Avenue Extension would allow for the Shasta Avenue extension, Sid Commons driveway, and the Petaluma Outlet Mall Expansion driveway, consistent with the Petaluma General Plan. As described in Section 5.5.2, Alternative B would not allow for connections, and access to these land uses would be similar to Cumulative No Project Conditions. As described in Section 5.5.3, Alternative C would allow for connections similar to the project. Therefore, traffic generated by the adjacent development projects is accounted for under all cumulative conditions scenarios.

Cumulative Hydrology Analysis

The Rainier Cross-Town Connector evaluated the cumulative hydrological impacts resulting from buildout of the City's General Plan, including the project. The methodology utilized in the analysis assumes full buildout of the City's Land Use Plan as identified in the General Plan and analyzed in the General Plan EIR, which included development projects in the vicinity of the

Rainier Avenue Extension such as the Deer Creek Village, Petaluma Outlet Works Expansion, and Sid Commons, among others. The General Plan EIR analysis found that full buildout of the General Plan may expose people or structures to risk of existing flooding hazards or may place structures which could impede or redirect flood flows. Policies in the General Plan therefore require projects like the Rainier Avenue cross-town connector to contribute zero net fill. In addition, the General Plan lays out policies for the City of Petaluma to re-map the 100-year flood boundary and develop a regional plan to minimize flooding impacts. With mitigations, the full buildout of the General Plan was not found to significantly impact hydrology and this project was not found to be cumulatively considerable. The project specific hydrology impacts are discussed further in Master Response 7.

Master Response 2: Establishing Baseline for CEQA

Summary of comments: The baseline used in the Draft EIR was not accurate or was incomplete.

Response: The California Supreme Court recently ruled through the *Neighbors for Smart Rail v. Exposition Metro Line* (S202828 - 8.5.13.) case that existing conditions should serve as the baseline unless substantial evidence is provided to justify otherwise. By affirming that a baseline other than existing conditions may be used, the court accepted that the guidelines allow for this provision but only under certain circumstances.

In the *Neighbors for Smart Rail v. Exposition Metro Line* ruling, the court states, "A departure from this norm can be justified by substantial evidence that an analysis based on existing conditions would tend to be misleading or without information valued to the EIR users." In this EIR, the existing condition was used as the baseline for all of the analyses except Transportation and two additional sections where part of the analysis relies on Transportation (Air Quality and Noise). In these sections, the existing traffic conditions were described as required by CEQA and in addition, the traffic projections for the project opening year of 2020 were described. These traffic projections were used as the baseline in the Transportation, Air Quality and Noise sections because these analyses required comparing traffic conditions between the Project and No Project alternatives.

If existing traffic conditions were used as a baseline in these sections, this would have provided for a misleading analysis that would not have provided the necessary information to EIR users. Comparing the traffic contribution of the project (projected to 2020) to existing conditions when the NOP was issued would not represent a scenario that could ever occur, and would understate the effect of the project and potentially understate the need for project-related mitigation. Such an analysis would not take into account overall growth in the city's traffic that will occur through the opening year of 2020. The analysis of these lower traffic volumes could consequently show acceptable levels of service when the project volumes are added, as opposed to the higher volumes of 2020 conditions combined with project-related changes in traffic that might indicate potential impacts and the need for mitigation.

The traffic analysis methods are described in Section 4.12.3.1, including the roadway network used for the traffic modeling. Improvements to US 101, Old Redwood Highway, and local streets

that are anticipated by the year 2020 are important changes that were included, and create a representative Opening Year condition consistent with the General Plan and transportation improvement planning. In fact, most of the anticipated projects that were included in the traffic analysis are already in construction or completed. Therefore, not including these predicted conditions or background traffic growth, while only including the proposed project based on traffic at the time the NOP was issued, would almost certainly have undercounted trips, volumes and levels of service. Current status of these roadway network improvements are as follows:

Highway 101 Widening. The Marin-Sonoma Narrows project is widening the US 101 corridor through these counties to six lanes, adding High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) facilities, and updating infrastructure connecting the freeway to local roads. Construction in Petaluma is currently underway with completion expected in 2018.

Old Redwood Highway Interchange Widening. The Old Redwood/US 101 Interchange between Petaluma Boulevard North and North McDowell Boulevard will widen the Old Redwood Highway overpass to four traffic lanes, with one bicycle lane in each direction and ADA-compliant pedestrian paths in each direction. The new interchange will also come with new on and off ramps, each with two lanes. The highway will be widened to accommodate standard shoulders and sound walls will be built next to existing sound walls along the southbound highway. This project is under construction and expected to finish in summer 2015.

Washington Street Interchange Improvements. The East Washington Street Interchange has been upgraded, existing freeway onramps have been realigned and an additional ramp to northbound Highway 101 has been added. Construction was completed in Spring 2013.

North Petaluma Boulevard Grid. A grid of streets is planned for development near North Petaluma Boulevard adjacent to the Rainier Avenue extension and a planned southward extension of Industrial Avenue. Environmental review has not yet begun for this project and funding sources are not known at this time.

The 2020 opening year was considered a reasonable assumption for several reasons. Although the Rainier Cross-Town Connector has been included in the City's General Plan, it represents a relatively substantial investment of funds. One major funding source will be the City's traffic mitigation fee program, which will take time to accumulate. Besides the City's approval of this EIR, regulatory permit approvals from state and federal agencies are required, and agreements for the SMART rail corridor crossing and utility agreements are needed (listed in Table 3-3 of the DEIR). Final design must be completed. Right-of-way acquisition is also required, described in Section 3.3.4.2. Construction, involving the types of structures at the railroad and river crossing, can expect to require at least one to two years, or more. In addition, Caltrans' work on the "MSN C2" project is anticipated to begin in 2018, which when completed will accommodate the planned Rainier Avenue corridor (The Rainier Avenue undercrossing of US 101 is described in Section 3.1.1 of the DEIR). Due to these necessary and sometimes sequential important steps, it can therefore take years to complete and open a new roadway alignment. The 2020 year forecast was assumed as a minimum planning target date to allow a reasonable time frame to complete for all of these events. Applying an earlier date to complete construction was not viewed as reasonable or realistic at the time the EIR process proceeded. If additional time is

required beyond 2020, an addendum or supplemental EIR may be appropriate to evaluate whether any changes in time or circumstances affect the conclusions of this EIR.

For these reasons, the existing conditions baseline was not relied upon and the more accurate future baseline was used for analysis of Transportation and its associated studies for Air Quality and Noise. Using the future baseline allowed for the comparison of the opening year 2020 with and without the project, overlaid on future development and future traffic volumes, for the most accurate evaluation and comparison of the impacts of the project against the No Project alternative.

For the analysis of all other sections of the EIR, such as Biological Resources or Cultural Resources, the existing setting was used as the baseline since there is no reasonable expectation that these resources would change or otherwise be substantially different at opening year 2020. Applying the existing conditions as the baseline for these sections was considered the most accurate to develop the impact analysis and avoidance or mitigation measures.

The assessment of cumulative impacts, described in Section 6.4, went beyond the 2020 opening year and considered buildout conditions under the General Plan, where applicable. Traffic is the primary topic affected by buildout conditions, and those conditions were modeled and evaluated.

Master Response 3: Opening Year Traffic Operations

Summary of comments: Why is traffic relief being compared in the year 2020?

Response: As described in Section 4.12.3.1, the Year 2020 was selected to represent Opening Year project conditions because this is when the roadway would be complete and open for use. The reason for using this future year (2020) was to represent conditions when the project could reasonably be expected to open to traffic (following funding, and completion of right-of-way, permits and agreements, and construction; see Master Response #2). Using a future year also captures traffic growth and any other changes in the local roadway network that might affect an accurate analysis of impacts and mitigation. Section 4.12.3.1 presents the roadway and development assumptions for Year 2020. Table B (presented below) summarizes the change in average vehicle delay and level of service (LOS) at study intersections during the AM and PM peak hour with greater than five seconds of change in delay. Note that the “existing condition” LOS F at Intersection 13 has likely improved already, since the East Washington Street Interchange improvements were completed in December 2013.

Table B. Opening Year (2020) Intersection Operating Conditions – Change with Project

Int ID	Intersection	Peak Hour	Change from No Project to Plus Project	
			Vehicle Delay	LOS
1	Old Redwood Highway/North McDowell Boulevard	PM	-16 seconds	D to C
3	Old Redwood Highway/ Highway 101 Southbound Ramps	PM	-7 seconds	No change
6	Petaluma Boulevard North/Corona Road (Skillman Lane)	AM	-11 seconds	E to D
		PM	-25 seconds	E to D
7	Rainier Avenue/North McDowell Boulevard	AM	+22 seconds	B to C (New roadway terminus)
		PM	+34 seconds	A to D (New roadway terminus)
8	Rainier Avenue/Petaluma Boulevard North	AM	40 seconds	New intersection (D)
		PM	>80 seconds	New intersection (F) ¹
9	Petaluma Boulevard North /Sycamore Lane(Shasta Avenue)	PM	+6 seconds	A to B
10	Petaluma Boulevard North/Magnolia Avenue (Payran Street)	AM	+7 seconds	No change
		PM	+14 seconds	C to D
11	East Washington Street/McDowell Boulevard	AM	->35 seconds	F to D
		PM	->36 seconds	F to D
12	East Washington Street/ Highway 101 Northbound Ramps	AM	->13 seconds	C to A
		PM	+13 seconds	B to C
13	East Washington Street/ Highway 101 Southbound Ramps ²	AM	->31 seconds	F to D
		PM	-19 seconds	D to C
14	East Washington Street/ Ellis Street	AM	-29 seconds	D to C
		PM	-13 seconds	D to C
15	East Washington Street /Payran Street	AM	-9 seconds	No change
		PM	-18 seconds	D to C
16	East Washington Street/Lakeville Street	PM	-18 seconds	D to C

Notes: **BOLD** indicates unacceptable conditions. Green highlights indicate improvement from unacceptable to acceptable operations. Red highlights indicate acceptable to unacceptable operations.

1. With Mitigation Measure TRANS-3 the intersection operations would improve to LOS D.
2. Opening Year (2020) intersection operations include the East Washington Street Interchange improvements completed in December 2013. These improvements include a second westbound left-turn lane onto the southbound US 101 on-ramp, a new westbound slip lane on-ramp to northbound US 101, and a widened northbound US 101 off-ramp that includes dual right- and left-turn lanes.

Source: Fehr & Peers October 2014.

Based on the intersection operations analysis the following three study intersections are expected to operate at an unacceptable service level (LOS E or F) under Year 2020 No Project Conditions:

- Petaluma Boulevard North/Corona Road (Skillman Lane) – LOS E during the AM and PM peak hours,
- East Washington Street/McDowell Boulevard – LOS F during the AM and PM peak hours, and
- East Washington Street/Highway 101 Southbound Ramps – LOS F during the AM peak hour.

These intersections degrade from acceptable LOS under existing conditions to unacceptable service levels due to forecasted growth in traffic associated with planned development. Similarly, due to increased traffic from planned development within Petaluma, the traffic operations are anticipated to worsen at Petaluma Blvd/Corona (PM), Washington/McDowell (AM), East Washington/101 NB Ramps (PM), East Washington/101 SB Ramps (AM), and East Washington/Ellis (PM) under Year 2020 No Project conditions.

The project would add a new crossing of Highway 101 and is expected to divert traffic away from congested corridors such as Corona Road and East Washington Street. As shown in Table B above, all three intersections that operate at unacceptable service levels under No Project conditions would improve to acceptable LOS D or better conditions under Project conditions.

Under Project conditions only one intersection (Rainier Avenue/Petaluma Boulevard North) would operate at unacceptable service levels. Mitigation Measure TRANS-3 would increase the capacity of this intersection such that its operations would result in acceptable LOS D or better conditions.

While congested corridors in Petaluma, such as East Washington Street and Corona Road, would see a decrease in vehicle delay and reduced congestion due to the project, there are several locations that would see increases in vehicle delay with the Project. At most of these locations, the changes in vehicle delay would be very minor (i.e. several seconds). These changes in delay would be primarily caused by small increases in traffic due to shifting traffic patterns caused by the project.

Several intersections would see a larger increase in delay, such as McDowell Boulevard/Rainier Avenue and Petaluma Boulevard/Magnolia Avenue under Project conditions (year 2020), due to the addition of vehicles shifting from Washington Street and Corona Road to make use of the new crosstown connector. However, even after additional traffic is added to these intersections they would still continue to operate at LOS D or better conditions. Under Project conditions and with Mitigation Measure TRANS-3, all of the study intersections would operate at acceptable LOS D or better conditions.

As described in Section 4.12.3.1, under Opening Year No Project Conditions, access to the Sid Commons and Petaluma Outlet Mall Expansion sites would be provided through other nearby roadways such as Graylawn Avenue, Burlington Drive, and the existing Petaluma Outlet Mall to ensure consistency with the land use plans in the Petaluma General Plan. Under Opening Year Plus Project Conditions, the Rainier Avenue Extension would allow for the Shasta Avenue extension, Sid Commons driveway, and the Petaluma Outlet Mall Expansion driveway, consistent with the Petaluma General Plan. As described in Section 5.5.2, Alternative B would not allow for connections, and access to these land uses would be similar to Opening Year No Project Conditions. As described in Section 5.5.3, Alternative C would allow for connections similar to the project. Therefore, traffic generated by a portion of the development at the adjacent lands with development potential are accounted for under all Opening Year scenarios.

Master Response 4: Consistency with the Petaluma General Plan

Summary of comments: Is the methodology in the DEIR consistent with the General Plan to provide enough information to understand all of the trade-offs involved in approving the project?

Response: As described in Section 4.12.2 of the DEIR, the General Plan specifically outlines how projects should weigh the benefits of pedestrian, bike, and transit access versus vehicle traffic. This project improves all conditions, including traffic conditions, and balances the modes, consistent with what has been outlined in the General Plan. General Plan policies providing guidance to traffic operations are shown in Table 4.12-7. This study analyzes the traffic conditions in a manner consistent with the General Plan.

With regards to traffic operations, intersection operations were evaluated with LOS calculations as described in Section 4.12.1.2. This impact analysis is consistent with the City of Petaluma General Plan guidelines, as described in Section 4.12.4.1. LOS is a qualitative description of operations ranging from LOS A, when the roadway facility has excess capacity and vehicles experience little or no delay, to LOS F, where the volume of vehicles exceeds the capacity, resulting in long queues and excessive delays. Typically, LOS E represents “at-capacity” conditions and LOS F represents “over-capacity” conditions. At signalized intersections operating at LOS F, for example, drivers may have to wait through multiple signal cycles to proceed. Often, some approaches of intersections may operate worse than others. Per Chapter 16 of the Highway Capacity Manual (HCM), the reported LOS for a signalized intersection is the average delay per vehicle of all the approaches. For example, if one approach is over capacity and operates at LOS F while another is under capacity and operates at LOS B, the reported LOS could be LOS C or D reflecting the average delay per vehicle. Per Policy 5-P-10 of the Petaluma General Plan, LOS D or better operations are considered acceptable operations for motor vehicles.

Master Response 5: Cumulative Traffic Operations With and Without the Project

Summary of comments: Is cumulative traffic improved with the project as compared to the No Project alternative?

Response: Table 6.4.11-1 in Section 6.4.1.12 presents Cumulative No Project and Cumulative With Project analysis results. As shown in Table 6.4.11-1, for every location that operates at unacceptable LOS E or F conditions under No Project conditions, the project would improve operations by at least one service level. For every study intersection on Washington Street, the project would improve operations by one service level and in some cases two service levels over the No Project scenario during the AM and PM peak hour. Impact CUMULATIVE TRANS-1 identifies cumulative impacts under both No Project and With Project conditions. The majority of locations listed are impacts under the Cumulative No Project scenario. These impacts are a result of planned development identified in the General Plan and not a result of implementing the project. Mitigation Measure Cumulative TRANS-1 is intended to address impacts caused by the project (i.e. degradation over the No Project scenario) and would reduce the project impacts to less than significant.

Table C (presented below) summarizes the change in average vehicle delay and LOS at study intersections during the AM and PM peak hour with greater than five seconds of change in delay. As noted in Section 6.4.1.12, the timing of the Shasta Avenue extension is unknown. Therefore, the traffic operations with and without the Shasta Avenue extension are shown in Table C.

Table C. Cumulative Intersection Operating Conditions – Change with Project

Int ID	Intersection	Peak Hour	Change from No Project to Plus Project	
			Vehicle Delay ¹	LOS
1	Old Redwood Highway/North McDowell Boulevard	PM	-23 seconds	E to D
3	Old Redwood Highway/ Highway 101 Southbound Ramps	PM	-9 seconds	C to B
4	Old Redwood Highway/Stony Point Road(Industrial Avenue)	PM	-6 seconds	D to C
5	Corona Road/North McDowell Boulevard	AM	- 6 seconds	No change
6	Petaluma Boulevard North/Corona Road (Skillman Lane)	AM	-14 seconds	E to D
		PM	-23 seconds	E to D
7	Rainier Avenue/North McDowell Boulevard	AM	+26 seconds	B to D (New roadway terminus)
		PM	+46 seconds	A to E (New roadway terminus) ¹
11	East Washington Street/McDowell Boulevard	AM	->35 seconds	F to D
		PM	->27 seconds	F to D
12	East Washington Street/ Highway 101 Northbound Ramps	AM	-16 seconds	C to A
		PM	-13 seconds	C to B
13	East Washington Street/ Highway 101 Southbound Ramps	AM	->11 seconds	F to E
		PM	->31 seconds	F to D
14	East Washington Street/ Ellis Street	AM	->47 seconds	F to C
		PM	-42 seconds	E to C
15	East Washington Street /Payran Street	AM	-25 seconds	D to C
		PM	-43 seconds	E to C
16	East Washington Street/Lakeville Street	AM	-9 seconds	No change
		PM	-21 seconds	D to C
Scenario 1: Rainier Avenue/Shasta Avenue at Petaluma Boulevard North - With Shasta Extension				
8	Rainier Avenue/Petaluma Boulevard North	A M	+14	New intersection (B)
		PM	+27	New intersection (C)
9	Petaluma Boulevard North /Sycamore Lane(Shasta Avenue)	A M	+29 seconds	A to D (New roadway terminus)
		PM	+>70 seconds	A to F (New roadway terminus) ²
Scenario 2: Rainier Avenue/Shasta Avenue at Petaluma Boulevard North - Without Shasta Extension				
8	Rainier Avenue/Petaluma Boulevard North	A M	61 seconds	E (New intersection) ³

Table C. Cumulative Intersection Operating Conditions – Change with Project

Int ID	Intersection	Peak Hour	Change from No Project to Plus Project	
			Vehicle Delay ¹	LOS
		PM	>80 seconds	F (New intersection) ³
9	Petaluma Boulevard North /Sycamore Lane(Shasta Avenue)	A	No Change	No Change
		M	No Change	No Change
		PM	+6 seconds	A to B

Notes: **BOLD** indicates unacceptable conditions. Green highlights indicate improvement from unacceptable to acceptable operations. Red highlights indicate acceptable to unacceptable operations.

1. Policy 5-P-10 A of the City’s 2025 General Plan notes that a lower Level of Service (LOS) may be deemed acceptable, by the City, in instances where the City finds that potential vehicular traffic mitigations (such as adding additional lanes or modifying signal timing) would conflict with the Guiding Principles of the General Plan. The City’s 2025 General Plan EIR identified several intersections where a lower LOS was deemed acceptable including Rainier Avenue/North McDowell Boulevard.
2. If the Shasta Avenue extension is built, traffic would shift to Shasta Avenue and degrade operations to LOS F. With Mitigation Measure CUMULATIVE TRANS-1 the intersection operations would improve to LOS D.
3. With Mitigation Measure CUMULATIVE TRANS-1 the intersection operations would improve to LOS D.

Source: Fehr & Peers October 2014.

Master Response 6: Washington Street Travel Time Comparison

Summary of comments: Does the project improve travel times on Washington Street?

Response: For every study intersection on Washington Street, the project would improve operations by one service level and in some cases two service levels over the No Project scenario during the AM and PM peak hour. These improved service levels would translate into improved travel times on Washington Street. As shown in Table D below, the project would reduce both the eastbound and westbound travel times compared to the No Project scenario under year 2020 and cumulative conditions. The project benefit during the peak hours would continue at full implementation of the General Plan. Although no technical evaluation was performed for time periods outside the AM and PM peak hour it can be surmised that the project would likely reduce traffic volumes on Washington Street throughout the day as result of providing an alternative crossing of Highway 101. As such, the project is expected to have either no change in travel time or a reduction in travel time on Washington Street during all time periods of the day.

**Table D. East Washington Street Travel Time Estimates
(Lakeville Street to McDowell Boulevard)**

Peak Hour	East Washington Street Direction	No Project to Plus Project Net Change		No Project to Plus Project Percent Change	
		Travel Time (Min:Sec)	Average Speed (miles per hour)	Travel Time (Min:Sec)	Average Speed (miles per hour)
Opening Year					
AM	Eastbound	02:17	3.7	-31%	45%
	Westbound	00:26	1.2	-9%	10%
PM	Eastbound	01:01	2.0	-17%	20%
	Westbound	01:48	3.4	-27%	37%
Cumulative Conditions					
AM	Eastbound	03:15	4.0	-37%	57%
	Westbound	01:08	2.6	-20%	24%
PM	Eastbound	04:16	4.5	-42%	74%
	Westbound	02:23	4.5	-34%	51%

Notes: Travel time under uncongested conditions is estimated to be 2:30-3:00. Congestion and signal delay along the corridor currently adds between 1:30 and 4:00 of travel time depending on the peak hour and direction of travel.

Source: Fehr & Peers October 2014.

Master Response 7: Hydrology and Flooding

Summary of comments: The DEIR does not adequately address the impacts on hydrology and flooding.

Response: Impacts on flooding could occur in two different ways – either by affecting the ability of the river to convey flood flows (i.e., changing the hydraulics) or by contributing additional water to the peak flood flows (i.e., changing the hydrology). Both of these impact mechanisms are analyzed in the EIR.

A portion of the bridge support structure (e.g., piers and abutments) would be constructed in the FEMA-designated 100-year floodplain. In general, bridge piers and abutments that are placed in a floodplain would occupy area that could otherwise be used to convey flows. The bridge footings can act as an obstruction that reduces the conveyance capacity at that specific cross-section of the river, thereby backing up water on the upstream side of the bridge and increasing localized water surface elevations. At the bridge, water accelerates through the narrower opening caused by the footings until it clears the obstruction and returns to pre-project base flood elevations. The potential for this impact was evaluated in the DEIR.

Hydraulic modeling was used to evaluate potential effects from the bridge support structure to convey 100-year flood flows with regard to the height of flood waters with and without the project. A full description of the modeling is included in Appendix E of the DEIR. The analysis included use of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Hydrologic Engineering Center River

Analysis System (HEC-RAS) model, using inputs of channel cross section geometry, flow, and assumptions regarding the condition of the channel. The proposed bridge concept dimensions were included in the modeled channel and banks, including abutments on each side of the bridge, retaining walls and the bridge's supporting bents (or columns). The hydraulic modeling indicated that base flood elevations immediately upstream of the bridge could increase by up to 0.03 feet (less than ½ inch) and there would be no change in base flood elevations downstream of the bridge. This potential rise in base flood elevations at and immediately upstream of the bridge would gradually decrease over distance in upstream areas. This effect is almost entirely contributed to by the necessary placement of structures, primarily piers and the abutments, in a portion of the channel.

The hydraulic assessment was based on the preliminary design. Structures such as the piers and abutments will undergo final design. One option to eliminate the calculated increase in flow within the channel would be slightly wider spacing between the proposed bridge abutments, creating a wider opening for flood events to pass beneath the bridge. An increase of 0.03 feet in the base flood elevation could potentially be eliminated by shifting the abutments 1 to 3 feet more apart. Later stages of design will include additional design details such as those described above, that would meet the City's no net fill policy (these measures are discussed in Mitigation Measure HYD-1).

During smaller flood flow events, the potential rise in flood elevations upstream of the bridge would be less than those predicted by the 100-year event (i.e., less than ½ inch). Floodplain areas downstream of the bridge would have no change in base flood elevations. Therefore, the results of the hydraulic analysis indicate that the project could have minimal and localized effects on floodplain elevations near the bridge crossing during large, 100-year flood events or greater.

The DEIR also discusses potential impacts on flooding from new impervious areas. With respect to flooding, impacts can occur when additional runoff from new paved surfaces contributes to peak flood flows in the river. As described in Impact HYD-2 in the DEIR, the project would add approximately 8.6 acres of new impervious surfaces, including the new bridge, sidewalks and road (Rainier Avenue extension). Pre-project and post-project runoff from the project area was calculated for the 100-year event using the methodology described in the Sonoma County Water Agency's *Flood Control Design Criteria* manual. Peak flow from the project area could increase by about 6 to 7 cubic feet per second (cfs). This flow is small (less than 0.1 percent) compared to the 100-year flow in the river (estimated by FEMA to be 6,750 cfs). Furthermore, the timing of the peak flow from the project area is unlikely to coincide with the timing of the peak flow in the river. The timing of the 100-year peak flow in the river is a function of the time of concentration in the watershed. Because the upstream watershed is large (approximately 45.4 square miles or 29,000 acres), it takes time for the peak runoff from the most intense precipitation of the 100-year storm to reach the project area (likely hours). Under pre-project conditions, rainfall within the project area would quickly contribute to flood flows near the proposed bridge location. The project area's peak runoff from the most intense precipitation of the 100-year storm would likely reach the river in less than ½ hour. This is due to the project area's close proximity to the river. Under most storm events, the peak runoff from the project area would reach the proposed bridge

location prior to the river's peak flood flow, which is influenced by the entire watershed, and by the time the river reaches its peak flood flow, runoff from the project area would already be reduced.

The contribution from new impervious areas to base flow elevations would also be minor. Hydraulic modeling (HEC-RAS) was used to evaluate the change in water surface elevations due to the addition of 7 cfs to the 100-year flow in the river. There was no measurable change in water surface elevations (i.e., 0.00 foot), as predicted by the model, when this additional flow was placed either before or after the bridge.

The roadway will include drainage facilities that collect and convey storm water runoff. These will include curbs and storm drains. With the project, rain that would otherwise have fallen directly into the river, the floodplain, or on undeveloped areas adjacent to the floodplain would instead fall on the new road or the bridge and be conveyed through a stormwater drainage system to an engineered vegetated swale constructed (or improved) as part of the project. The vegetated swale would be a low impact development stormwater treatment control BMP that would slow the runoff and provide an opportunity for a portion of the runoff to infiltrate into groundwater. Because runoff from the project would be conveyed through a vegetated swale, the project would cause minimal changes in both the volume and the timing associated with contributions to peak flood flows in the river. Stormwater drainage systems for the project would be designed per the City's stormwater treatment guidelines to capture all runoff from new impermeable surfaces. The rate of captured runoff entering the Petaluma River would not result in additional on- or off-site flooding.

As explained in Master Response 1, the project is included in the City's General Plan and analyzed in the General Plan EIR as part of the City's planned buildout. The General Plan EIR found that, under the cumulative development scenario, hydrology and water quality impacts would be less than significant. Runoff from potential future new impervious surfaces from other construction projects in the area were not included in hydraulic modeling for this project, as any proposed new area is unknown and would be speculative with regard to a quantitative analysis. As other independent future development projects are moved forward through plan and environmental review, they would be subject to the same requirements to evaluate runoff contribution and impacts, including quantitative evaluation of any substantial or cumulative runoff and flooding contributions and impacts.

Master Response 8: Corona Road as an Alternative

Summary of comments: A cross-town connector at Corona Road should have been evaluated as an alternative to a cross-town connector at Rainier Avenue.

Response: Corona Road is an east-west two lane road located about 1.2 miles north of the proposed location of the Rainier Avenue Cross-Town Connector. It has existing bridge crossings of US 101 and Petaluma River. The City has a long history of considering various options to achieve the desired east/west connectivity that would be realized by the proposed Rainier Cross-

Town Connector including through the use of a Corona Road Alternative. This history includes the following:

- The City's General Plan since 1961 has considered various options to meet the objective of providing east/west connectivity and alleviating traffic congestion and identified an interchange at Corona Road as a possible option (there are no existing ramp connections between Corona Road and US 101).
- The Corona/Ely Specific Plan EIR (1989) also considered opportunities to utilize Corona Road to alleviate traffic congestion including an interchange at Corona Road.
- As part of the environmental document prepared for the Rainier Avenue Cross-Town Connector and Interchange Project, which the City prepared in May 1998 prior to separating the two elements into distinct projects, a number of alternatives were considered including Corona Road.
- In 2003 Fehr and Peers conducted the Cross-Town Mobility Enhancement Alternative Analysis as a precursor to the General Plan Update, which included an evaluation of Corona Road.

Past studies and planning efforts all ruled out Corona Road as a viable option to alleviate traffic congestion. As is reflected in the current General Plan 2025, the Rainier Cross-Town Connector (project) and a possible future interchange were identified as the preferred means to meet the objectives of the General Plan as compared to Corona Road for a variety of reasons as described below.

First, despite the General Plan classification of Corona Road as an Arterial, the City has historically kept Corona Road rural in nature, with one lane in each direction. All development over the last 25 years along Corona Road has been limited in size and intensity including a limited number of new access driveways to Corona Road. Only larger parcel sizes with larger setbacks have been allowed. Existing historic-era homes and barns and water tanks have been conditioned to remain. Urban-type street improvements have not been permitted. The vision for a rural-feeling country road has been consistently applied, and the result is that this roadway is distinct from other roadways within City limits.

Second, widening Corona Road would increase capacity and could provide some traffic relief but only half of what would be gained by a new four-lane route proposed at Rainier Avenue (i.e., widening Corona Road would add one lane in each direction, in comparison to the project which would add two lanes in each direction). A one lane alternative for Rainier Avenue was not considered as it would not provide adequate capacity to serve build out conditions anticipated in the General Plan.

Third, widening Corona Road would involve similar or greater environmental and monetary costs compared to the project. Widening Corona Road would involve reconstruction of the

bridge crossings at the Petaluma River and US 101 and would have similar construction costs to the proposed project. There would also be similar impacts to biological habitat along and within the Petaluma River, and construction would similarly occur within FEMA mapped 100 –year floodplain areas. There would be substantial impacts to Corona Road and Skillman Lane, since they function as rural roadways and are not designed to accommodate large traffic volumes. Widening Corona Road would require acquisition of right-of-way and would adversely impact the Auction Yard, existing mobile homes, and other existing uses proximate to Corona Road at the Highway 101 overpass. Additionally, expansion of Corona Road could result in growth-inducement since it is located at the edge of the City and the UGB.

Fourth, the project was developed as a means to alleviate traffic congestion identified along East Washington Street. Corona Road is located farther away from East Washington and would not provide the same benefit that Rainier Avenue would provide in shifting trips away from East Washington.

Lastly, the Rainier Avenue Cross-Town Connector is included in the City’s General Plan while expansion of Corona Avenue is not; widening of Corona Avenue would not be consistent with the General Plan without an amendment. Moreover, since Corona Road is an already existing available route, it would not meet the objective of providing a new cross-town crossing of the Petaluma River. As such it would conflict with the General Plan Guiding Principal #13 which names the Rainier Avenue underpass/interchange as a new east/west City link².

A new interchange a Corona Road was also considered, but was also ruled out as there are a number of constraints. It is also important to note that an interchange at Corona Road would not achieve the necessary spacing between interchanges required by Caltrans. The highway spacing distance between Corona Road and Old Redwood Highway is closer than the spacing between East Washington Street and Rainier Avenue. Therefore the same spacing concern identified by Caltrans for the future Rainier interchange due to inadequate distance from East Washington also exists for an interchange at Corona Road.

In conclusion, City’s past planning documents have considered the viability of Corona Road as a means to alleviate traffic congestion and have determined that the Rainier cross-town connector was the preferred alternative because it would be less expensive, would have fewer environmental impacts, and would provide more traffic relief. Thus, an alternatives analysis that further investigated Corona Road was not revisited as part of the DEIR. Finally, note that a four-lane Rainier Avenue alignment does not necessarily eliminate or preclude future consideration for widening or other improvements that might increase the capacity of Corona Road in addition to the Rainier Avenue project.

² City of Petaluma, 2008a. *City of Petaluma: General Plan 2025*. Adopted May 18, 2008.
Accessed at: <http://cityofpetaluma.net/genplan/gp2025/gp2025final.pdf>. p.I-10.

2.4 INDIVIDUAL RESPONSES

Individual comment letters and public meeting testimony is reproduced in the remainder of this section, followed by responses.



State of California – The Natural Resources Agency
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE
Bay Delta Region
7329 Silverado Trail
Napa, CA 94558
(707) 944-5500
www.wildlife.ca.gov

EDMUND G. BROWN JR., Governor
CHARLTON H. BONHAM, Director



August 27, 2014

Comment Letter (CL)-1

Ms. Heather Hines
City of Petaluma
11 English Street
Petaluma, CA 94952

Dear Ms. Hines:

Subject: Rainier Avenue Cross-Town Connector, Draft Environmental Impact Report,
SCH #2011082032, City of Petaluma, Sonoma County

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) has reviewed the documents provided for the subject project, and we have the following comments.

Please be advised that a California Endangered Species Act (CESA) Permit must be obtained if the project has the potential to result in take of species of plants or animals listed under CESA, either during construction or over the life of the project. Issuance of a CESA Permit is subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) documentation; therefore, the CEQA document must specify impacts, mitigation measures, and a mitigation monitoring and reporting program. If the project will impact CESA listed species, early consultation is encouraged, as significant modification to the project and mitigation measures may be required in order to obtain a CESA Permit.

1-1

For any activity that will divert or obstruct the natural flow, or change the bed, channel, or bank (which may include associated riparian resources) of a river or stream, or use material from a streambed, CDFW may require a Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement (LSAA), pursuant to Section 1600 et seq. of the Fish and Game Code, with the applicant. Issuance of an LSAA is subject to CEQA. CDFW, as a responsible agency under CEQA, will consider the CEQA document for the project. The CEQA document should fully identify the potential impacts to the stream or riparian resources and provide adequate avoidance, mitigation, monitoring and reporting commitments for completion of the agreement. To obtain information about the LSAA notification process, please access our website at <http://www.dfg.ca.gov/habcon/1600/>; or to request a notification package, contact CDFW's Bay Delta Regional Office at (707) 944-5500.

1-2

If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Adam McKannay, Environmental Scientist, at (707) 944-5534; or Ms. Karen Weiss, Senior Environmental Scientist (Supervisory), at (707) 944-5525.

Sincerely,

Scott Wilson
Regional Manager
Bay Delta Region

cc: State Clearinghouse

Conserving California's Wildlife Since 1870

RESPONSE TO COMMENT LETTER 1**Scott Wilson, California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW)**

Response 1-1: Commenter notes that a California Endangered Species Act (CESA) permit must be obtained. As listed in Table 3-3 of the DEIR, an Incidental Take Permit may be needed from CDFW for the project prior to construction. The City would apply for this permit once the project has been designed in sufficient detail. Regulatory permits cannot be issued by resource agencies until CEQA review has been completed.

Response 1-2: Commenter notes that a Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement may be required for the project. As listed in Table 3-3 of the DEIR, a Streambed Alteration Agreement will be needed from CDFW prior to construction. Coordination to date has consisted of providing CDFW a copy of this EIR. As reiterated in their comment letter, the DEIR included review of a species list from CDFW's California Natural Diversity Database (CNDDDB) and a discussion on the potential impacts to the riparian habitat (Impact BIO-3), the measures that will be implemented to avoid and minimize impacts to the riparian habitat (Mitigation BIO-1, BIO-2, BIO-7 and BIO-8), and the associate compensatory mitigation (Mitigation BIO-3). The City would apply for the Lake and Streambed Alteration Agreement once CEQA review has been completed and the project has been designed in sufficient detail. The City will consult with CDFW as needed during permit review.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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Comment Letter (CL) - 2

September 5, 2014

SON1011030
SON/101/PM 5.61
SCH #2011082032

Ms. Olivia Ervin
Planning Division
City of Petaluma
11 English Street
Petaluma, CA 94952

Dear Ms. Ervin:

Rainier Cross-Town Connector – Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR)

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the project referenced above. We have reviewed the DEIR and have the following comments to offer.

Lead Agency

As the lead agency, the City of Petaluma (City) is responsible for all project mitigation, including any needed improvements to State highways. The project’s fair share contribution, financing, scheduling, implementation responsibilities and lead agency monitoring should be fully discussed for all proposed mitigation measures. 2-1

This information should also be presented in the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Plan of the environmental document. Since an encroachment permit is required for work in the State ROW, and Caltrans will not issue a permit until our concerns are adequately addressed, we strongly recommend that the City continue to work with Caltrans to ensure that our concerns are resolved during the environmental process, and in any case prior to submittal of an encroachment permit application. 2-2

Hydraulics

- The document states that a 508 foot bridge will be placed through the floodplain to span both the railroad and the Petaluma River floodplain. However, Figure 3.3 and Figure 3.6 show retaining walls across the floodplain. These Figures should be corrected to appropriately show a bridge across this area. 2-3

- The document shows two new permanent drainage outfalls into Petaluma Creek on Figure 4.7-2. Please clarify the basis for this Figure. Is the permanent drainage already designed to a point where the location and size of these new outfalls are determined? 2-4

“Provide a safe, sustainable, integrated and efficient transportation system to enhance California’s economy and livability”

Ms. Ervin / City of Petaluma
 September 5, 2014
 Page 2

Traffic Operations

- Please make the Construction Management Plan available to Caltrans for review and comment. 2-5
- Pg. 4-12.5 Traffic was based on a 2008 Rainier Ave. Traffic Report. Please explain if the data has been verified according to 2014 conditions. 2-6
- Pg. 4.12-11 Section 4.12.1.3 mentions that the Freeway Performance Measurement System (PeMS) was used for mainline traffic data. Please cite which PeMS Vehicle Detection Station (VDS) Station was used. 2-7
- Please explain why 2011 volumes instead of more recent 2014 volumes were used, when the report was submitted in July 2014. If possible, please update to 2014 volumes. 2-8

Design

- Please explain the use of year 2020 for the future year traffic analysis. Twenty years is typically used for future year analyses. 2-9
- The difference is between Alternative B and Alternative C is not clear. Please provide a clearer drawing/layout in the report. 2-10
- Section 3.3.2.1 states “These facilities would be modified later when a Rainier Avenue/Highway 101 interchange is constructed”. Please clarify what modifications would be necessary; also consider revising text to state “if a Rainier Avenue/Highway 101 interchange is constructed.” 2-11
- Section 3.3.3 states “While the interchange and Shasta Avenue collector are not part of this project, they are included as projects that are constructed in the future and considered in the cumulative analysis scenario for the project.” Please justify including these projects as part of the analysis. 2-12

Project Management

- Please cite the estimated total cost of the project (not just the portion within State right-of-way). 2-13
- Page 3-1, Project Description, fourth paragraph says that “In January 2010, the City of Petaluma City Council separated the interchange and cross-town connector into two independent but concurrent elements.” However, the approved motion actually says “Resolution 2010-009 N.C.S. Authorizing Suspension of the Project Development Process with Caltrans for the Rainier Avenue Interchange Project (Independent Element 1); Proceeding with a Project Study Report for the Rainier Avenue Cross Town Connector (Independent Element 2).” The interchange/ramp element (Element 1) was therefore not concurrent. It was suspended indefinitely. Please correct this language in the EIR. (emphases added) 2-14
- If the interchange/ramp element were to be resurrected, it would still have to satisfy the Caltrans Design Information Bulletin (DIB) 77 (Interchange Spacing) requirement in effect at time of this element’s suspension before further development could proceed. 2-15
- Page 3-2, Project Description, last paragraph erroneously states that “The MSN C2 project has been designed and the Record of Decision (ROD) was published on December 4, 2013.” The ROD was published in October 2009; please correct this language in the EIR. 2-16

“Provide a safe, sustainable, integrated and efficient transportation system to enhance California’s economy and livability”

Ms. Ervin / City of Petaluma
September 5, 2014
Page 3

Encroachment Permit

Please be advised that any work or traffic control that encroaches onto the State ROW requires an encroachment permit that is issued by Caltrans. To apply, a completed encroachment permit application, environmental documentation, and five (5) sets of plans clearly indicating State ROW must be submitted to: David Salladay, District Office Chief, Office of Permits, California Department of Transportation, District 4, P.O. Box 23660, Oakland, CA 94623-0660. Traffic-related mitigation measures should be incorporated into the construction plans prior to the encroachment permit process. See this website for more information:
<http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/traffops/developserv/permits>.

2-17

Should you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact Betsy Joseph, Regional Project Manager at (510) 286-5097 or betsy.joseph@dot.ca.gov.

Sincerely,



ERIK ALM, AICP
District Branch Chief
Local Development - Intergovernmental Review

c: State Clearinghouse

"Provide a safe, sustainable, integrated and efficient transportation system to enhance California's economy and livability"

RESPONSE TO COMMENT LETTER 2**Erik Alm, Caltrans**

Response 2-1: Commenter notes that the City of Petaluma is responsible for all project mitigation, including any needed improvements to State highways, fair share contributions, financing, scheduling, and implementation. This project, like many major infrastructure improvements, is not funded. As a proposed roadway, it is expected it will be funded through multiple sources, including developer impact fees. The responsibilities and requirements for the project and mitigation measures are included with each impact and mitigation. A Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program is included in the FEIR, summarizing the measures from the DEIR, and listing the responsible parties for each of those measures and at what point in project development they will be completed.

Response 2-2: Commenter notes that mitigation measures should be presented in the Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program, and that the City continues working with Caltrans to ensure that their concerns are resolved prior to submitting an encroachment permit. The implementation and monitoring of mitigation measures is described in the MMRP (See Chapter 4 herein). The need for an encroachment permit from Caltrans was identified in Table 3-3 of the DEIR. The City will work with Caltrans through the project permitting and approval process.

Response 2-3 Commenter notes that Figure 3.3 and Figure 3.6 show retaining walls across the floodplain as opposed to the bridge. The figures were modified to remove the retaining wall labels.

Response 2-4: The commenter asks if the level of design for the two new permanent drainage outfalls shown in Figure 4.7-2 is at the point where the location and size of the outfalls are determined. The figure indicates where permanent erosion protection may be placed. The drainage system as presented in the DEIR is described based on a conceptual design. The final location and size of the outfalls has not been definitively determined. The drainage plans would be developed at a later stage of design, and would be included as part of the project permit applications.

Response 2-5: The commenter asks that the Construction Management Plan (CMP) be made available to Caltrans for review and comment. A construction management plan will be prepared as a part of Mitigation Measure TRANS-2. This plan will be provided to Caltrans for their review and comment prior to the commencement of construction. Mitigation Measure TRANS-2 was updated to reflect this.

“The construction management plan shall be submitted to Caltrans for review and approval prior to commencing construction. Implementation of mitigation measure TRANS-2 would reduce the...”

The revision to TRANS-2 will ensure that the CMP will be made available to Caltrans for review.

Response 2-6: The comment regards the traffic volume data used and if it has been verified against 2014 conditions. Most of the traffic volume data used for the analysis was based on information presented in the 2008 Rainier Avenue Traffic Report. As described in Section

4.12.3.1, per CEQA requirements, an EIR should include a description of the existing physical environmental conditions in the vicinity of the project at the time of the NOP. The NOP was issued in 2011 and therefore the existing conditions traffic analysis reflects 2011 conditions. The 2008 Rainier Avenue Traffic Operations Report (TOR) presented 2008 traffic conditions and future year traffic forecasts based on various Rainier Concepts and buildout of the Petaluma General Plan. As shown in Table 4-12-2, new intersection turning movement volumes were collected at select locations in early 2012 to confirm that traffic volumes had not increased since 2008. On average, traffic volumes decreased by 10 percent during the AM peak hour and 14 percent during the PM peak hour since 2008. Therefore, the turning movement volumes presented in the 2008 Rainier Avenue Traffic Operations are appropriate for use in the DEIR. Freeway mainline volumes were collected in February 2012 following the NOP. The cumulative traffic forecasts presented in the 2008 Rainier Avenue TOR were reviewed and approved by Caltrans; therefore, the traffic forecasts were carried forward into the Rainier Cross-Town Connector Project DEIR as the Petaluma General Plan has not changed since the completion of the 2008 Rainier Avenue TOR. Based on the turning movements verification and that the General Plan has not changed, the 2008 traffic volume data remains applicable and is appropriately utilized in the DEIR.

Response 2-7: The commenter requests that a citation be added to reflect what PeMs Vehicle Detection Station (VDS) Station was used. A footnote to page 4.12-11 has been added into the FEIR to note the following:

“The following PeMS Vehicle Detection Stations and Traffic Census Stations were used to collect data for the mainline traffic analysis: 402631, 402632, 402642, 42831, 42822, 42833, 42822, 42819, and 42815. Counts are from dates with 100 percent observed volumes, between 2010 and 2012.”

Response 2-8: The commenter inquires about traffic volumes and why 2011 volumes were used instead of 2014, and is requesting that traffic volumes be updated to reflect 2014 conditions. Please see response to comment 2-6 above. Although the DEIR was released in July 2014, the traffic counts reflect conditions at the time of the NOP in 2011. Given the time it takes to collect new data, execute the analysis, document results, and go through the DEIR process it is typical for the DEIR to be released one or more years out from the release of the NOP. The impact analysis projected out to the first year of operation (2020) using an annual growth factor, and therefore the methodology takes into account yearly average increases in traffic growth to ensure that conditions are not understated for both the No Project and Project conditions. The traffic projections adequately reflect the expected conditions for the opening year of operation. Therefore, no revisions to the DEIR are warranted.

Response 2-9: The commenter is requesting an explanation for using the year 2020 as the future year traffic analysis, and notes that twenty years is the typical timeline used for future year analysis. The twenty year analysis is common for highway projects. Please see Master Response 2 for a discussion of the baseline assumptions and methods used. The transportation analysis presented validated existing condition traffic counts as required by CEQA but used the project opening year of 2020 as the future baseline for the analysis to accurately define project and no project impacts. The analysis provided a comparison of the opening year 2020 with and without the project in order to thoroughly evaluate the impacts of the project on the environment.

Response 2-10: The commenter notes that the difference between Alternative B and Alternative C is not clearly laid out in the DEIR. The alignments of the two alternatives are almost identical, and hence a layout drawing was not created. Per Section 5 of the DEIR Alternative B would entail the construction of a 4-Lane Roadway and no future connections. It would not allow for connections with driveways or future roads. This contrasts with the proposed project, which would also be 4 lanes, but accommodates width for left-turn pockets. Alternative C would entail the construction of a 2-Lane roadway, which would also allow for future connections similar to the project. Therefore, the primary differences between Alternative B and Alternative C is the number of lanes proposed and allowance of future connections. This information is discussed in more detail in Chapter 5 of the DEIR.

Response 2-11: The commenter requested a correction regarding the potential to build a Rainier Avenue/Highway 101 interchange. The FEIR text on page 3-11, Section 3.3.2.1 was revised as follows (deletions are in strikethrough and additions are shown in underline):

“These facilities would be modified later ~~when~~ if a Rainier Avenue/Highway 101 interchange is constructed.”

Other modifications would involve interchange ramp connections with Rainier Avenue. These modifications have been considered in the past and are not proposed with this project.

Response 2-12: The commenter asks for clarification for including the interchange and Shasta Avenue collector in the cumulative analysis. These future projects are envisioned in the City’s General Plan (2008), and were therefore included in the cumulative analysis. Please see Master Response 1: Cumulative Analysis.

Response 2-13: Commenter asks for an estimate of the total cost of the project. The City has prepared preliminary cost estimates for the project, but have not included in the FEIR as project cost is not part of CEQA considerations.

Response 2-14: Commenter requests that a clarification regarding the separation and suspension of the Caltrans Rainier Avenue Interchange Project by the City of Petaluma City County Resolution 2010-009 N.C.S be included in the FEIR. As such, the FEIR text on Page 3.1, Section 3.1 Project Background was revised as follows:

“In January 2010, the City of Petaluma City Council separated the interchange and cross-town connector into two independent ~~but concurrent~~ elements to allow coordination of the cross-town connector with the Sonoma County Transportation Authority (SCTA) Marin Sonoma Narrows (MSN) C2 project that will undertake mainline and ramp improvements along Highway 101 from just south of Caulfield Lane to just south of Old Redwood Highway. The interchange project was suspended at that time until future analysis and consideration by the City of Petaluma City Council.”

Response 2-15: The commenter notes that Caltrans Design Information Bulletin (DIB) 77 requirements would have to be met by any future interchange project. The City will work closely with Caltrans to resolve the issues raised in DIB 77 at the time the City is ready to pursue construction of the interchange at US 101 and Rainier Avenue.

Response 2-16: The commenter asks that the date of the MSN C2 ROD be corrected. As such, the FEIR text on Page 3-3, Section 3.1.1 Planning Background was corrected as follows:

“The MSN C2 project has been designed and the Record of Decision was published on ~~December 4, 2013~~ in October 2009.”

Response 2-17: Commenter notes that a Caltrans permit must be obtained for any work within the State right-of-way. As listed in Table 3-3 of the DEIR, an Encroachment Permit is needed from Caltrans for the proposed project prior to construction. The City would apply for this permit once the project has been designed in sufficient detail.

Comment Letter (CL) 3

Jennifer Pierre Comments on Rainier Draft EIR, August 2014

Project Description

Section 3.3.3 assumes 30 months of construction, but the bio analysis assumes periods in which construction could not occur to avoid in-water and nesting bird impacts. The construction schedule needs to be better defined to assess the effects of the construction activities, including concentration of truck traffic (and associated AQ and Noise effects) during periods of construction. 3-1

The project assumes that the Shasta Avenue extension would be in place, which is not the baseline and should not be considered as such. 3-2

Section 3.4 should be updated. 3-3

Project Objectives

The first objective listed is 'Relieve traffic congestion within the local street network,' but the analysis does not show that the project actually does this. In fact, there are significant project effects cumulatively and as currently analyzed, assumes mitigating projects in the baseline such that it is currently unknown what the effects of the project are on traffic. 3-4

Required Permits and Approvals

Please add USFWS to Table 3.3. 3-5

Impact Analysis

Aesthetics assessment: Thank you for providing visual simulations! 3-6

Air Quality: This assessment does not take into account the 8,000 truck trips that are expected to occur during construction. Impact AQ/GHG-6 assumes that the construction effects would occur equally over 30 months, which cannot be true given timing restrictions due to biological impacts. Also, you cannot amortize construction-related AQ impacts over a 30-year operational period! These effects should be amortized over 30 months or whatever the construction period ends up being. Why are we assuming a drastic drop in GHG between now and 2020 (without project)? (From 53,363 to 46,291) 3-7

Impact BIO-2: This discussion needs to acknowledge that there would be restrictions to in-water work to avoid fish effects. 3-8

Mitigation Measure BIO-3: Mitigation should be onsite and the ratio listed in the measure should be '2:1' not '1:2' as listed on page 2-8. 3-9

Impact BIO-4: it is not clear what the total permanent and temporary effects would be. These should be described. 3-10

Mitigation Measure BIO-1: The Corps standard is 5 years for site monitoring of new plantings. 3-11

Impact HYD-9: This impact discussion essentially postpones essential information in determining the design of the project to avoid base flood elevation changes. The mitigation measure HYD-1 includes potential additional environmental impacts related to changes in the Petaluma River channel or other 3-12

<p>potentially sensitive habitats. CEQA requires that the mitigation measures themselves are mitigated if there is a potential for a significant impact. The EIR does not currently disclose those potential impacts and any associated required mitigation, which is required.</p>	<p>3-12</p>
<p>Traffic impacts use the incorrect CEQA baseline. The effects of the project should not be compared to future conditions (Opening Year). They must be compared to today's condition. Even though the methods section says that there are 'dual baselines,' the existing condition is not what is actually used for the significance findings. The Opening Year assumes several other projects that may or may not be constructed or operated as currently planned. The project analysis should demonstrate what the effects of the project would be if it were added to existing conditions. Additionally, the 'LOS' method is currently proposed to be eliminated as the standard assessment method for traffic impacts. Given the importance of this as a traffic relief project, the traffic analysis should be more detailed, written for lay persons to understand, and should be explicit about when the analysis shows degradation of intersections or other traffic patterns. The tradeoffs should be articulated.</p>	<p>3-13</p>
<p>Traffic impacts (and associated AQ and noise) assume that 8,000 truck trips would occur equally over the construction period, which is untrue since there are restrictions on construction timing. This analysis should be consistent with the in-water and other timing restrictions laid out in the biological resources section.</p>	<p>3-14</p>
<p>Table 4.2-10: Intersections of Stony Point/Old Redwood Highway (AM); Petaluma Blvd/Corona (PM); substantial increases in McDowell/Rainier; Petaluma Blvd/Shasta (PM); Petaluma Blvd/Magnolia; Petaluma Blvd/Rainier (PM); Washington/McDowell (AM); East Washington/101 NB Ramps (PM); East Washington/101 SB Ramps (AM); East Washington/Ellis (PM) all have increased delay times.</p>	<p>3-15</p>
<p>East Washington/101 NB Ramps goes from LOS B to LOS C in PM hours and East Washington/Ellis goes from LOS A to LOS C in PM hours. This needs to be discussed in greater detail.</p>	<p>3-16</p>
<p>Impact TRANS-7: The effects on access to the existing Operations Facility are proposed to be mitigated by including a driveway from EB Rainier to the facility, essentially creating an extra left turn lane on Rainier. Have the traffic effects of this been evaluated? Essentially, turning buses have the potential to hold up the entire left turn pocket. Was this mitigation included in the modeling? What is the timing of bus ingress and egress?</p>	<p>3-17</p>
<p>Impact TRANS-9: Intersection of Rainier and Petaluma Blvd N would operate at LOS D in peak PM. This impact assessment should compare only the project to the existing condition. The current analysis is convoluted by the inclusion of the Opening Year baseline. The question is: Does the project improve or not existing conditions? How is Mitigation Measure TRANS-3 mitigating the effect of conflicts with a congestion management plan?</p>	<p>3-18</p>
<p>Impact CUMULATIVE TRANS-1: Essentially every major intersection in Petaluma would operate at an unacceptable level. CEQA compels us to look for an alternative to this.</p>	<p>3-19</p>
<p>Section 5.5.2.8: How does Alternative B perform relative to traffic? What residential land uses are prohibited if this network of streets are not constructed? This is the 100-year floodplain.</p>	<p>3-20</p>
<p>Why wasn't an alternative including the expansion of Corona Road evaluated? It would be a much cheaper alternative and would likely provide better relief on its connecting intersections, would not</p>	<p>3-21</p>

Interfere with the bus Operations Yard, would not induce floodplain development, and would likely have fewer impacts to riparian habitats. CEQA requires that reasonable alternatives be evaluated that have the potential to meet MOST of the project objectives. Corona Road meets all objectives except that last one: 'Not preclude future connections from adjacent parcels along the roadway.' This is not an acceptable CEQA objective for what is described as and meant to be an East-West Connector.

3-21

Where are growth-inducing effects evaluated? If this project allows growth, which it acknowledges it does, then the impacts of that growth must also be evaluated. What are the effects of 100s of homes in the floodplain?

3-22

RESPONSE TO COMMENT LETTER 3 (CL-3)**Jennifer Pierre, Planning Commissioner**

Response 3-1: The comment requests clarification of the 30 month construction period given the restrictions to avoid bird nesting and in-water resources. The analysis in the DEIR assumes an overall 30 month construction period within which the work would be performed. There are restrictions that would limit work within some habitat sensitive locations. Mitigation measures BIO-1, 4, and 5 require that construction work adjacent to the Petaluma River (specifically in the riparian woodland identified in DEIR Figure 4.3-1) will be scheduled from June 15 through October 15. This period is typically when the lowest precipitation occurs and is considered the dry season. Limiting construction activities to the dry season is an effective means to minimize potential impacts to in-water resources. Restrictions to construction would only be in effect if the pre-construction surveys required under BIO-6 detect nesting birds and construction activities would occur between February 1 and August 30. This later measure is typically complied with by removing trees and vegetation prior to this period and not during active nesting. The overall construction period (30 months) accommodates these restrictions, and the contractor can continue working in areas outside of the immediate vicinity of the river and identified nest areas, if any.

The commenter further requested clarification as to the air quality and noise impacts related to construction activity. Construction noise impacts are described in the DEIR for both peak and average levels. The highest noise levels are expected to be generated by pile driving which would occur during the installation of the foundations of the bridge over the river (estimated at 10 months in the DEIR). General construction is noise during the overall construction period is averaged, but is noted in the DEIR that it will occur in stages along the roadway as it is constructed and completed within sections. Air quality impacts are estimated by activity and duration in the DEIR in Table 4.2-7, for example land clearing is estimated at 66 working days and the table is sequenced in the general order of how the various construction activities would be carried out.

How the project is specifically staged and scheduled will ultimately be determined when final design is completed and the contractor establishes the work schedule for the project. The DEIR provides a reasonable estimate of these activities and durations and identifies sensitive habitats and seasons that should be avoided or restricted. Further, the mitigation measures set forth in the DEIR provide appropriate steps to take when sensitive habitat or sensitive seasons may not be avoidable.

Response 3-2: The commenter asks for clarification for including the interchange and Shasta Avenue collector in the baseline analysis. The project does not consider Shasta in the baseline analysis. Rather, Shasta is envisioned in the City's General Plan (2008), and were therefore included in the cumulative analysis. Also see Master Response 1: Cumulative Analysis.

Response 3-3: The comment asks for an update of Section 3.4 Vicinity Projects in the DEIR. Section 3.4 Vicinity Projects reflects general proposed or planned projects at the time of compilation and circulation the DEIR, and is not meant to be an exclusive or exhaustive list. The cumulative impact analysis evaluates build out conditions for all improvements as envisioned in the General Plan.

Response 3-4: The comment notes that the first project objective for improving traffic is not supported by data presented in the DEIR, and relies on mitigating projects in the baseline. See Master Responses 1, 2, 3 and 4 for an explanation of baseline, cumulative traffic operation and cumulative analysis. The focus of the DEIR is on identifying impacts caused by the project, but it also shows benefits of the project at buildout of the General Plan. The future baseline of opening year 2020 was used in the traffic analysis to describe the conditions in 2020 with and without the project, in order to allow an understanding of the project impacts.

As a new cross-town connector across the Petaluma River and the railroad, the project would relieve traffic and congestion on Corona Road and East Washington Street, and intersections on these streets would improve in the future conditions from unacceptable levels to acceptable levels (refer to Impact TRANS-9). Any project that shifts traffic to a new alignment will result in higher levels of congestion at the locations where the connector joins existing roads; this project would result in an un-mitigated impact to the proposed Petaluma Boulevard North/Rainier Avenue intersection, and would require additional turn lanes in the design to function at an acceptable level as identified in Mitigation Measure TRANS-3. The Rainier Cross-Town Connector was identified in the General Plan as a means to alleviate congestion at several deficient intersections. Overall, it will provide an additional option in the future to cross between North McDowell Boulevard and Petaluma Boulevard North.

Regarding the assumptions of projects within the baseline, the traffic analysis includes four “mitigating projects” in the study, consistent with assumptions for the 2020 analysis year. Section 4.12.3.1 lists the roadway network assumptions. Of the four listed and included in the study, one has now been constructed (Washington Street Interchange Improvements), and another is under construction (the Old Redwood Highway Interchange Widening, scheduled for completion in 2015). A third project, the US 101 HOV lanes, are part of the large Marin-Sonoma Narrows Project that is currently under construction; the HOV lane phase is anticipated for funding at or after 2018. The North Petaluma Boulevard grid improvements will be constructed as funding is available, similar to the Rainier Cross-Town Connector. The inclusion of these projects in the traffic analysis was considered a reasonable estimate based on projected priorities for major infrastructure improvements, and these projects are being completed or advancing into construction as planned (or estimated).

Response 3-5: The commenter requested that USFWS be added to the list of permitting and approving Federal Agencies. Per Table 3-3, Potential Permits and Approvals USFWS is included as a permitting and approving federal agency. No change needed.

Response 3-6: The commenter appreciates the visual stimulations provided in the DEIR. Comment noted.

Response 3-7: The commenter requested that emissions from truck trip activity during construction be accounted for in the analysis. The emissions from truck trips during construction had been calculated and were included in the analysis. As such, no change is needed.

The commenter requested that construction-related impacts not be amortized over the lifetime of the project. The Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) has not developed a threshold for construction-related greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. The BAAQMD has developed a threshold for operational GHG emissions of 1,100 metric tons carbon dioxide

equivalent (CO₂e) per year. Because operational GHG emissions occur throughout the lifetime of the project, but construction GHG emissions only occur for a short period of time during project construction, it is not appropriate to directly compare the construction GHG emissions to the operational GHG emissions threshold. The method of amortizing the construction emissions of GHG is a practice that has been established by other California air districts, and in the absence of a construction threshold by BAAQMD was applied in the DEIR. Note that this is only applicable to GHG emissions, and this practice was not followed for any other pollutant evaluated in the DEIR.

It should further been mentioned that as set forth in Table 4.2-10, a total of 1,666 metric tons (MT) of CO₂e emissions will be generated over the 30 month construction period. This equates to an average of 666 MT/yr, which is well below the 1,100 MT/yr significance threshold. Although construction GHG emissions are amortized over the lifetime of the project to evaluate the construction GHG impacts using the operational GHG threshold level, when considering the construction duration of 30 months the average emission rate per year is also below the significance threshold. As such, no change was made to the DEIR.

The comment also asks for clarification on the decrease in GHG emissions from the Existing Conditions and Opening Year No Project. GHG emission factors from EMFAC2011 (the California Air Resources Board model used for estimating pollutant emissions) show that vehicles are expected to emit less GHG emissions on a per mile basis in 2020 compared to existing conditions due to the implementation of adopted regulations and standards, such as those related to fuel efficiency and fuel carbon content. Therefore, despite potential increased vehicle activity in 2020 compared to existing conditions, GHG emissions are expected to decrease due to these lower GHG emission factors. The reduction in pollutant emissions from vehicles over past decades has been the most significant factor enabling air districts to meet pollution standards, and the reductions are predicted by CARB to continue into the future.

Response 3-8: The comment requests that seasonal restrictions for in water work be reflected in Section 4.3 Biological Resources Impact BIO-2. Per Page 4.3-18, as cited below, the text reflects that work at or near the Petaluma River, including any dewatering activities, would be conducted during the dry season. As such, seasonal restrictions involving in-water construction are reflected, as any work within Petaluma River would require dewatering activities.

“A portion of the Petaluma River would be dewatered to install the temporary bridge falsework. This system would be installed and in place during the dry season, and fish are not expected to be present or affected by dewatering activities.”

Response 3-9: The comment requests that project mitigation for potential loss of riparian habitat due to project construction and operation be done on the project site at a 2:1 ratio. Mitigation Measure BIO-1 is included in the DEIR to minimize impacts to riparian habitat due to project construction and operation. Mitigation Measure BIO-3 is included to allow for mitigation of permanent impacts on riparian habitat additional to on site protection, and not as an exclusive off-site measure. Pending RWQCB and CDFW review, and the permitting process, a higher mitigation ratio may be required.

BIO-3 was revised in the FEIR to state the final mitigation ratio will be determined during consultation with the resources agencies. As such, the FEIR text on Page 4.3-21, Section 4.3.1.3 Significant Impacts was corrected as follows:

“The City of Petaluma shall mitigate for impacts on riparian habitat at a 1:1 ratio or as deemed appropriate by the regulatory agencies. The final mitigation ratio will be determined during consultation with the resources agencies. The City Shall first seek to provide mitigation onsite proximate to the River, then within other nearby areas of the watershed, and as a final option through offsite means via an approved mitigation bank.”

Response 3-10: The commenter requests that temporary and permanent impacts be specified for riparian and Petaluma River channel work. The DEIR includes total approximate area of construction activities that would impact resources in the project area. Per Page 4.3-19, construction activities would impact approximately 4.21 acres of riparian habitat, while less than 0.5 acre of rock outslope protection would be placed within the Petaluma River. Final calculations of permanent and temporary impacts would be determined in final design stages (90 to 100% design). Further, any temporary and permanent impacts would be mitigated through the Federal and State permits outlined in Table 3-3, Section 3 Project Description and included in those permits.

Response 3-11: The comment indicates that the USACE standard for site monitoring of new plantings is 5 years and it should be reflected in Mitigation Measure BIO-1. Per USACE Regulatory Guidance Letter No. 08-03, dated October 10, 2008, monitoring timeline and performance standards will be based on functional, conditional or other suitable assessment methods and/or criteria. Further, the guidance states that “[t]he monitoring period must be sufficient to demonstrate that the compensatory mitigation project has met performance standards, but not less than five years (see 33 CFR 332.6(b)).” As such, the FEIR on page 4.3-19, Section 4.3, Mitigation Measure BIO-1 was revised as follows:

“~~3~~ 5 years, or until the banks are adequately revegetated to prevent erosion and sedimentation at these areas and ground cover is equivalent to pre-project conditions” meets USACE standards, as it allows for flexibility of monitoring based on functional and sustainable methods.

Response 3-12: The comment indicates that, in general, the EIR does not disclose potential impacts of the required mitigation measures, and specifically, that Mitigation Measure HYD-1 could cause undisclosed significant impacts on the river channel or other potentially sensitive habitats. Please note that the comment refers to Impact HYD-9, and the corresponding mitigation measure was incorrectly labeled HYD-1 on page 4.7-20 of the DEIR; that reference has been corrected to Mitigation Measure HYD-9.

Mitigation Measure HYD-9 indicates that later stages of project design could incorporate measures such as benching or widening the channel near the bridge crossing to comply with the City’s no net fill policy. The impacts from construction of the project would occur within the proposed project area shown on Figure 3-2. This was the area that was evaluated for removal of vegetation and construction of the new roadway, including embankments, bridge overcrossing of Petaluma River, the undercrossing of US 101, and other features. Work within the bank and channel is described in Sections 3.3.3.2 and 3.3.2.5. It would include excavation and placement

of flood scour protection, bridge abutments and footings, and temporary cofferdams, pile driving, or other design elements. The study area used for the analysis of impacts (Figure 3-2) would be the work area for the project, and is assumed to also be the eventual right-of-way that the City will have to acquire or gain temporary easements for construction of the project. The preliminary design and environmental review does not include work outside of the study area/right-of-way, because a contractor could not work outside of the right-of-way without explicit permission or approval. It was assumed that work within the study area would include excavation, the placement of fill, benching, or widening. If temporary and/or permanent easements would have to be obtained for work in areas outside of the planned right-of-way, environmental effects of that change would be evaluated. If such an evaluation is necessary, the impacts are fully expected to remain consistent with what is already reported and addressed in the FEIR (e.g., the type of impact such as removal of riparian vegetation), but the quantity of the impact might increase as well as the quantity of needed mitigation. This is not unusual when a project such as a roadway goes through final design, and the work areas change slightly.

Potential impacts on riparian habitat or other sensitive natural communities from HYD-1 would be similar to those discussed under Impact BIO-3 and other measures. As such, the DEIR adequately captures potential project impacts including those that may result from mitigation measures.

Response 3-13: This comment addresses the CEQA baseline used in the transportation section analysis. It notes that the effects of the project should not be compared to future conditions (Opening Year), but with present day conditions and that the ‘LOS’ method is currently proposed to be eliminated as the standard assessment method for traffic impacts. The commenter further notes that given the importance of the project as a traffic relief project, the traffic analysis should be more detailed, written for lay persons to understand, and should be explicit about when the analysis shows degradation of intersections or other traffic patterns.

See Master Response 2 for clarification of future baseline in the Transportation analysis. The existing condition was described as required by CEQA but substantial evidence (i.e. several traffic improvement projects finishing ahead of schedule but after the NOP was submitted) necessitated using a future baseline of opening year 2020. The future baseline allows for a discussion of the conditions with and without the project so that the impact of the project on the environment can be reasonably evaluated and compared. See Table 4.12-10 for a direct comparison of analysis results. See Master Response 3 for further discussion on the Opening Year traffic analysis.

It is recognized that Senate Bill 743 (SB 743) will limit the applicability of traffic LOS standards in CEQA analyses and directs the California Office of Planning and Research (OPR) to develop new guidelines specifying alternate methods to assess transportation impacts. OPR released draft guidelines in August 2014, which include the use of vehicle miles traveled (VMT) per capita generated by a plan or project as the appropriate metric. However, OPR has yet to finalize or adopt the draft guidelines and the City of Petaluma has not yet adopted its transportation significance criteria in response. The DEIR underwent public circulation in July, 2014, prior to the OPR draft guidelines, and CEQA guidelines advise that amendments to the guidelines apply prospectively only (Section 15007). LOS was used in the determination of significant impacts for the project.

Response 3-14: The comment notes that traffic impacts (and associated AQ and noise) assume that 8,000 truck trips would occur equally over the construction period, which does not take in account restrictions on construction timing. The commenter requests that this analysis be made consistent with the in-water and other timing restrictions as written in the biological resources section.

As noted in Section 4.12.4.3, there would be a maximum of 8,000 trucks over the course of the entire construction period. On average, this would result in 24 truck trips (in and out) a day over the entire construction period. The number of truck trips would fluctuate over the course of the period based on the level of construction activity. As noted in Mitigation Measure BIO-1 in Section 4.3.1.3, construction activities on a portion of the roadway would be limited to the dry season June 15 through October 15. Therefore, during the months where construction activity occurs on these portions of the site, construction traffic could be higher. As noted in Section 4.12.4.3, if truck traffic is expected to be heavier during certain phases of construction then the City shall ensure that the appropriate measures are in place to minimize the impact due to truck traffic. For pedestrian and bicyclists, adequate advance notice of closures and construction and identifying alternate pedestrian/bicycle routes as necessary to support possible closures and construction, this Mitigation Measure TRANS-2 would reduce impacts to levels that are less than significant.

Response 3-15: The commenter notes that Table 4.2-10 Intersections at specific locations show increased delay times. See Master Response 3 for further discussion on the Opening Year analysis. In summary, the increase in delay at the majority of intersections listed above is a result of planned development (No Project conditions) that is not attributable to the project. Under project conditions only one intersection (Rainier Avenue/Petaluma Boulevard North) would operate at unacceptable service levels. Mitigation Measure TRANS-3 would increase the capacity of this intersection such that its operations would result in acceptable LOS D or better conditions.

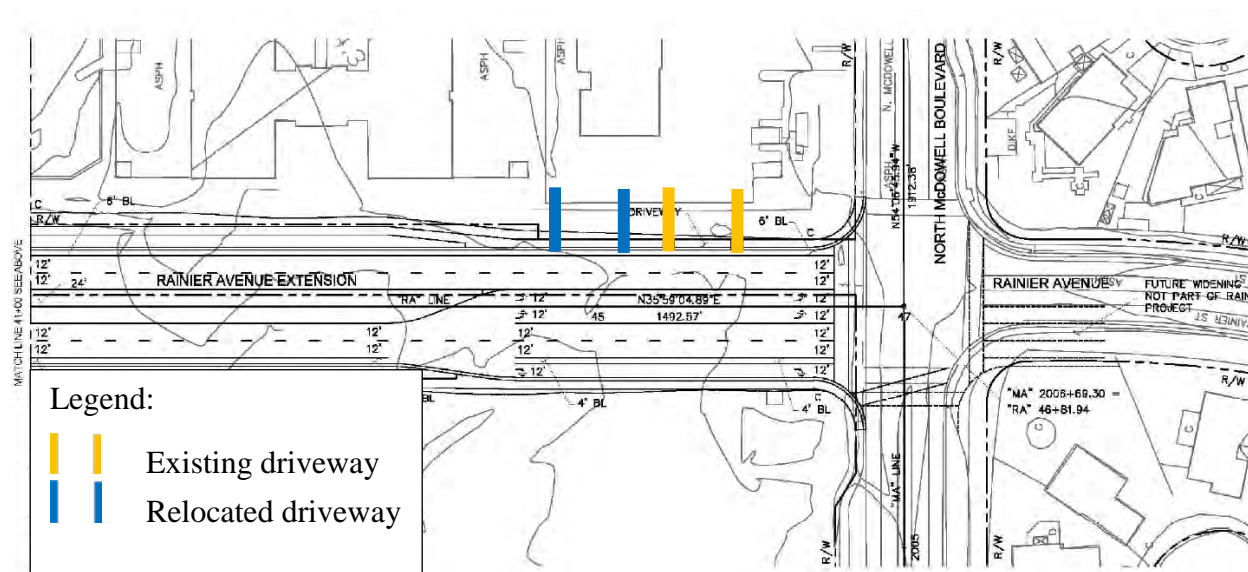
Response 3-16: The commenter asks for additional discussion of the impacts at East Washington/101 NB ramps and East Washington/Ellis during the PM hours. The intersection of East Washington/101 NB ramps goes from LOS B to LOS C due to traffic volume diversion resulting from the project. However, LOS C is still considered an acceptable service level and therefore the project has an impact at this location, but it is not a significant impact as it does not drop to an unacceptable level LOS of E or F. The intersection of East Washington/Ellis goes from LOS A under existing conditions to LOS D under year 2020 No Project, and then to LOS C under year 2020 with the project. Therefore, at this location the project has a traffic operational benefit, although the levels of service never drop to an unacceptable level. See Master Response 3 for further discussion on the Opening Year analysis.

Response 3-17: The comment inquires about the traffic impacts of adding a driveway from eastbound Rainier to the Operations Facility.

Mitigation measure TRANS-1 was developed in close coordination with Petaluma Transit staff to ensure this circulation pattern would work for their services. The primary route for buses entering the bus operating facility would continue to be from North McDowell Boulevard. Buses traveling southbound on North McDowell Boulevard enter and exit via the driveway just north of

Rainier. Buses traveling north on McDowell Boulevard turn left onto Rainier Avenue before entering the driveway from Rainier. The project would potentially allow buses to reduce their travel distances by returning to the operations facility via eastbound Rainier Avenue. This new route would be allowed through the turn lane from eastbound Rainier Avenue described in Mitigation measure TRANS-1. Buses do not return during peak hours as they are in service during these times. Therefore, buses would use this turn pocket during the late evening or mid-morning (for morning commute services), when the traffic volumes are generally much lower than the peak times. Lower traffic volumes would improve accessibility for vehicles turning left from Rainier Avenue. As shown in Inset A, the driveway would be relocated to the west edge of the property under Mitigation measure TRANS-1. Buses using this new route would enter the far left turn lane and wait for a gap in traffic along westbound Rainier Avenue to pull into the driveway. Drivers wanting to turn left onto North McDowell Boulevard would pass the bus and queue in the right lane and proceed to the intersection.

Inset A: Relocated driveway for Petaluma Transit Operations Facility.



Response 3-18: The commenter inquires about the project’s impacts on the intersection of Rainier and Petaluma Blvd North. Under existing and No Project conditions, there is no intersection at this location, and hence no intersection LOS to compare. Table 4.12-10 shows this intersection as #8, and shows that with the project in the opening year, it would operate at LOS D in the AM peak period and LOS F in the PM period, which was noted as an unacceptable level in the DEIR. Text was added to the FEIR that explains this, and that for purposes of comparison the existing and No Project condition could be considered “acceptable.” The existing text then notes that the project would result in a LOS of F in the PM peak period, which is considered an unacceptable impact.

Mitigation Measure TRANS-3 is a specific intersection design to improve capacity and flow through this intersection (described in the DEIR as an additional westbound left turn lane and a northbound right overlap phase). The traffic study determined that it would improve operations at Rainier Avenue/Petaluma Boulevard North to acceptable levels of service.

Response 3-19: The comment addresses Impact Cumulative TRANS-1. See Master Response 1 for clarification regarding cumulative analysis. Without the project, the six intersections referred to in Cumulative Trans-1 would degrade from acceptable levels of service under existing conditions to unacceptable levels of service in the future. However, the text and Table 6.4.11-1 identify that three of these intersections would improve to acceptable conditions with the project, and the other three intersections would still improve in LOS or can be mitigated by intersection restriping at Petaluma Boulevard North/Sycamore Lane (Shasta Avenue). With mitigation, the identified cumulative impacts can all be mitigated.

Response 3-20: The comment inquired of Alternative B's ability to alleviate traffic without providing connectivity to parcels slotted for development. Per Section 5 Alternatives, Alternative B would have similar impacts as the project at Corona Road and Washington Street by providing an additional crossing of Highway 101. However, under Alternative B, the new Petaluma Boulevard/Rainier Avenue intersection would operate at unacceptable LOS E during the AM and PM peak hours. This would be a significant impact. Per the conclusions of Section 5, Alternative B would perform either comparable or lower than the Project. Further, Alternative B would not meet project objectives to provide connectivity to said parcels.

The comment also asked what land uses would be prohibited if the project is not built. Section 5.5.1.8 describes land uses under the No Project Alternative. Figure 4.8-1 on page 4.8-3 indicates that the project area land use designations are mainly medium density residential, community commercial, and mixed use. The site is zoned Residential 4, Commercial 2, and Mixed Use 1A. According to the general plan, these are the land uses that would be permissible without the project.

Response 3-21: The comment asks about the inclusion of a Corona Road Alternative and inquires about the acceptability of the project objectives under CEQA. Please see Master Response 8: Corona Road Alternative.

Section 15124 (b) of the CEQA guidelines requires objectives to be written to assist the lead agency in developing a reasonable range of alternatives to evaluate in the EIR. Objectives should include the underlying purpose of the project. Two of the objectives in the DEIR (page 3-20) are providing a new cross town connection, and not precluding future connections from adjacent parcels.

Regarding the objective for cross-town connection, this objective is not worded with a specific connection required (such as the proposed Rainier Avenue, or improving Corona Road). However, the General Plan does identify the Rainier Avenue alignment, and does not include widening Corona Road. The reasons for not advancing Corona Road are described in Master Response 8.

Regarding the objective for not precluding future parcel connections, Corona Road has driveway connections to the road that serve various parcels, and there are no restrictions from adjacent

parcels having driveways along this route. It is considered a rural arterial, and is intended to be maintained as such at two lanes.

Response 3-22: The commenter inquired about the potential growth inducing effects of providing connectivity to parcels slotted for development. As described in Section 4.10 Population and Housing Impact Pop-1 discussion:

“In assessing the potential indirect growth inducing impacts of the project, it is important to clearly identify growth induced by the project beyond amounts already anticipated and planned. This project is needed to serve growth that has been approved and anticipated through the General Plan process, and is therefore considered growth-accommodating... Therefore, any reasonably foreseeable growth resulting from the project has been anticipated and incorporated into analysis utilized in development of the General Plan. In this context, the project would accommodate existing and planned growth, but not induce substantial population growth in the area, thus, potential impacts would be *less than significant*.”

Comment Letter (CL) -4

MEMORANDUM

To: Heather Hines
 cc: John Brown
 From: Mike Healy
 Date: August 24, 2014
 Re.: Comments & Questions on Rainier Cross-Town Connector DEIR

Below please find my comments and questions on the Draft EIR. Overall I thought the document was quite comprehensive and well done, so please do not take the following as implying otherwise.

- p. 2-1 Regarding the 118 foot width of the 101 undercrossing, what lane / sidewalk configuration can that accommodate? Does it include turn lanes for a future interchange, as at Steele Lane? 4-1
- p. 2-9 In the discussion of Impact BIO-3, the “two-to-one” trunk diameter basis would more accurately be called a “one-to-two” ratio, based on the example. This same issue recurs on p. 2-22 and p. 4.3-28. 4-2
- p. 4.2-1 The two references to Petaluma being located in the “Sonoma Valley” are incorrect. 4-3
- p. 4.3-19 & elsewhere. Defining the “dry season” as June 15 – October 15 seems arbitrarily short, when Petaluma’s historic average rainfall in June is 0.17 inches. June 1 would seem to be a more appropriate start date. 4-4
- p. 4.3-22 Dewatering and falsework seem to be a result of a particular design choice. Such features are not part of the new 101 / Petaluma River bridge, for instance. 4-5
- p. 4.4-7 The old railroad trestle was recently replaced. 4-6
- p. 4.4-15 The DEIR does not identify the location of SON-2254/H, so the decision makers cannot evaluate if there is an alternate alignment that avoids disturbing it. 4-7
- p. 4.5-1 The highest elevation within the city limits is far lower than 2,295 feet. 4-8
- p.4.12-38 The data for Intersection 11 (East Washington at McDowell) shows a delay of “>80” seconds with no project in 2020 in both the a.m. and p.m. peak, with a letter grade of “F.” Please provide the actual computer run calculations, rather than just “>80.” There is a big difference between 81 and 150, for instance. These are perhaps the two most important pieces of data in the entire document. 4-9
- There are statements on p. 4.8-16 (“the project would create roadway access to vacant parcels designated for residential and commercial development in the City’s General Plan 4-10

that do not currently have access.”) & p. 4.10-3 (“The project was included...to...provide access to parcels designated for future development in General Plan 2025.”) which seem to be partially undercut by a statement on p. 4.10-5 (“the project would potentially provide access to vacant parcels.”) Then at p. 4.12-23 a scenario is described “including connections at the Shasta Avenue extension and Sid Commons driveway.” Also at p. 5-9 (“unlike the project, the design of [Alternative B] would preclude future connections at the Sid Commons driveway, Shasta Avenue extension and the Petaluma Outlet Mall expansion...”)

For clarity, please show specifically where future connections off of the proposed connector could be located and confirm that these connections would be permissible given relevant design constraints, elevations; minimum distances between intersections; minimum distance from a future 101 interchange; and so forth; and also advise which if any are anticipated to be signalized. Would the Sid Commons driveway be west of the river? Is the Shasta Avenue extension also west of the river, and is it dependent on an (unlikely) at-grade crossing of the SMART tracks? Is there any future connection potentially providing access to the portion of the Johnson property east of the river?

These issues are important for two reasons. First, the availability of these parcels for development consistent with the General Plan is important to provide a sufficient inventory of land within the UGB, thus supporting the continued viability of the UGB. Second, the City is assuming that the property owners will donate the needed right of way at no cost to the City, but that assumption will not hold if there is no ability to access their properties.

4-10

RESPONSE TO COMMENT LETTER 4**Mike Healy, Councilmember**

Response 4-1: The comment inquires about the 118 foot width of the Highway 101 crossing and the type of lane/sidewalk would accommodate. Per Section 4.12 Transportation pedestrian facilities are an integral portion of the project. As such, sidewalks would be included in project design as required by the Petaluma General Plan 2025, and would include all feasible safety design features required by Federal, State and local regulations. Width for turn lanes is included in the layout of the design.

Response 4-2: The comment indicates that the trunk “two-to-one” trunk diameter replacement ratio should be called a “one-to-two.” This tree replacement ratio is based on the City of Petaluma Tree Removal Ordinance. No change was made.

Response 4-3: The comment indicates that references to “Sonoma Valley” should be removed from the DEIR in reference to the City of Petaluma Location. Per the climate subregion descriptions from BAAQMD, Section 4.2 Air Quality was revised as follows (deletions are in strikethrough and additions are shown in underline):

“The project site lies within the City of Petaluma-in the ~~adjacent to the~~ southern portion of ~~Sonoma~~ Petaluma Valley, approximately 11 miles north of the San Pablo Bay. ~~The Sonoma vValley that stretches from Santa Rosa to the San Pablo Bay is known as the Cotati Valley at the north end and the Petaluma Valley at the south end. The Petaluma Valley refers to the southern portion of the valley that stretches from Santa Rosa to the San Pablo Bay; the northern portion of this valley is known as the Cotati Valley.~~ To the east, Petaluma Valley is bordered by the Sonoma Mountains, with the San Pablo Bay at the southeast end of the valley.”

“The air pollution potential of the Petaluma ~~Sonoma~~ Valley is generally low due to its link to the Petaluma Gap and its low population density, but could be high under stagnant morning conditions or during eastern or southeastern wind patterns bringing pollution from the Carquinez Strait Region and the Central Valley. ~~if there were significant sources of pollution nearby.”~~”

Response 4-4: The comment indicates that defining the dry season as from June 15 to October 15 is short based on the historic rainfall. The San Francisco Bay RWQCB and CDFW define the dry season as from June 15 to October 15. To be consistent with these agencies, the same timeframe was used to define the dry season in this EIR.

Response 4-5: The comment remarked on the need for dewatering and in water work as compared to the Highway 101/Petaluma River Bridge. The DEIR evaluated the types of construction methods that are typically involved, or may be needed, in settings that require falsework for construction of the bridge structure, and may involve in-water construction. As the comment notes, these may be the choice of a designer. However, they may also be up to the contractor, and the DEIR includes evaluation of construction techniques that may be employed and may have the potential for environmental impacts. This allows for the greatest flexibility in final design and construction.

Response 4-6: The commenter remarked that the Northwestern Pacific Railroad trestle that spans the Petaluma River was recently replaced. The observation is correct, as such and as stated in Section 4.4 Cultural Resources, the trestle was not included for further consideration in the cultural resources impact assessment. No change needed.

Response 4-7: The commenter indicated that the location of archaeological resource SON-2254/H is not disclosed in the DEIR. Per Federal and State regulations archaeological resources are not divulged to the general public as a protection measure from looting or destruction. The alignment of the proposed project cannot be shifted to any great amount, and was considered with regard to the location of this site. If a design or construction method can be employed that avoids this site it will be considered, but the DEIR evaluated the worst-case situation for evaluation of impacts. No change was made to the FEIR text.

Response 4-8: The commenter notes that the highest elevation in the City of Petaluma is lower than the cited 2,295 feet. Per USGS topographic maps the median elevation in the City of Petaluma is approximately 30 feet. As such Section 4.5 Geology and Soils was revised as follows (deletions are in strikethrough and additions are shown in underline):

“Elevations in the City of Petaluma range from sea level to approximately ~~2,295~~ over 50 feet above mean sea level.”

Response 4-9: The comment inquires about the data used for Intersection 11 delay calculations. Per the traffic engineering guidelines set forth in the Transportation Research Board’s Highway Capacity Manual (HCM) – Special Report 209, (Chapter 16), delay over 80 seconds is presented as “greater than 80” due to the logarithmic growth in delay above this threshold. The calculated delay is shown in the Intersection Analysis sheets presented in the Rainier Avenue Extension Project Administrative Draft Report Technical Appendix (August 2013, Fehr & Peers).

Response 4-10: The comment inquires about the project’s goal to allow for connectivity to future parcels and inquires about specific details of how future connections would be constructed and operated. Specific access details, like intersection and road design, are beyond the scope of the project and this DEIR. Per Section 3: Project Description the project’s goal is to “Not preclude future connections from adjacent parcels along the roadway,” and not to design or implement such connections. As such, the future connections are not part of the project.

Comment Letter (CL) - 5

Kremin, Darcy

From: Ervin, Olivia <OERVIN@ci.petaluma.ca.us>
Sent: Tuesday, September 02, 2014 8:46 AM
To: Zimmerman, Jeff; Kremin, Darcy
Subject: FW: Comments on DEIR Rainier Cross-Town Connector

Good Morning,

Please see the comments below.

Thanks,

Olivia

From: Dennis Kelly [mailto:drkelly5@comcast.net]
Sent: Monday, September 01, 2014 3:47 PM
To: Ervin, Olivia
Subject: Comments on DEIR Rainier Cross-Town Connector

Dear Ms. Ervin,

My comments to the DEIR Rainier cross-town connector follow:

Comment on the Public Notice for the DEIR:

1. I received a notice of public hearing on the DEIR for the Rainier Cross-town Connector 8-29-14. The notice is postmarked 8-27-14 and it advises that the public comment period on the Draft Environmental Impact Report for the cross-town connector is from July 24th, to September 8th. The notice was postmarked over month after the comment period began and less than two weeks before it expires. I am requesting that the public comment period be extended such that the start date is the date that public notice was received (i.e. 8-29-14). 5-1
2. I am also requesting that any future such notices provide the web address where the DEIR be downloaded on-line in pdf. The notice I received only referred to locations where hard copies were available at designated locations in Petaluma despite the fact that document was available on-line. 5-2

Comment on Overall Scope of the DEIR: Add another Alternative for evaluation under a revised DEIR as follows:

4-Lane Roadway and highway interchange at Corona Road: In lieu of the Rainier cross-town connector, construct a 4-Lane Roadway and highway interchange at Corona Road. Through highway signage divert traffic heading through Petaluma and out to Bodega; to the Petaluma Outlet Malls; to the AutoMall and frontage road business along North McDowell and Petaluma Boulevard North to the new Corona Road exit (rather than Lakeville, Washington Street or Old Redwood Highway). Make any minimally necessary roadway improvements to Skillman Lane to accommodate and improve traffic flow heading out to Bodega and to provide for improved bicyclist and pedestrian circulation. 5-3

A significant percentage of traffic on Lakeville Highway, Washington Street and old Redwood Highway is either through town traffic or out of town traffic accessing the Petaluma Outlet Malls; to the AutoMall and frontage road business along North McDowell and Petaluma Boulevard North. The proposed Rainier cross-town connector would do nothing to mitigate this traffic. A Corona interchange would allow through town

traffic and traffic to be directed to Skillman lane from Highway 101 and would meet all of the project objectives to with the exception of "Provide a new cross town connection to serve both the east and west sides of the City;" (the inappropriateness of this objective is discussed later in these comments). A 4-Lane Roadway and highway interchange at Corona Road would:

- relieve traffic congestion within the local street networks by diverting out of town traffic off of Lakeville Highway, Washington Street and Redwood Highway;
- Provide enhanced transit, bicyclist, and pedestrian circulation between the east and west side of the City of Petaluma (Note that bicyclist, and pedestrian circulation between the east and west side of the City of Petaluma already exists at the Rainier location via the Lynch creek trails and bridges).
- Relieve future traffic demands at the East Washington Street interchange for local traffic crossing east-west across the Highway 101 corridor by moving through out of town through town traffic from the Washington street corridor to Skillman Lane and moving out of town traffic accessing the Petaluma Outlet Malls; the AutoMall and frontage road business along North McDowell and Petaluma Boulevard North from Lakeville Highway, Washington Street and Redwood Highway to the new Corona Interchange.
- Relieve future traffic demands at the Old Redwood Highway interchange for local traffic crossing east-west across the Highway 101 corridor by allowing traffic from north central Petaluma to access Highway 101 at Corona Road rather than use surface streets to access existing interchanges at Lakeville Highway, Washington Street and Redwood Highway; and
- Not preclude future connections from adjacent parcels along the roadway.

5-3

In addition to improving traffic within Petaluma this route saves through town travelers 2 1/2 miles of travel and avoids multiple delays associated with traffic lights on existing cross town routes. Unlike the Rainier option, this option does not require crossing the new Smart Rail tracks lowering costs and coordination complexities.

Please note that the request that this alternative be evaluated is not new. I submitted a similar request on a previous DEIR: however, city staff responded by conducting a cursory evaluation of a full interchange at Corona in conjunction with a cross-town connector at Rainier which was not what I requested (That analysis concluded, in essence, that two bridges cost more than one and, therefore the alternative was rejected as not cost effective). So just to be clear, I am again requesting that a full interchange at Corona Road be evaluated in lieu of the Rainier Cross-town Connector.

Comment on Pedestrian Access: North McDowell has become extremely busy roadway and the envisioned project will only exasperate that. Please incorporate measures into the project to improve the safety of pedestrians at the interchange of Rainier and North McDowell.

5-4

Comment on financial impact: Petaluma has recently constructed several major retail shopping centers all of which would tend to increase sales tax revenues. Despite this, the City is pursuing an increase in the sales tax rate due to funding shortfalls. It would appear that retail economic development results in a net burden to the City's general fund; thus making the overall benefit of such growth questionable. Since this proposed cross town connector will open up large areas to development consistent with the general plan, please include an analysis of the financial impact to the City's general fund of the construction of this project. Include in the analysis the proposed mechanisms for funding the project as well as the financial impact of the growth envisioned in the General Plan on City operating budgets in a revised DEIR.

5-5

Section 3.1 and 3.5 These sections discuss the project background and project objectives respectively. Section 3.1 is a long and confusing discussion regarding the history of the Rainier project that seems to say that the plan is to build both a cross-town connector and highway interchange as evidenced by the general plan, but then in the

5-6

middle of the discussion the text concludes that the cross-town connector is a standalone project without the need to construct the interchange, which means that the connector can attain the project’s objectives without any other transportation improvements. In Section 3.5 the highway interchange is not one of the project’s objectives and so, the DEIR while acknowledging the that the true scope of the project includes the highway interchange, is inappropriately limiting the scope of the analysis to just the cross town connector.

5-6

Comment: Since the stated intent is pursue the 101 interchange in parallel with the cross town connector, given that the Rainier interchange is already embraced by the general plan and given that an independent decision to pursue the cross town connector would virtually lock in the Rainier location for the interchange without any analysis, revise the DEIR to also address the impacts of the cross town connector in association with the highway 101 interchange such that project is fully evaluated.

Section 3.5: Comment: Delete the project objective to

- Provide a new cross town connection to serve both the east and west sides of the City;

5-7

This objective is too narrow in scope and limits the opportunity for evaluation of alternatives that would be more effective in meeting the other project objectives at lower cost with less environmental impact.

Section 4.2 This section evaluates the expected emission of air pollutants and greenhouse gases (GHG) generated during the construction and operation of the project. As background, I have lived at my current location of 107 Lassen Pl. since 1980. In the ensuing 34 years I have seen traffic on McDowell increase dramatically as the number of lanes was expanded and Highway 101 turned into a parking lot most days. Over the last year we have also had to live with an upwind construction project as the Deer Creek Village went in. It obvious that all this has resulted in an increase in unmonitored exposure to GHG and particulates. Our vehicles and lawn furniture serve as daily indicators of the increased particulate deposition.

5-8

Comment: The DEIR analysis is entirely based on data from a BAAQMD air quality monitoring station located in Santa Rosa at 5th Street Monitoring Station. This was selected because it is closest such station to the project site; however it is 14 miles away. Using data from such a distance does not allow for consideration of localized conditions. Recommend conducting monitoring at the Rainier Prince Albert intersection and using that data in lieu of the Santa Rosa data to support conclusions in a revised DEIR.

5-9

Comment: The conclusion that GHG impacts can be mitigated to less than Significant (LTS) is entirely based on the modeling using data from Santa Rosa and contract provisions stipulating construction controls (which may or may not be rigorously enforced). Recommend that air monitoring be required during the construction phase and that contractors be required to prepare work plans with action levels established for addressing GHG and particulates in excess of action levels.

5-10

Section 4.7.4.3 This section discusses significant hydrology and water quality impacts. The section concludes that the project will have Less than significant impacts because of a mitigation measure to conduct a future hydraulic design study at later stages of project design to determine the project’s potential to alter the river’s flood flows at the bridge location and upstream and downstream of the bridge. It is inappropriate to conclude that impacts will be less than significant based on a future study. What if the study demonstrates otherwise? Recommend that study be conducted now and that the study take into account the development envisioned in the general plan (in terms of runoff from paved surfaces) and that those results be factored into a revised DEIR.

5-11

Section 4.9 This section describes the existing noise environment in the project vicinity and potential noise impacts resulting from the proposed project and concludes that the impacts are LTS. As background, the noise impacts I am interested in are the long term impacts of traffic noise in my neighborhood resulting from the increased traffic flow resulting from the proposed project. My comments on the noise analysis are as follows:

5-12

Comment: . **Section 4.9.4.3.** this section states that “The project is a transportation project and not a noise sensitive use; therefore, this impact would be less than significant.” Please cite the authority for this statement. The statement seems to imply that any noise impact from a transportation project no matter how loud is somehow excluded by regulation or otherwise from considerations.

Comment: As written the entire Section 4.9 is very confusing containing too much boilerplate text and tables with conflicting information. The Modeling states that it is done in conformance with Table 4.9-6 (Office of Planning and Research Guidelines), but no comparison of results to City of Petaluma Guidelines, Table 4.9-5, is provided. In addition, graphical results such as Figure 4.9-4 provide no acceptance standards. Please revise the text to clearly refer to the acceptance standards that are being used and eliminate text that is not relevant to this project sited. Include text that clearly states the results of the analysis such as:

“Based on the modeling conducted, implementation of the proposed project would result in no changes/changes in traffic noise levels, relative to noise levels without the project, ranging from a decrease/increase of X dB to an increase/decrease of Y dB Ldn. Under existing and Existing plus Approved Projects conditions the proposed project would result in significant increases/decreases in traffic noise levels along North McDowell Boulevard and Rainier Avenue. Implementation of the proposed project under cumulative 2025 City General Plan conditions would result in less than significant/significant increases in traffic noise levels along North McDowell Boulevard and Rainier Avenue. Thus, long-term noise levels from project-generated vehicular traffic would result in a less than substantial/substantial (X–Y dB or greater) permanent increase in ambient noise levels. As a result, this impact would be significant/less than significant. Feasible mitigation measures are

5-13

Comment: Please collect actual long term noise monitoring data on McDowell and Rainier in the area of the Park Place subdivision and re-perform modeling. The existing model has a number of deficiencies which need to be corrected as follows:

The Model uses calculated noise levels in the Park Place (R8 and R9) subdivision area based on Rainier traffic only (ignores McDowell traffic) and uses as a source site LT-3 which is located several blocks away and subject to screening by existing structures and landscaping.

5-14

Section 4.9.4.2 states “Since traffic volumes in the area surrounding the roadway corridor have remained relatively stable for the last 10 years, it was assumed that noise levels for existing and Opening Year (2020) conditions would be relatively stable as well.” This comment is incorrect because the new Deer Creek Village opened subsequent to the collection of the monitoring data upon which the analysis is based, and, in addition, the opening of the project site connector with result in increased traffic flow on both McDowell and Rainier.

Section 4.10.3.3 Discusses Less Than Significant Impacts:

This section states that “the project would potentially provide access to vacant parcels along the project’s length that are designated for development in the General Plan. The Rainier Avenue extension and associated connections have been anticipated in the General Plan to allow access to parcels that are designated for higher density housing development including Medium Density Residential (8.1-18.0 hu/ac) and Mixed Use. Therefore, any reasonably foreseeable growth resulting from the project has been anticipated and incorporated into analysis utilized in development of the General Plan.” This

5-15

section ignores the fact that access the cross town connector is not needed to access the areas planned for development on the western side of Highway 101 in the project area. Areas to the east of Highway 101 are already developed. Areas to the west of Highway 101 simply require access roads be built by the development interests that will benefit from public infrastructure improvements needed to access their parcels.

5-15

Dennis Kelly
107 Lassen Place
Petaluma, CA 94954
707-778-0915A

RESPONSE TO COMMENT LETTER 5

Dennis Kelly

Response 5-1: The comment requests that the comment period be extended based on the postmarked date of the notice received. Based on our mailing records, the commenter's name and address were included in the initial mailing of the public notice of availability 30 days before the closing of the comment period.

Response 5-2: The comment requests that future notices include the website where the document can be found as an online resource. The purpose of the notice is to inform the commenter of the public meetings held to discuss the project. Comment noted.

Response 5-3: The commenter requested consideration of a Corona Road Alternative and interchange. Please see Master Response 8: Corona Road Alternative which provides details of several studies the City conducted that led to a decision against pursuing the Corona Road Alternative.

As noted in Master Response 8, an interchange at Corona Road and US 101 would not meet Caltrans minimum spacing requirement between interchanges. A US101/Corona Road interchange would have similar or greater design constraints and approval requirements from Caltrans as for the US101/Rainier Avenue interchange for minimum interchange spacing of at least one mile apart. The Corona Road alternative would also offer less capacity increase compared to the proposed project as it would add only one lane in each direction. The alignment of the proposed project was designed to cross the railroad near the river to avoid the need for multiple bridges; although the proposed bridge crossing is slightly longer than would be potentially necessary at a Corona Road river crossing, there would still be only one bridge with the proposed project. Widening Corona Road and avoiding a railroad crossing would save some cost of construction compared to the proposed project, but would not avoid a bridge crossing, and the existing bridge would still have to be rebuilt to carry 4 lanes of traffic.

Adding highway signage to US 101 is not under the control of the City; it can only be added by Caltrans and while a request to increase directional signs to avoid Petaluma could be submitted, it would not likely effectively reduce the peak period commuters who are probably already aware of their route options. For these reasons and others listed in Master Response 8, a Corona Road alternative was not considered.

Response 5-4: The comment inquires about the inclusion of pedestrian facilities at the intersection of North McDowell Avenue and Rainier Avenue. Per Section 4.12 Transportation of the DEIR pedestrian facilities are an integral portion of the project. As such sidewalks would be included in project design as required by the Petaluma General Plan 2025 and would include all mandated safety features, such as striping, pedestrian cross-walk signal and a refuge median, should the intersection be of sufficient width.

Response 5-5: The commenter asks for an estimate of the total cost and financial impact of the project. The primary goal at this time is to identify a preliminary design for the project and undergo environmental and public review of the proposed project and alternatives. Construction funding has not been entirely allocated for this project, which is typical for most large infrastructure improvements. As a transportation project, its objective is to provide

improvements in future traffic operations and provide an alternative route to cross through Petaluma, and is not intended to open up any large areas for development. The project is intended to meet the goals of the General Plan growth, which will occur whether this project is built or not.

Response 5-6: The commenter suggests that the DEIR be revised to reflect impacts associated with the Highway 101 interchange.

Per Section 3 Project Description “In January 2010, the City of Petaluma City Council separated the interchange and cross-town connector into two independent ~~but concurrent~~ elements to allow coordination of the cross-town connector with the Sonoma County Transportation Authority (SCTA) Marin Sonoma Narrows (MSN) C2 project that will undertake mainline and ramp improvements along Highway 101 from just south of Caulfield Lane to just south of Old Redwood Highway.”

As such, there is only one project under consideration, the Rainier Avenue Cross Town Connector Project. An analysis of impacts associated with the separate highway interchange project is beyond the scope of the DEIR. It should be noted that the General Plan envisions an interchange at Rainier Avenue. Accordingly, the cumulative impacts analysis provides an evaluation of traffic conditions associated with full build out of the General Plan, which includes on-ramps to Hwy 101 from Rainier Avenue. Please also refer to response 2-14 regarding an interchange at US 101.

Response 5-7: The commenter requested that the project objective requiring connectivity of the east and west side of the City of Petaluma be deleted. The project objectives were drafted by the City of Petaluma Planning Department and are based on City of Petaluma General Plans. This objective is consistent with the General Plan mobility priority to “Provide cross-town mobility enhancements for Petaluma residents that make crossing of Highway 101, the northwest Pacific Railroad Tracks [now SMART corridor] and the Petaluma River easier and more convenient.” As such, no change has been made.

Response 5-8: The comment notes existing conditions at their residence, and the lack of monitored data taken closer to their home; the use of monitoring data for GHG and particulates is addressed in Response 5-9. There will be potential impacts from dust/particulates and GHGs, which have been identified in the DEIR. Mitigation measures will effectively reduce air quality impacts to levels below significance, but some level of impact cannot be avoided, as noted in this comment.

Response 5-9: The comment requests that air monitoring at the Rainier Prince Albert intersection be conducted to replace the air monitoring data from the Santa Rosa-5th Street Monitoring Station and used in the air quality analysis. The air quality monitoring data shown in the DEIR is presented for informational purposes, but is not entirely the basis for the quantitative analysis. The BAAQMD and the California Air Resources Board (CARB) are the agencies responsible for monitoring air quality and maintaining records. Although not measured directly at the proposed project location, their data is still valuable and applicable as it provides a long-term record of pollutant levels. Their monitoring network is limited by cost and availability of monitoring locations, but it is the best available data that can be used to understand background levels, and trends or changes. The Santa Rosa monitoring location is in a similar setting to

Petaluma, with no major industrial sources, and similar meteorological, climate, temperature, and weather conditions. These monitoring networks were primarily established to track “criteria pollutants,” which are pollutants that have direct human health or smog forming concerns, and consequently have regulated limits based on their emissions or concentration in the air. In contrast, GHGs may not necessarily be directly harmful to humans, but are of concern primarily because their emissions in the atmosphere likely trap heat and contribute to warming. GHGs are not monitored but are estimated by the BAAQMD at a regional level, and are therefore not available at local monitoring stations.

The measured levels of the criteria pollutants at the Santa Rosa station were presented in the DEIR in Table 4.2-1. All were below state and federal standards, including particulate levels. The assumptions used in the analysis of construction impacts is included in Appendix B in the DEIR and are also summarized in the air quality section of the DEIR in Table 4.2-7 for construction, and Tables 4.2-8 and 4.2-9 for operation. The construction activities and their durations were based on the estimated phased of construction. As described in section 4.2.3.2 of the DEIR, various modeling programs including EMFAC2011 and OFFROAD2011 were utilized to quantify air quality emissions. Each construction activity is evaluated by duration of working days, and then totaled. The total emissions for dust (particulate matter, referred to as PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}) listed for construction and operation are well below the BAAQMD threshold levels considered significant.

As such, no change is needed.

Response 5-10: The comment notes that the less than significant finding for GHG and particulate impacts is based on Santa Rosa monitoring data and contract provisions, and requests that air monitoring be conducted during construction to address and mitigate GHG and particulate matter emissions. See Response 5-9 on Santa Rosa monitoring data. Construction and operation GHG and particulate matter emissions were found to be less than significant; therefore, no additional mitigation for monitoring was required.

Response 5-11: The comment indicates that it is inappropriate to base impact conclusions on a future study. The impact conclusion is based upon the project’s compliance with the City’s Floodway and Floodplain Districts Ordinance. Bridge bents, abutments, outfalls and rock protection would require fill in the floodplain. Measures such as benching or widening the channel near the bridge crossing would be used to ensure removal of compensating material. Implementation of the City’s no net fill policy would provide reasonable hydraulic equivalence to existing conditions and achieve an approximate no net rise in base flood elevations within the FEMA-designated floodway. The existing hydraulic analysis, which is based on the preliminary design, is sufficient to evaluate potential impacts of the project. Because final design will not be completed until after the environmental document is approved, the analysis has to rely on assumptions at this stage of project development. The analysis will be revisited at a later stage of design when those final engineering details are available, to ensure consistency with the assumptions of this EIR. If necessary, an addendum or supplemental environmental impacts analysis can be conducted to assess potential impacts associated with any changes in the project.

Response 5-12: The commenter questions the noise sensitive use finding. Impact NOI-1 evaluates the potential noise impacts on any new noise-sensitive receptors (or “uses”) that would

be constructed as part of the proposed project. An example of a noise-sensitive receptor would be a proposed new housing development near a noise source. Since the project does not propose any new noise-sensitive receptors, impact NOI-1 is less than significant and this statement was included in the DEIR to show that this CEQA criterion did not apply.

To clarify the findings, as the comment notes, Impact NOI-3 addresses temporary construction noise, listing potential levels that could range from 73 dBA up to 105 dBA (impact pile driver) at 50 feet. These impacts are variable depending on the equipment location and would have a temporary impact, but were not defined as significant as the noise levels, would move as construction proceeds within the right-of-way, and would be limited by allowable hours and any City codes. Impact NOI-4 addresses the issue of noise increasing with existing noise-sensitive receptors and found the project would increase ambient noise by less than the established CEQA significance criteria of 4 decibels. The highest levels estimated were at corporation yards, and not noise sensitive land uses such as residences.

Response 5-13: The commenter notes that the noise section can be confusing including tables with conflicting information. The text and supporting tables provide the relevant information regarding potential noise impacts due to the project to adequately inform the public and project decision makers. The evaluation requires different methods to address construction noise and long-term noise. The DEIR follows acceptable standards for noise impact discussion of a transportation type project.

The commenter also notes there is no comparison of results to City of Petaluma Guidelines. Table 4.9-5 provides varying maximum noise levels from the City's noise ordinance, and provide a means for the city to enforce excessive noise levels and complaints. These levels were established for 15, 5 and 1 minute measuring periods, and would be applicable to the project related to construction noise. Impact NOI-3 notes that construction may result in a temporary substantial increase at times, and this is generally an unavoidable impact but is limited by requiring day time construction requirements of the contractor. Construction noise levels also substantially reduce with distance.

For Impact NOI-4, the CEQA significance criteria analyzes a "substantial permanent increase" in ambient noise at existing noise-sensitive receptors. In the surrounding area, the noise-sensitive receptors, such as those along North McDowell Avenue, currently exceed the City limits based on the measurements for this project. The noise analysis does evaluate the change in noise levels from no project conditions to with project conditions as explained in impact NOI-4. Table 4.9-12 lists the increases at each location where noise levels were measured and then modeled with and without the project in place, including the noise level increase overall. The increases range from 0 to 3 dBA, which is not considered a significant increase in noise.

Response 5-14: The comment requests collecting long term noise monitoring data on McDowell and Rainier in the area of the Park Place subdivision and re-perform modeling. Measuring the existing noise from the private backyards in this subdivision would not accurately provide the required information for modeling due to the existing fences that partially mitigate the existing traffic noise. The data collected at LT-3 adequately represent all noise-sensitive receptors adjacent to North McDowell Avenue. This information is supported because two dominant noise sources for the existing noise-sensitive receptors include North McDowell Avenue and Highway

101. The distance to both of these sources would be consistent for all the North McDowell-facing residences.

The commenter notes that the noise model uses calculated noise levels in the Park Place (R8 and R9) subdivision area based on Rainier traffic only and ignores McDowell traffic. North McDowell Boulevard and the Rainier Connector would be the predominant noise sources with the project, and traffic along both of these roadways was included in the model.

The commenter questions the statement that since traffic volumes in the area surrounding the roadway corridor have remained relatively stable for the last 10 years, it was assumed that noise levels for existing and Opening Year (2020) conditions would be relatively stable as well. This statement is based on Peak Hour data predicted for the traffic assessment for this project, and from data published from Caltrans. Daily (24-hour) traffic volumes have increased, but modeling results are based on Peak Hour (e.g., one-hour) data only because this represents a worst-case scenario. Other hours of the day besides the peak hour would be lower than the peak period modeled and reported in the DEIR.

Response 5-15: The commenter inquiries regarding the need to provide connectivity to the existing parcels slotted for development. Per Section 3.5 Project Objectives, one of the project's objectives is to not preclude connectivity to future development sites. Consideration of alternatives to gain new parcel access are not part of the project's objective, although the design of the project does not preclude these connections from being made in the future, if approved separately by the City similar to any other proposed new residential or business development.

Comment Letter (CL) - 6

Petaluma River Council
 1327 I Street
 Petaluma, CA 94952
 September 8, 2014

To: Mayor Glass
 Members of the Petaluma City Council
 11 English Street
 Petaluma, CA 94952

Comments re: Rainier Cross-town Connector DEIR, July 2014

Dear Mayor Glass and Members of the Petaluma City Council:

Petaluma River Council provides the following comments on the Rainier Cross-town Connector Draft EIR ("DEIR") and its compliance with CEQA.

For the reasons set forth below, we find the DEIR to be inadequate under CEQA, preventing informed and meaningful public review, participation and comment. It also prevents the City Council, as the reviewing and approving public body, from making informed decisions about this proposed project as required by CEQA.

1. The Project Description is Inadequate.

"An accurate, stable and finite project description is the *sine qua non* of an informative and legally sufficient EIR." *County of Inyo v. City of Los Angeles* (3d Dist. 1977) 71 CA3d 185, 193. Additionally, the entire project being proposed must be described in the EIR, and the project description must not minimize project impacts. *City of Santee v. County of San Diego* (1989) 214 CA3d 1438, 1450.

"Without an accurate description of the project or its environmental setting, an EIR cannot achieve the foremost objective of CEQA, that is, the disclosure and analysis of project related impacts on the environment. A project description must include all relevant aspects of a project, including reasonably foreseeable future activities that are part of the project." (*Laurel Heights Improvement Assn. v. Regents of the University of California* (Laurel Heights I) (1988) 47 Cal.3d 376.

"Responsibility for a project cannot be avoided by limiting the title or description of the project." *Rural Land Owners Association v. Lodi City Council* (3d Dist. 1983) 143 Cal.App.3d 1013, 1025.

6-1

1a. The DEIR illegally and improperly presents a segmentation of the actual project as its Project Description.

The DEIR illegally and improperly presents a segmentation of the actual project: the oft proposed and planned full interchange with Highway 101 with a crosstown connector "Rainier Avenue Extension and Interchange" vs. current Project as only one portion or phase, the Rainier Crosstown Connector.

By limiting this DEIR to only a portion of the General Plan-included project, the current DEIR fails to describe the entirety of the Rainier Project, which for decades of political, legal, financial, development and planning purposes has been composed of the Crosstown Connector and a full interchange with Highway 101. The entirety of the larger project is described at DEIR 3.1 and 3.1.1.

For example, "In January 2010, the City of Petaluma City Council separated the interchange and cross-town connector into two independent but concurrent elements to allow coordination of the cross-town connector with the SCTA Marin Sonoma Narrows C2 project..." "The Rainier Avenue interchange is included in Sonoma County Transportation Authority's 2004 Comprehensive Transportation Plan." (DEIR, pg 3-1, 3-2) and other such clear descriptions of both elements as part of a single project.

See also, Petaluma General Plan of 1987, General Plan 2025 (DEIR, at page 3-3: "The General Plan 2025 lists the Rainier Avenue Extension and Interchange as a planned improvement..." "2-P-92: Extending Rainier Avenue westward to Petaluma Boulevard North, creating a new interchange with Highway 101"; "5-P-11 Require proposed development to assist, in addition to seeking other funding sources, in the funding and construction of the following improvements: ... Rainier Avenue extension and interchange..."); prior Rainier Interchange and Crosstown Connector EIR, 1994 (ultimately rejected by the Petaluma City Council as infeasible, unaffordable, and as not meeting project transportation objectives); Petaluma River Access and Enhancement Plan; Petaluma Area Redevelopment Plan 1988; abundant correspondence for decades between the City of Petaluma and CalTrans; conditions of approval for various development projects, and numerous political campaigns, surveys, editorials, articles and public demands for the 'complete' project.

"The project would cross under Highway 101 at an undercrossing structure constructed as part of the SCTA MSN C2 project. ... *These facilities would be modified later when a Rainier Avenue/Highway 101 interchange is constructed.*" (3.3.2.1 Highway 101 Undercrossing) (emphasis added)

"Although the project would not create a new interchange with Highway 101, it would extend Rainier Avenue from N. McDowell Blvd. to Petaluma Blvd. N., over the Petaluma River. The full Rainier Avenue Interchange is assumed as proposed in the Petaluma General Plan build out scenario." - Table 4.8-1, p 4.8-8 See also the "information" provided at Cumulative Traffic Conditions with Full Rainier Avenue Interchange, Table 6.4.11-4.

6-2

The DEIR omits any data, mapping and analysis of the Shasta Ave. or Sycamore Lane extension as the preferred connection route to Petaluma Boulevard N. 6-3

The entirety of the Project must be included in a Revised and expanded DEIR, to encompass what has been portrayed for many years as a community mandate to design, fund, build and accomplish. Else, this DEIR is fatally flawed by segmenting the larger project into component pieces. 6-4

If the Council decides that the current proposed Project is indeed the entirety of any planned roadway expansion, traffic circulation and highway access for this area, then the Rainier freeway interchange must be removed from the city's General Plan and any funding request, budgets and proposals, from being used as 'future mitigation or vehicular capacity improvements' for any forthcoming development projects, from SCTA's MSN C2 project plans, and from any requests to or from CalTrans. 6-5

1b. Project Objectives are not met.

3.5 Project Objectives.

The project objectives are to:

- (1) Relieve traffic congestion within the local street networks;
 - (2) Provide a new cross town connection to serve both the east and west sides of the City;
 - (3) Provide enhanced transit, bicyclist, and pedestrian circulation between the east and west side of the City of Petaluma;
 - (4) Relieve future traffic demands at the East Washington Street interchange for local traffic crossing east-west across the Highway 101 corridor;
 - (5) Relieve future traffic demands at the Old Redwood Highway interchange for local traffic crossing east-west across the Highway 101 corridor; and
 - (6) Not preclude future connections from adjacent parcels along the roadway.
- 6-6

-- DEIR, p 3-20.

As presented, this DEIR shows that Objectives (1) and (4) are not well met by the Project, and details of how (6) would be accomplished are completely missing. The traffic congestion and delay calculations are completely skewed and improperly understated by the omission of cumulative development in the parcels accessed, enabled and induced by the Project.

Even without the cumulative traffic congestion enabled and induced by the Project, the following intersections still degrade significantly from current delays (Table 6.4.11.1) 6-7

Rainier Ave/Petaluma Blvd. N. intersection drops to LOS F (PM peak hour), with or without Shasta Ave. extension. (over 80 second delays).

6-7

E. Washington Street/Hwy 101 Southbound Ramp intersection remains at LOS E during AM peak hour.

Rainier Ave/N McDowell Blvd intersection drops to LOS D during AM peak hour, from LOS B (56 second delay).

The DEIR fails to discuss, analyze and provide data for the proposed Shasta Avenue extension, even though “The cumulative analysis assumes that the proposed Shasta Avenue extension is in place and it would allow traffic to travel between Petaluma Boulevard North and the Rainier Avenue extension.” p. 6-16 Impact analysis shows degradation of the intersection of Petaluma Boulevard North/Sycamore Lane (Shasta Ave) “to degrade from acceptable LOS A to LOS F in the PM peak hour under Cumulative with Project conditions.” Mitigations are improperly predicated on the existence of the Shasta Avenue extension.

6-8

As stated, 6.4.2 Significant Unavoidable Cumulative Impacts, “The proposed project... would result in significant unavoidable cumulative impacts related to the following environmental considerations: biological resources, air quality, noise, and traffic.”

Even in its limited scope, the Project description in the DEIR fails to provide the transportation solutions promised for so long in Petaluma’s planning documents and political campaigns. The Project is, in large part, a significant avenue to open up lands for development with public funds, under the guise of a transportation solution project.

2. The DEIR’s analysis of the Project’s Impacts is significantly flawed; Mitigation measures are vague, inadequately analyzed, and postponed until after the EIR approvals.

An EIR must evaluate all significant environmental effects of a proposed project. (§§21100(b) (1), 21061; CEQA Guidelines 15126(a), 15143.) Both direct and indirect impacts must be analyzed, in the short term and the long term. (CEQA Guideline 15126.2.) “Significant effects should be discussed with emphasis in proportion to their severity and probability of occurrence.” (CEQA Guideline 15143.) EIRs “should be prepared with a sufficient degree of analysis to provide decision-makers with information which enables them to make a decision which intelligently takes account of environmental consequences.” (Galante Vineyards v. Monterey Peninsula Water Management Dist. (1997) 60 Cal.App.4th 1109, 1123; CEQA Guideline 15151.)

6-9

Bare conclusions without explanation of the actual and analytical basis is not sufficient analysis of an environmental impacts. (Laurel Heights Improvement Assn. v. Regents of University of California (1988) 47 Cal.3d 376, 404) Further, failure to adequately explain the reasons why an impact is insignificant violates CEQA. (Protect The Historic Amador Waterways v. Amador Water Agency (2004) 116 Cal.App.4th 1099, 1111-12.)

6-9

2a. The Project fails to provide significant congestion relief and improved transportation times on Washington Street and other critical arterial streets.

6-10

See Impact CUMULATIVE TRANS-1 for a list of negatively impacted roadways and intersections. The MM CUMULATIVE TRANS-1 fails to address the bulk of these negative impacts, yet claims to achieve Less Than Significant Impact after Mitigation:

The mitigation measures proposed fail to address loss of LOS at key intersections and roadways. Yet, relief of traffic congestion on East Washington Street has been one of the prime motivations and rationales presented by the City during decades of advocating for this Project and its companion piece, a new interchange at Highway 101 and Rainier.

6-11

-The DEIR fails to address, calculate and model Project-specific cumulative traffic loads induced by the Project for development of adjacent lands. Chapter 4.8, 6.4. Instead, it relies on discussions and conclusions of the General Plan 2025. It omits any Project-specific discussion of cumulative growth enabled and induced by the creation of a new high-volume roadway providing access to several hundred acres of potentially developable land. Such project-specific analysis is exactly the point of conducting an EIR for this Project. It is critical for the public to understand the actual projected impacts of this project, so that informed choices and comments can be made.

6-12

- See, attached, "Rainier Spurs Land Boom", Argus Courier, 5-31-94.

- The DEIR fails to present and analyze alternative ways to improve transportation in and around Petaluma, including the need for alternative congestion relief on Washington corridor. Such measures could well include making the Washington St. corridor more efficient by eventual removing access directly to Washington St. by business' curb cuts and auto-dependent business occupancies; signalizing all intersections to help allow traffic to access businesses from side streets through alleyways; improving local transit, para-transit and bus services, particularly for children and parents (especially to access ball fields, parks, sports events, the hospital, shopping centers, and other main traffic loads on the Washington corridor).

6-13

- The DEIR fails to analyze the Corona Road crosstown connector and potential Highway 101 interchange, as was originally part of the 1987 General Plan (where a half-interchange was located each at both Corona and Rainier). This is a more direct route

6-14

connecting Sonoma Mountain Parkway and all of Petaluma’s northwest development, including housing, SRJC, shopping areas, commercial and industrial businesses, the USPS General Mail Facility and other trucking firms. The crossing of the Petaluma River is far shorter, in a less sensitive part of the riverine environment, is primarily not in the floodplain, already exists in a lower-capacity form, and does not require a long bridge to cross both the river and railroad tracks, nor the expensive raising of Highway 101 bridge over the Rainier roadway, nor the excavation for a below grade undercrossing of 101 at the same location. From a traffic circulation perspective, Corona Road connector and interchange are likely to be vastly more effective than the immense and expensive Rainier Project.

6-14

In addition, there should be a chart showing survey results of actual average travel times (in minutes and quarter minutes) across the Washington Street corridor. Average travel times to cross the corridor should be shown in both east and west bound directions, starting from the intersections at both McDowell Boulevard and at Petaluma Boulevard North, and concluding when entering the opposite intersection on the other end of the corridor. Travel times should be recorded during no-load periods (say, between midnight and 1am); midday hour weekday; peak PM hour weekday.

6-15

These results should be compared with how much time in transit across the Washington Street corridor would be saved, if any, under current conditions; at completion of the Project; at General Plan buildout (2025). How long will any improvements in Washington Street travel times last?

An analysis of the prior Rainier Avenue Extension and Interchange EIR (1998) by Michael Dyett, traffic engineer and planner, showed that that project would have provided only a 10-15% improvement in travel and capacity on Washington Street, and those improvements would only last for some 10-12 years as new development – in part enabled by that Rainier project – would overwhelm any new capacity created.

6-16

There has never been an official survey and modeling conducted by the City, and the results would help show the residents and taxpayers what they can expect after spending upwards of \$100M for the Rainier Crosstown Connector.

6-17

The DEIR should be revised and recirculated to address the lack of adequate information and alternatives analysis.

6-18

3. The Project will cause significant damage and unmitigated fragmentation of the Petaluma River's most critical remaining riparian woodlands corridor and associated natural resources and geology. Impacts of the Project are significantly understated, omitted, or misstated.

The Legislature has made it clear that the purpose of an EIR is "an informational document and that the purpose of an EIR is to provide public agencies and the public in general with detailed information about the effect which a proposed project is likely to have on the environment; to list ways in which the significant effects of such a project can be minimized, and to indicate the alternatives to such a project." *Laurel Heights Improvement Assn. v. Regents of the University of California* (1988) 47 C3d 376, 390; Public Resources Code Section 21061.

"A prejudicial abuse of discretion occurs if the failure to include relevant information precludes informed decision making and informed public participation, thereby thwarting the statutory goals of the EIR process." *Kings County Farm Bureau et al v. City of Hanford*, (5th Dist. 1990) 221 Cal.App.3d 692, 712.

"The EIR is also intended to demonstrate to an apprehensive public that the agency has, in fact analyzed and considered the ecological implications of its action [in approving a project]." *No Oil Inc.v.CityofLos Angeles* (1974) 13 C3d 68,86.

PRC §21102 requires agencies to adopt feasible mitigation measures (or feasible environmentally superior alternatives) in order to substantially lessen or avoid otherwise significant adverse environmental impacts. (PRC §21102, 21081(a), CEQA Guidelines §15002(a)(3), 15021(a)(2), 15091(a)(1)). To effectuate this requirement, EIRs must set forth adequate mitigation measures that decision makers can adopt at the final stage of the process. (PRC §21100(a)(5), CEQA Guidelines §15126(c)).

- The DEIR fails to adequately, accurately and completely describe the Petaluma River setting, which is crossed by the roadway and bridge over SMART rail and the Petaluma River. The Project Site Description 4.3.1.2 significantly and improperly understates the acknowledged values and functions of this riparian reach of the Petaluma River and its flood plain and tributaries.

- A more complete description of the current conditions of the Corona Reach of the Petaluma River is found in the Petaluma River Access and Enhancement Plan ("River Plan"), 1996. The DEIR fails to cite and use any of the information and data from that Plan. See also, Biological Resources and Special-status Species Surveys for the Corona Reach Specific Plan Area, Petaluma, Jones & Stokes, Sept. 3, 1997.

"In the upper reaches of the Petaluma River above Washington Creek, the historic river corridor probably supported a dense continuous strip of riparian woodland

6-19

7

with an overstory of oaks, box elder, black walnut, ash, willows and other trees. The adjacent plains and valley bottom supported an oak savanna, dotted with meadows and seasonally wet drainageways (swales and vernal pools)... Today, very little remains of the native plant communities... Only a relatively small amount of natural riparian woodland can be found, and oak savannas, native grasslands, seasonal wetlands and fresh- and saltwater marshes have been greatly reduced as well.” – Existing conditions report, Petaluma River Access and Enhancement Plan, Feb. 24, 1992, p IV-2.

“The Corona and Denman Reaches, however, have not been channelized, and these reaches contain the best representation of the natural oak-dominated valley bottom savanna or woodland, as well as extensive open grassland on the adjacent floodplain and terraces. The eastern side of the Corona Reach in particular still has some excellent stands of riparian and valley oak woodland. Numerous small young willows have become established along almost all of this reach, and there are also numerous large willows.” – *ibid*, p. IV-2

“Stands of mixed native riparian species... are limited in the [river] planning area... In some locationso, however, native stands of willows, California box elder, and Oregon ash, along with coast live oak make up a significant part of the tree canopy. *The most notable example is near the Southern Pacific railroad tracks upstream of Lynch Creek. These remnant areas are biologically unique along the Petaluma River, and have the highest wildlife values.*” – *ibid*, p IV-5 [emphasis added]

6-19

See the attached correspondence from USFWS (8/25/93, to USACE re: Petaluma Factory Outlet Village Project; 9/14/93, to City of Petaluma, re: Rainier DEIR) regarding the high value of this reach, as the best remaining riparian forest of the entire Petaluma River, including reproducing Valley Oaks, which this Project will bisect, and other related environmental issues. This reach is a mature riparian forest, with complete understory, and will be significantly and permanently damaged by the construction and operation of this Rainier roadway system.

The DEIR fails to correctly and adequately describe the current Project area, omitting the biological, aesthetic, cultural, recreational and spiritual values encompassed, particularly between the river and Petaluma Boulevard N. of the Corona Reach, as noted in the Petaluma River Access and Enhancement Plan.

6-20

- The Project area is known basking and feeding location for Western Pond Turtle and for River Otters (not mentioned in animal survey). See full inventory as noted in the River Plan.

6-21

- the field surveys for special-status plant and wildlife species and plant communities and for wetland delineation were conducted in June and July 2011 (DEIR 4.3.3.4). This is too late in the year for proper surveys for wetland and other late winter/early spring appearing plant species. Wetlands and vernal pools

6-22

have been positively identified in the Corona Reach during surveys for the Petaluma Village Outlet Mall EIR as well as for the Petaluma River Access and Enhancement Plan. The survey should be repeated during the proper season, and the results included in a revised DEIR. 6-22

- The DEIR fails to request or provide consultation with regulatory agencies re: listed species (USACE; USFWS; NMFS; CDFW) (see, Impact BIO-5; Mitigation Measure BIO-5) [“MM BIO-5”] 6-23

- The DEIR fails to identify and mark specific impacted trees, vernal pools, wetlands, and associated species, and fails to provide proposed mitigation, revegetation and replanting plans for valley oaks, vernal pools, wetlands, and listed fish species (CCC Steelhead, green sturgeon, Sacramento splittail) for public review as part of DEIR (see MM BIO-7; MM BIO-8) There is no tree survey mapping or in-the-field marking/flagging provided in the DEIR to determine which trees – species, locations, quantities, health, reproductivity – are proposed to be removed (see MM BIO-7). The keyed inventory of trees is not linked to specific identifiable trees (Appendix C). 6-24

- The DEIR fails to identify construction staging and access areas, and the impacts to those affected resources. 6-25

- the DEIR fails to provide documentation of proposed BMPs and locations of mitigation plantings and/or wetlands prior to project approval stage. The DEIR improperly assumes that all wetlands and vernal pool mitigations must be accomplished off site in some unidentified mitigation bank, but has no discussion of options for restoration, protection or locating such biological resources within or adjacent to the Project area, nor within the biological complex of the upper Petaluma River complex, thus further diminishing the values and functions of this important and scarce biological habitat. 6-26

- the DEIR fails to show likely, possible or proposed routes to the developable parcels that would be accessed by the Project’s roadway, as stated in Project Objective (3). The cumulative impacts of those additional roadways to biological resources, protected species, cumulative traffic, runoff, flood levels, and additional fragmentation of the Corona Reach’s rich riparian forest are ignored completely and improperly. Nor are any identifiable impacts addressed to show avoidance, minimized damages, or feasible mitigations required to respond to those impacts due necessarily to the construction of this roadway. 6-27

- the DEIR improperly and illegally fails to provide specific site surveys and a host of specific, implementable and feasible mitigation plans during the public review period, thus denying the public and decisionmakers adequate and complete information necessary to evaluate the adequacy, veracity and effectiveness of any proposed mitigations prior to any decisions about the Project. 6-28

- the DEIR fails to address visual, sound, aesthetic, circulation and access impacts for Petaluma River pedestrian, bicycle and equestrian trail users, as set forth in the Petaluma River Access and Enhancement Plan for the Corona Reach trail network. The construction of the Project would have significant adverse impacts to the users of these trails, and no mitigation or alternatives are proposed or examined.

6-29

- the DEIR fails to address impacts of air pollution and polluted stormwater runoff in this riparian and riverine setting. The use of the Santa Rosa-5th Street Monitoring Station (BAAQMD) for baseline ambient air quality and Project impact calculations is totally inappropriate for this undeveloped, relatively unimpaired river setting and habitats. (DEIR 4.2.1.2 Air Monitoring Data) Air quality baseline information and data should be derived from onsite or similar undeveloped semi-rural riverine habitat. The baseline levels of pollutants used is significantly erroneous, and leads to a substantial understatement of predicted changes in air quality levels and contaminants.

6-30

- the DEIR fails to address impacts of increased air pollutants on animal, bird, fish and plant species within a disbursement zone of the Project and its induced developments, thus further indicating the failure of this DEIR to adequately and accurately describe its impacts. The DEIR incorrectly only addresses humans at 4.2.1.5 Sensitive Receptors. Impacts should be calculated and addressed in a revised DEIR for both construction and operations phases, including cumulative induced and enabled development.

6-31

The DEIR should be revised and recirculated, with a complete mapping of actual locations of trees to be removed. In addition, there should be story poles and flagging of the proposed Project boundaries, elevations, and actual trees to be removed or saved.

6-32

4. The DEIR fails to address direct and induced development in floodplain and surrounding 300+ acres of the Corona Reach, to be made possible by the Project.

6-33

The DEIR inadequately and incompletely describes the impacts to downstream flood project capacities, flooding, cumulative impacts of future development; and alternatives to proposed Project design and locations.

6-34

- The DEIR improperly and illegally fails to provide geotechnical, hydraulic and hydrologic investigation, modeling and reports as a complete part of this DEIR (see MM GEO-1; Impact HYD-9; Impact HYD-10; MM HYD-1).

6-35

“The City shall prepare a hydraulic design study at later stages of project design that shall determine the project’s potential to alter the river’s flood flows at the

bridge location and upstream and downstream of the bridge... The revised hydraulic analysis would be conducted to quantify the rise in base flood elevation in the floodway after compliance with the City’s no net fill policy.”

The only remedy for increases in flood elevations is noted (MM HYD-1) as: “If this reevaluation [following final project design] determines that the project would still result in a base flood elevation increase in the regulatory floodway ... the City would obtain a CLOMR [conditional letter of map revision] for the project from FEMA, and request a NFIP map revision.” (MM HYD-1)

At Appendix E, Hydrology:

“2.0 Assumptions

“This analysis is based on the topographic data provided by City of Petaluma and the bridge dimensions described in the Preliminary Bridge Concept Plan. No site visits were conducted to assess the existing channel and flow conditions, since this analysis is intended solely to be used as supporting documentation for the permitting process. Revisions to this analysis will be necessary with further development or revisions to the bridge design.”

6-35

“5.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

“Project features located in the 100-year floodplain are the abutment east of the bridge (Abutment 4), two retaining walls east of this abutment, part of Bent 2, and all of Bent 3 (columns, pile caps, and piles). Project features in the floodway are Abutment 4, a bit of the retaining wall near this abutment, and a portion of Bent 3 (see Figure 1).

“It is concluded from the results of the hydraulic analysis that the construction of project features would only raise the base flood elevation in the floodplain and floodway by approximately 0.03 feet.

“As discussed in Section 4.0, evaluating long-term erosion or siltation due to project features within the floodplain would require more detailed historical observations and detailed geomorphology studies, but it is assumed that these impacts would be minimal.”

The DEIR and this Technical Memorandum only addresses impacts to water surface elevations due to construction of the bridge abutments and foundation in the flood plain. It fails to address hydrological impacts from additional runoff due to this Project’s impervious and compacted surfaces, nor from the induced cumulative growth and development enabled by this roadway and access project in the Corona Reach.

6-36

The DEIR is breathtakingly cavalier about the impacts of this Project in the flood plain and floodway, and the impacts of the Project’s associated cumulative

6-37

growth-induced development on the Payran Reach residents and the residents, businesses and property downtown.

The omitted information is especially necessary in understanding the critical conditions needed for designing the components and totality of this Project, and its impacts downstream and to the Petaluma River Flood Control Project's lifetime efficacy, as well as for the safety and viability of the Rainier Highway 101 undercrossing itself.

6-37

There is no modeling, calculations or report showing the impacts on flood levels, frequency or duration as a result of future development and construction induced in the upper Petaluma River basin (and especially this Corona Reach) as a result of providing full vehicular access to currently land-locked or somewhat inaccessible parcels.

The DEIR would have the City approving a project of this scale in an area subject to "100-year" (1%) and "500-year" (0.2%) flood events, channel movement, seismic shaking, liquefaction, subsidence, soil expansion, bank and surface erosion and other major geotechnical hazards, and the concurrent risks to human life and property, with insufficient information to make an informed decision.

In a city so frequently subjected to catastrophic flooding over the past century, particularly downstream and in this Corona Reach of the Petaluma River, costing the city and its residents and businesses hundreds of millions of dollars in repeated flood losses, and where the taxpayers have recently spent over \$100M to build the USACE-designed Flood Control Project, it is astonishing and confounding that this Project is being put forth in a DEIR without this critical information necessary to protect the safety and financial health of our residents, businesses and visitors.

6-38

The Final EIS for the USACE Petaluma River Flood Control Project states clearly that that project was designed to provide 1% ("100-year") flood protection for the vulnerable Payran Reach, based on buildout of the 1987 General Plan. (FEIS, 4.10.2) New construction and development upstream of the Flood Control Project beyond the 1987 General Plan buildout was modeled to show reduced flood level protections downstream of the Flood Project beyond predicted levels, such that protection would be reduced from the 1% level ("100 year event") to 2.5% levels ("40 year level of protection") "No construction should be permitted in the 100 year floodplain." -- FEIR 4.10.3

"It is assumed that no significant upstream channelization would occur by the year 2005. Once the Petaluma River watershed has been fully developed, including upstream channelization, it is estimated that the proposed [flood control] project would provide a 40-year level of protection." -FEIR 4.10.3

The Rainier Project DEIR does not discuss, model, predict or offer mitigations necessary to prevent that loss of flood protection, so dearly paid for, and so sincerely promised.

6-38

Once again, this DEIR is fatally flawed by illegally omitting and postponing provision of critical information necessary for an informed public and for informed decision making until after the DEIR and EIR are to be certified.

6-39

The DEIR should be revised and recirculated with a clear map showing actual projected changes in water surface elevations and flooding depths downstream of the Project and its associated and cumulative development. This should be comparable in scale and scope to Figure J.1.a of the Petaluma Flood Control Project FEIS, March 1995. Such figures will better inform the public and City of the level of risk of flooding, in depths, frequency and duration, as a result of this upstream development of the proposed Project.

6-40

The Petaluma River Council strongly urges the City Council to reject the current DEIR, and have it revised to include the information described above, and to cure its numerous deficiencies, inadequacies, omissions and fundamental flaws. Because significant new information must be added to the documentation required under CEQA, a revised DEIR should be recirculated for public comment. Without this step, the public is denied a meaningful review and opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

David Keller
Director
Petaluma River Council

RESPONSE TO COMMENT LETTER 6**David Keller, Petaluma River Council**

Response 6-1: The commenter notes that Section 3, Project Description is inadequate. The Project Description, in accordance with Federal, State, and local laws describes the location and boundaries of the proposed project, a statement of objectives sought by the proposed project, a general description of the project's technical, economic, and environmental characteristics, and a statement describing the use of the EIR. This DEIR project description further describes the project history to clarify, not minimize, the actual project components. The commenter's question about project segmentation is addressed in response 6-2.

Response 6-2: The commenter summarizes the project as improperly segmented. As described in response 2-14, per Section 3, Project Description "In January 2010, the City of Petaluma City Council separated the interchange and cross-town connector into two independent ~~but concurrent~~ elements to allow coordination of the cross-town connector with the Sonoma County Transportation Authority (SCTA) Marin Sonoma Narrows (MSN) C2 project that will undertake mainline and ramp improvements along Highway 101 from just south of Caulfield Lane to just south of Old Redwood Highway." As such, the identified elements are two separate and unrelated projects. The outcome of each project is not related to the outcome of the other. An analysis of the Highway Interchange impacts is beyond the scope of the DEIR.

Response 6-3: The commenter notes that the project omits data and analysis of the Shasta Avenue or Sycamore Alternatives. Section 5 describes alternatives that were either eliminated from further consideration or evaluated in the DEIR. The alternatives evaluated were chosen by the City after careful deliberation because of their ability to meet most of the project objectives and reduce or avoid a significant impact caused by the proposed project, as required by CEQA. CEQA specifies that the EIR must include a range of reasonable alternatives but does not require a review of every possible alternative.

Response 6-4: This comment refers to segmentation. Please see Response 6-2 above. No change was made.

Response 6-5: The comment requests that the Highway 101 project be removed from General Plan projections and be precluded from being used a mitigation measure for other projects. The Highway 101 interchange is not part of the project and was not analyzed in the DEIR except under the cumulative analysis which includes full build-out of the General Plan. Please see Master Response 1: Cumulative Analysis.

Response 6-6: The commenter states that project objectives 1, 4 and 6 are not met by the project. For a discussion of how project objectives 1 and 4 are met please see Section 4.12 Transportation. Please note project objective 6 only states that the project would not preclude future development, and does not include said development as part of the project. Therefore, an analysis of future connection impacts are beyond the scope of this DEIR.

Response 6-7: The comment states that the project fails to provide significant congestion relief and improved transportation times on Washington Street and other critical arterial streets. Please see Master Response 5 for further discussion of cumulative traffic operations.

Response 6-8: The comment notes that the DEIR fails to provide an analysis of the Shasta Avenue extension. The Shasta Avenue Extension is not part of this project and as such was not analyzed except under the cumulative analysis which includes full build-out of the General Plan. Please see Master Response 1: Cumulative Analysis.

Response 6-9: The comment notes that the DEIR proposed mitigation measures are inadequate. The DEIR proposes mitigations commensurate with project impacts and in accordance with Federal, State and Local regulations. Where such regulations were included in the project design it was concluded that the project would not have a significant impact, therefore a mitigation measure was not necessary. According to Section 15002(h)(2) of the California Code of Regulations, the lead agency, if it finds the project would have significant effects on the environment has the option of imposing conditions on the approval of the project. The DEIR includes mitigations for all significant impacts identified. Please also see Responses 3-11, 3-12, and 5-12 above.

Response 6-10: The comment notes that project fails to provide congestion relief. Please see Response 6-7 above.

Response 6-11: The comment states that the mitigation measures proposed fail to address loss of LOS at key intersections and roadways. See Master Response 5 for further discussion on cumulative traffic operations and Master Response 6 for further discussion on Washington Street travel times.

Response 6-12: The commenter notes that induced growth as a result of project construction and operation is not analyzed in the DEIR. Induced growth and associated development is discussed in Section 6.3. The project is included in the City's General Plan 2025. The City's General Plan establishes land use development patterns and growth policies that are intended to allow for the orderly expansion of urban development supported by adequate public services, including roadway infrastructure. The City conducted CEQA environmental review on its General Plan to assess the secondary effects of its planned growth. The project is consistent with and has been accounted for in that analysis.

Response 6-13: The comment notes that adequate alternatives were not considered in the DEIR. Please see Response 6-3 above.

Response 6-14: The comment notes that the DEIR fails to consider the Corona Road crosstown connector and potential Highway 101 interchange. Please see Master Response 8: Corona Road and Response 2-14 above.

Response 6-15: The comment requests that data for Washington Street travel time be presented as a chart and includes details of what the chart should show. See Master Response 2 for further discussion on the baseline used for this study and Master Response 6 for further discussion on the Washington Street travel times. Recording actual average travel times across the Washington Street corridor was not part of the traffic evaluation. However, several study intersections along the Washington corridor were evaluated during the weekday AM and PM peak hour. The project would reduce both the eastbound and westbound travel times compared to the No Project scenario anywhere between 30 seconds and four minutes depending on the analysis year and

peak hour. The project benefit during the peak hours would continue at full implementation of the General Plan.

Response 6-16: The comment refers to a previous study done in 1998 by Michael Dyett, and its results. See Master Response 5 for further discussion on Cumulative traffic operations and Master Response 6 for further discussion on the Washington Street travel times. The project is anticipated to provide a benefit to Washington Street through complete implementation of the General Plan.

Response 6-17: The comment notes that an official survey and modeling was not conducted by the City. Traffic counts are provided for the existing condition in Section 4.12.1.1 of the DEIR and modeled projects with and without the project are provided in Section 4.12.4 of the DEIR.

Response 6-18: The comment notes that adequate alternatives were not considered in the DEIR. Please see Response 6-3 above.

Response 6-19: The comment states that the project would cause damage to Petaluma River riparian habitat and that project impacts are understated or omitted. For a discussion of project impacts on Riparian habitat and mitigation measure please see Section 4.4 Biological Resources. The DEIR accounts for temporary and permanent impacts to Petaluma River habitat and proposed mitigation measures commensurate with said impacts.

In addition, the comment states the DEIR does not use information from other sources such as the *Petaluma River Access and Enhancement Plan*. The information in the referenced documents contains information about the historic environmental setting within the project footprint; they are over a decade old. As such, it would not be correct to use these documents to establish the current baseline conditions within the project footprint when more current data is available. As discussed in Section 4.3.3.4., field surveys were conducted in June and July 2011 to identify special-status plant and wildlife species, plant communities and terrestrial wildlife habitats that have potential to occur within the project site. Also, potential jurisdictional wetland and water features were identified by qualified biologist. This information was used in the subsequent impact analysis discussed in Impact BIO-3.

Response 6-20: The comment states that the DEIR fails to encompass the full project area. The DEIR analyses potential project impacts to the geographical extent described in Section 3 Project Description. Each resource area is analyzed based on extent of impact and resource area definition. As such, no change needed.

Response 6-21: The comment states that the area is known as a basking location for Western pond turtle and river otters and notes river otters were not mentioned in the document. As required by CEQA, impacts to species identified as 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 are discussed in the DEIR. The western pond turtle is considered a species of special concern by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife. Section 4.3-23 Biological Resources includes a discussion on the Western pond turtle and the associated biological survey that was conducted within the project site. Implementation of Mitigation Measures BIO-1, BIO-2 and BIO-4 would protect basking Western pond turtles during project construction.

River otters are not listed under the federal and State Endangered Species Acts, are not considered a species of special concern by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife and are not included as a species of special concern in the Petaluma General Plan (2025). Because the river otter does not meet definition of a special-status species, they were not described in the document. No further analysis was conducted and no change is needed.

Response 6-22: The comment notes that wildlife and plant surveys were conducted at an inadequate time of year. Further, the comment notes that the project area was not the same as for the Petaluma Village Outlet Mall EIR or the Petaluma River Access and Enhancement Plan. A three step wetland delineation process - to identify anaerobic soils, hydrology and hydrophytic vegetation - was conducted in 2011 (refer to Section 4.3.3.4 of the DEIR) according to the 1987 *Corps of Engineers Wetlands Delineation Manual*, the 2006 *Interim Regional Supplement to the Corps of Engineers Wetland Delineation Manual: Arid West Region*, and the 2008 *A Field Guide to the Identification of the Ordinary High Water Mark (OHWM) in the Arid West Region of the Western United States*. Anaerobic soils were not observed in the project area and wetland hydrology did not overlap with wetland vegetation. No evidence of wetlands were present so additional early season investigation was not needed.

In preparation of this EIR, qualified biologists conducted a review of the CDFW California Natural Diversity Database, the CNPS electronic database, the California Consortium of Herbaria database, and the Sacramento USFWS online database to identify the special-status species and natural community of concern with potential to occur within the project area and immediate vicinity. The database searches provided information on the blooming season for special-status plant species with potential to occur and the associated vegetation communities. The field surveys for the special-status species were done to confirm the presence of these species within the project area. Based on the database searches and field surveys, additional special-status plant surveys were not warranted. If the database searches or field surveys had indicated the project could impact special-status plant species with late winter/early spring blooming seasons, additional surveys would have been done during the appropriate blooming season. As such, no change was needed in the FEIR.

Response 6-23: The comment notes that the DEIR fails to provide consultation with appropriate Federal and State agencies for impacts to protected species. Please see Response 1-1 and 1-2 above. Comment noted.

Response 6-24: The comment states that the DEIR does not provide adequate detail for impacts to trees, vernal pools, wetlands and other biological species. As discussed in Section 4.3.3.4, field surveys were conducted in June and July 2011 to identify special-status plant and wildlife species, plant communities and terrestrial wildlife habitats that have potential to occur within the project site. In addition, potential jurisdictional wetland and water features were identified by a qualified biologist. This information was used in the subsequent impact analysis.

Per Mitigation Measure BIO-7 a tree survey would be conducted once project design is in a more advanced stage to allow for more specific accounting of impacted resources. Further, Mitigation Measures in Section 4.3 Biological Resources provide biological monitors, replacement ratios based on Federal, State and Local mandates, and avoidance and minimization measures. Such

mitigation measures and discussion are commensurate with project impacts. As such, no change needed.

Response 6-26: The comment notes that adequate provisions were not taken to replace impacted resources on site and that not enough information was provided for offsite mitigation measures. Mitigation Measure BIO-1 is included in the DEIR to minimize impacts to riparian habitat due to project construction and operation. Mitigation Measure BIO-3 is included to allow for mitigation of permanent impacts to riparian habitat additional to on site protection, and not as an exclusive off site measure. The 1:1 mitigation ratio is based on USACE standards, and is supported by Federal guidelines regarding impacts to riparian habitat. Offsite mitigation options will be finalized in the later design stages. The identified measures set forth in the DEIR are sufficient to meet the needs of CEQA and serve as the basis for regulating agencies to consider permit applications.

Response 6-27: The comment states that the DEIR fails to show routes to future developments and account for such environmental impacts. The construction and operation of future connections to adjacent parcels are not part of the project. As stated in Section 3.5 Project Objectives, the project would not preclude future connections to be built, but would not build such connections. No change was made.

Response 6-28: The comment notes that the DEIR does not adequately describe specific site surveys and mitigations. As discussed in Section 4.3.3.4., field surveys were conducted in June and July 2011 to identify special-status plant and wildlife species, plant communities and terrestrial wildlife habitats that have potential to occur within the project site. In addition, potential jurisdictional wetland and water features were identified by a qualified biologist. This information was used in the subsequent impact analysis.

The DEIR provides an analysis of project impacts and project mitigation measures in compliance with Federal, State and Local laws and regulations. The impact analysis considered how implementation of the proposed mitigation measures would avoid and minimize impacts to biological resources. The measures included in the DEIR are implementable, feasible and consistent with measures required by the agencies to protect biological resources. These measures include work windows, buffers to avoid nesting birds and erosion control to prevent water quality impacts. The eight mitigation measures noted in Section 4.3 would be adopted as conditions of approval. According to Section 15002(h)(2) of the California Code of Regulations, the lead agency, if it finds the project would have significant effects on the environment has the option of imposing conditions on the approval of the project. Please see Response 6-9 above for additional clarification on mitigation measures.

Response 6-29: The comment notes that the DEIR does not adequately address visual, sound, aesthetic, circulation, and access impacts for users of the pedestrian, bicycle, and equestrian trails described in the Petaluma River Access and Enhancement Plan. These trails are not currently built proximate to the Rainier project site. Consistent with a planning level document, the Petaluma River Access and Enhancement Plan does not have specifically defined locations of the trails. The project would place bridge abutments (the foundation structures supporting each end of a bridge) with clearance from the river's edge, and would allow for high flows as described in the hydrology section of the DEIR. There is passage available for a trail near or against these

abutments. The design would allow for the future location of the trail, and at the time of design in the future, the location and design of the abutments could take into consideration a more specific horizontal and vertical alignment design of the trail, if it is known at that time. The design would also allow for future plantings along the trail system consistent with the “Gateways” planting description on page 70 of the Petaluma River Access and Enhancement Plan.

Response 6-30: The comment notes the use of air quality monitoring data from the Santa Rosa-5th Street Station for impact calculations is not appropriate for this area, and on-site air quality data should be used in the analysis. The air quality monitoring data shown in the DEIR is the most representative data available from the BAAQMD, and is presented for informational purposes to disclose the ambient air quality conditions of the basin. The monitoring station in Santa Rosa is similar to Petaluma in terms of important factors such as temperature, climate, seasonal weather patterns, and local development. The river location at the project site is more forested, as the comment notes, and this more rural project setting could have slightly lower ambient (existing) pollutant levels than the monitoring station in Santa Rosa due to fewer emission sources although this difference is likely negligible. In addition, the monitoring data is not entirely the basis for the quantitative analysis. As described in Section 4.2.3.2 and in response to comment no. 5-9, various modeling programs including EMFAC2011 and OFFROAD2011 were utilized to quantify air quality emissions. Estimated impacts were generally far under the established BAAQMD thresholds for an impact, no change to the analysis is needed.

Response 6-31: The comment notes that the DEIR does not adequately address air pollution on animal, bird, fish and plant species. Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations appendix G CEQA checklist requires an EIR to address the impact a project will have on the existing levels of air pollution and if it exposes sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations. While the CEQA statutes and guidelines provide no definition for sensitive receptors, the DEIR provides a definition from the Bay Area Air Quality Management District as “facilities or land uses that include members of the population that are particularly sensitive to the effects of air pollutants, such as children, the elderly and people with illnesses.” Sensitive receptors are represented by facilities or land uses such as schools and hospitals. There is no substantial evidence that project construction would impact non-human populations and the CEQA checklist can be used as a guide in the absence of substantial evidence of potential impacts not listed. As such, no change was made.

As discussed in Impact BIO-2, a hydroacoustic analysis was done to determine potential biological impacts associated with pile driving activities. The piles driven to support the bridge and falsework would be installed outside of the channel of the Petaluma River, and would not be in direct contact with the water. This same analysis also determined that project-related pile driving on land would not generate sound levels of sufficient intensity to cause injury to fish.

Construction related noise has the potential to impact nesting birds, as identified in the DEIR. Prior to the start of construction, the project site will be surveyed for nesting birds. If a nesting bird is observed, buffers will be erected around the nest and construction activities within the buffers will not be allowed to occur until the nest is empty. The buffers stated in Impact BIO-2

are consistent with standard buffers used by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife and the US Fish and Wildlife Service.

Response 6-32: The comment notes that the DEIR should be recirculated with a map of trees to be removed and a visual simulation that includes story poles and flagging of the proposed project boundary. The DEIR section 4.1 provided a simulated view from three viewing locations of the project in order to provide an accurate representation of the project's impact on the visual character of the site. The DEIR is required to provide a sufficient degree of analysis to provide decision makers with information which enables them to make a decision that takes account of environmental consequences. Page 4.1-7 addresses the issue of tree removal and its impact on the visual character of the site and its surroundings. The section contains sufficient detail to evaluate the project's impact on the visual character of the site and its surroundings and the requested additional information is not necessary to provide the City with a sufficient degree of information to reach a decision.

Response 6-33: The comment inquires about induced growth and associated development impacts. Induced growth and associated development is discussed in Section 6.3 of the DEIR. The project is included in the City's General Plan 2025. The City's General Plan establishes land use development patterns and growth policies that are intended to allow for the orderly expansion of urban development supported by adequate public services, including roadway infrastructure. The City conducted CEQA environmental review on its General Plan to assess the secondary effects of its planned growth. The project is consistent with and has been accounted for in that analysis. Future proposals to develop lands within the vicinity of the project will consider potential impacts associated with the floodplain, but that analysis is beyond the scope of the DEIR.

Response 6-34: The comment inquires about project impacts to downstream flood. Impacts to flooding are discussed in Impact HYD-4, HYD-6, HYD-8, and HYD-9. As indicated in HYD-8 and HYD-9, analysis of the preliminary project design indicates that there would be no change in the downstream flood elevations. Therefore, downstream flood project capacities would not be changed by the project. Cumulative impacts are discussed in Section 6.4. Project Alternatives are discussed in Section 5.5.

Response 6-35: The comment notes that the DEIR fails to provide geotechnical, hydraulic and hydrologic investigation, modeling, and reports. These studies and models are not required by CEQA regulations or guidelines. However, the DEIR found the project would significantly impact hydrology by placing structures within the 100-year flood plain and proposed mitigation measures to lessen the significance of the identified impact. According to Section 15002(h)(2) of the California Code of Regulations, the lead agency, if it finds the project would have significant effects on the environment has the option of imposing conditions on the approval of the project in the form of mitigations.

Response 6-36: The comment notes that DEIR fails to address hydrologic impacts from additional runoff from impervious and compacted surfaces. Impacts associated with additional runoff due to impervious and compacted surfaces are discussed in Impact HYD-5. Induced growth and associated development is discussed in Section 6.3.

Response 6-37: The comment notes the DEIR does not adequately address impacts of the project in the floodplain, including the project itself and its effect on Petaluma River Flood Control Project as well as growth-inducing impacts on nearby residents and businesses. Section 4.7 of the DEIR states that the project would pose a significant impact to hydrology by placing structures into the 100-year flood plain and by altering the existing drainage pattern of the site. The DEIR further recommends mitigation measures that would lessen these impacts. All final designs would be subject to NPDES General Construction Permit, the City of Petaluma Grading Ordinance, the County's SUSMP, and the City's NPDES Phase II Permit which will ensure the safety and viability of the project, itself. Please see Master Response 1: Cumulative Analysis.

Response 6-38: The comment notes that the DEIR does not include a discussion, model or mitigation necessary to prevent loss of flood protection. The DEIR does conclude that the project would pose a significant impact to hydrology by placing structures into the 100 year flood plain and by altering the existing drainage pattern of the site, but does not indicate the project would increase the risk of flooding or negate flood protection from the Petaluma River Flood Control project. The project is required to comply with the City's Floodway and Floodplain Districts Ordinance which requires no net fill and reasonable equivalence of channel hydraulics as well as be designed to include benching or widening of the channel near the bridge crossing to maintain flood flow conveyance.

Response 6-39: The comment notes the DEIR omits or postpones critical information necessary for an informed public or informed decision-making until after the EIR is certified. The DEIR and FEIR are comprehensive documents that have addressed all comments made from scoping and during the review of the DEIR. No identified issues were postponed or not addressed.

Response 6-40: The commenter requests a map showing changes in water surface elevations and flood depths downstream of the project. Please see response 6-38.

Comment Letter (CL) - 7

David Libchitz
P.O. Box 955
Petaluma, CA 94953

To: Olivia Ervin, Senior Environmental Planner
re: Rainier Cross-Town connector DEIR comments

My comments on the Rainier Cross Town Connector DEIR are as follows:

p. 1-1, 1.2 "Proposed Project" – Comment - Nothing is mentioned here about any future connections to the Rainier Cross Town Connector. 7-1

p. 2-1, 2.1 "Project Under Review" - Comment - Nothing is mentioned here about any future connections to the Rainier Cross Town Connector. 7-2

p 3-3, 3.1.1, Planning Background – quote "The project was included as part of the General Plan 2025 to provide east-west connectivity across Petaluma, provide traffic relief on the existing street networks, and provide access to parcels designated for future development in the General Plan 2025. Therefore, the project is needed to mitigate traffic impacts that would occur under full buildout of the General Plan and would need to be constructed as full buildout occurs." 7-3

Comment – This is the first mention in this project DEIR about it being more than a cross town connector and instead being a means to provide access to future developments. As this project is stated to be vital to full build-out of the General Plan as it will mitigate traffic impacts, traffic generated by the full build-out of the General Plan must be taken into consideration and predicted and included in the project DEIR traffic analysis as to determine the effect on the most important function of this project, which is traffic relief elsewhere in Petaluma. (note: this will be referenced later)

p. 3-17, 3.3.3 – "Project Phasing " – Inquiry - Please clarify as to why anticipated construction beginning and completion dates are stated when the City of Petaluma does not have the funding to build this Rainier Cross Town Connector. 7-4

Suggestion – All references to specific dates of any and all points of construction, completion, etc. of this project should be removed and replaced with wording along the line of "date TBD".

Quote – “While the interchange and Shasta Avenue collector are not part of this project, they are included as projects that are constructed in the future and considered in the cumulative analysis scenario for the project.”

7-5

Comment – Traffic generated by the Shasta Avenue collector must be included in the traffic analysis if it is to be included the cumulative traffic analysis for the project.

p. 3-19, 3.4 - Request - “Vicinity Projects” and p. 3-20, 3.5 “Project Objectives” should be reversed in order for better clarity.

7-6

p. 3-20, 3.5 “Project Objectives” – Comment - Note that “Relieve traffic congestion within the local street networks” is the number one goal of the Rainier Cross Town Connector. However, these objectives include the first mention in this DEIR of additional connections to the Rainier Cross Town Connector in the manner of the last item: “Not preclude future connections from adjacent parcels along the roadway.” This addendum completely changes the focus of the Rainier Cross Town Connector and renders its ability to achieve its number one goal of traffic relief elsewhere in the city highly unlikely. There is no data (particularly traffic analysis) on the impacts of this project objective in this DEIR.

7-7

Question – Why is such vital information missing from this DEIR?

p. 3-20, 3.4, “Vicinity Projects” – Comments - This is the first mention in the Rainier Cross Town Connector DEIR about the project known as “Sid Commons”. It is the only place in this DEIR as to what it is, simply stating “residential”. “Sid Commons” is mentioned no fewer than 18 times in this DEIR and connecting to its “driveway” appears to be a vital component of the Rainier Cross Town Connector. For complete public disclosure, a full description and location of the project must be included in this DEIR.

7-8

Request - Please confirm the accuracy of the following information:

Sid Commons

Project: Site Plan and Architectural Review for construction of 282 unit apartment complex.

Applicant: Mark Johnson

Property owner - The Acclaim Companies

Location: End of Graylawn Ave. at Petaluma River

APNs: 019-010-006, 007, 008, 009

7-9

File Numbers: 03-GPA-0379-CR
 Project Planner: Tiffany Robbe 707-778-4318 // trobbe@ci.petaluma.ca.us
 Status: Draft Environmental Impact Report being prepared

The majority of this site is currently landlocked, being bordered by Highway 101, Lynch Creek/The Lynch Creek Trail, The Petaluma River, and the SMART/NWP Railroad tracks. Emergency/alternate access is currently available to the site via the Lynch Creek Trail Bridge at the end of Burlington Drive

7-9

Questions – The main goal of Rainier Cross Town Connector, to alleviate traffic congestion within local streets, as well as access to the Sid Commons site itself, would be much better served by the project developer simply constructing access to the site from the end of Greylawn Ave. Why is the City of Petaluma severely compromising the ability of the Rainier Cross Town Connector to alleviate traffic congestion within the local street networks (The projects number 1 goal) by offering a driveway connection to a private developer? How is providing a driveway access to a private development beneficial to the general public? Is there anything stopping the developer from building their own access from the end of Greylawn Ave.?

p. 3-20, 3.4, "Vicinity Projects" (cont.) Comment - There is no mention in this section about an Outlet Maul expansion.

7-10

Question – If a connection to the driveway of the Outlet mall expansion is such an important part of the Rainier Cross Town Connector, why is it not mentioned and explained here?

p. 3-20, 3.4, "Vicinity Projects" (cont.) – Comment - In order for the DEIR on the Rainier Cross Town Connector to be completely analyzed, all potential projects under full build-out of the General Plan within 1,000 feet of the Rainier Cross Town Connector must be fully disclosed and their traffic impacts included in the traffic analysis of this DEIR. General Plan 2025 calls for a second shopping center in this area and it is not mentioned at all in this DEIR.

7-11

Request - Please identify its location, approximate size and include any other available information on the project. Please indicate the location, approximate size and an adequate description of ALL other potential projects under full build-out of the General Plan within 1.000 feet of the Rainier Cross Town Connector

p. 3-20, 3.5 "PROJECT OBJECTIVES"

Quote: "The project objectives are to:

- Relieve traffic congestion within the local street networks;
- Provide a new cross town connection to serve both the east and west sides of the City;
- Provide enhanced transit, bicyclist, and pedestrian circulation between the east and west side of the City of Petaluma;
- Relieve future traffic demands at the East Washington Street interchange for local traffic crossing east-west across the Highway 101 corridor;
- Relieve future traffic demands at the Old Redwood Highway interchange for local traffic crossing east-west across the Highway 101 corridor; and
- Not preclude future connections from adjacent parcels along the roadway."

7-12

Comment – The last objective, "Not preclude future connections from adjacent parcels along the roadway." is only beneficial to the affected property owners. It is NOT beneficial to the people of Petaluma. The possible repercussions of such future connections are staggering.

p. 4-4.7 Survey 4.4.1.6 Methods and Results – "The Anderson Ranch" – Questions – What is the location of this parcel? What is the current zoning of this property?

7-13

p. 4.5-1, 4.5.1.1 "Soils" – Comment - A complete soil study by means of a core drill down to a depth of 50' appears not to have been performed. This is vital as to be able to specify the proper design of the roadway itself and the overpass support piles.

7-14

Question – Why was this soil study not performed?

p. 4.5.1.2 – Topography - Comment - 2,295 feet is the elevation of the top of Sonoma Mountain. For the purposes of this DEIR, the average elevation in the contiguous City of Petaluma of 30' should be used instead.

7-15

Comment - As the Rainier Cross Town Connector is located within the Petaluma River Flood Plain, the lowest point of the project is far lower than 20 feet above mean sea level. Also, for the same reason, the upper end of groundwater elevations in the project vicinity is far less than 18 feet below the surface. The correct information must be ascertained and those figures in the DEIR replaced.

<p>p. 4.7-3, 4.7.1.4 "Floodplain" - Petaluma River's 100-year floodplain is indicated on figure 4.7-2, not figure 3-3</p>	<p>7-16</p>
<p>Question – If the 100-year floodplain is the area that has a statistical probability of being flooded once every 100 years, why has it flooded at this location at least 5 times in the last 35 years?</p>	
<p>p. 4.7-3, 4.7.1.5 Groundwater – Comment - One again, groundwater elevations are far less than 18 to 45 feet below the ground surface. The correct information must be obtained.</p>	<p>7-17</p>
<p>p. 4.7-18, figure 4.7-2 – Comment - An additional figure is needed that identifies the locations of all of the potential projects under full build-out of the General Plan within 1,000 feet of the Rainier Cross Town Connector, including but not limited to the Sid Commons development and the Outlet Mall Expansion in relation to the Petaluma River 100-year floodplain. As the Rainier Cross Town Connector is needed to mitigate traffic impacts that would occur under full build-out of the General Plan, the location of these potential projects must be included in this DEIR.</p>	<p>7-18</p>
<p>p. 4.7-19, Quote: "The project would be required to comply with the City's Floodway and Floodplain Districts Ordinance..."</p>	<p>7-19</p>
<p>Question – What about all of the other projects that would occur under full build-out of the General Plan that building the Rainier Cross Town Connector would accommodate?</p>	
<p>p. 4.7-19, Quote: "The project would construct approximately 8.6 acres of impermeable surfaces that would potentially increase the rate or amount of surface runoff within the project site."</p>	<p>7-20</p>
<p>Quote: "This impact would be <i>less than significant</i>."</p>	
<p>Question – How can 8.6 acres of impermeable surfaces in a flood-sensitive location such as this be considered "less than significant"? It is very significant.</p>	
<p>p. 4.8-4, 4.8.1.3 "Surrounding Land Uses" – Quote: "An application has been filed to develop the area south of the project site, west of the Petaluma River, and east of the SMART tracks with 400 multi-family residential units."</p>	<p>7-21</p>
<p>p. 4.8-3, figure 4.8-1 and. 4.8-5, figure 4.8-2 – comment – It is appalling how much land that is in the Petaluma River floodplain and is highly susceptible to flooding and</p>	

currently acts to hold storm waters away from other areas is zoned for development.
 Note: This item will be referenced later in my comments. 7-21

p. 4.8-6, 4.8.2.1 "City of Petaluma General Plan" – Quote: "The City's General Plan was adopted on May 19, 2008 and is the principal policy document for guiding future land use, conservation, and development in the City. The General Plan serves as a comprehensive guide for making decisions about land use, economic development, road improvements, and protection of natural resources and public health and safety."
7-22

Comment – The General Plan is a GUIDE. It is not a demand that certain projects can or must be built. It is a compromise and not a perfect document. And it is subject to change.

p. 4.12-5 – quote: "Of the nineteen (19) study intersections noted, fifteen (15) exist without the project. The Petaluma Outlet Mall Expansion Driveway, Shasta Avenue Extension, and the Sid Commons Driveway would provide connections to Rainier Avenue between North McDowell Boulevard and Petaluma Boulevard North under Cumulative Year conditions with the project."
7-23

Question – What is preventing the Petaluma Outlet Mall Expansion and Sid Commons project developers from constructing their own access points to more suitable roads?

p. 4.12-38 & 39, Table 4.12.10 "Opening Year (2020) Intersection Operating Conditions" – Comment - This table contains false and misleading information.
7-24

Quote from p 3-3, 3.1.1: "Therefore, the project is needed to mitigate traffic impacts that would occur under full buildout of the General Plan".
7-25

Comment - As the "with project" data does not account for traffic generated by full build-out of the General Plan the figures shown in the table are nowhere near accurate. This must be corrected.

p. 5-2, 5.3 "PROJECT OBJECTIVES"
 Quote: "The project's objectives are to:
 • Relieve traffic congestion within the local street networks;
 • Provide a new cross town connection to serve both the east and west sides of the City;
 • Provide enhanced transit, bicyclist, and pedestrian circulation between the east and west side of the City of Petaluma;
7-26

- Relieve future traffic demands at the East Washington Street interchange for local traffic crossing east-west across the Highway 101 corridor;
- Relieve future traffic demands at the Old Redwood Highway interchange for local traffic crossing east-west across the Highway 101 corridor; and
- **Facilitate opportunities for future connections from adjacent parcels along the roadway "**

7-26

Comment – The last item is significantly different from the objective previously shown in p 3-20, 3.5 "PROJECT OBJECTIVES".

Question – Which is the objective of the Rainier Cross Town Connector? Is it to "Not preclude future connections from adjacent parcels" or to "Facilitate opportunities for future connections"? These are quite different objectives.

7-27

Comment – Most Petaluma citizens don't even know that either of these two objectives exists. They believe that the objective of the Rainier Cross Town Connector is a cross-town connector to alleviate traffic congestion o East Washington and North and South McDowell.

7-28

p. 5-7, 5.5.1.12 "Traffic and Transportation" and p. 5-8, 5.5.1.13 "Relationship of the Alternative to the Project Objectives" – Comment - As mentioned previously, Table 4.12.10 "Opening Year (2020) Intersection Operating Conditions" contains false and misleading information. Therefore, it is entirely possible that under Alternative A: No Project/No Build, as bad as the traffic levels may be without the Rainier Cross Town Connector, the traffic levels would be BETTER than if is built.

7-29

p. 5-9, 5.5.2 "Alternative B: 4-Lane Roadway, No Future Connections" and p. 5-14, 5.5.2.12 "Traffic and Transportation". Comment – This is the Rainier Cross Town Connector that has been promised to the people of Petaluma for decades. It offers traffic relief and a cross-town connection. No more, no less. The only thing that this alternative would not do is "Facilitate opportunities for future connections from adjacent parcels along the roadway". There is nothing that this alternative would preclude that is a benefit to the people of Petaluma overall.

7-30

p. 5-16, Table 5-3. "Alternative B Opening Year Intersection Operating Conditions"

Comment – As there is absolutely NO DIFFERENCE between the operating conditions shown between "with project" and "Alternative B" (no connections to other parcels, projects, etc), it is clear that the "with project" data does not account for traffic

7-31

generated by full build-out of the General Plan the figures shown in the table are nowhere near accurate. This must be corrected.

7-31

Quote from p 3-3, 3.1.1: "Therefore, the project is needed to mitigate traffic impacts that would occur under full buildout of the General Plan".

p. 5-17, Table 5-4. "Alternative B Cumulative Year Intersection Operating Conditions"

Comment - As there are insignificant differences between the operating conditions shown between "with project" and "Alternative B" (no connections to other parcels, projects, etc), it is clear that the "with project" data does not account for traffic generated by full build-out of the General Plan the figures shown in the table are nowhere near accurate. The accuracy of the information shown in #8 - Petaluma Boulevard / Rainier Avenue3 is highly suspect. These inaccuracies must be corrected. And even though the "with project" figures are incorrect, Alternative B still shows significant traffic improvements at numerous locations over time

7-32

Quote from p 3-3, 3.1.1: "Therefore, the project is needed to mitigate traffic impacts that would occur under full buildout of the General Plan".

p. 5-19, 5.5.2.13, "Relationship of the Alternative to the Project Objectives" Quote: "However, Alternative B would preclude future connections from adjacent parcels along the proposed project roadway."

7-33

Question: What is preventing these property owners/developers from construction their own access to their projects? Why is it the City of Petaluma's responsibility to do so?

p. 5-23 & 24 - Table 5-5. "Alternative C Opening Year Intersection Operating Conditions" and
p. 5-25 & 26, Table 5-6. "Alternative C Cumulative Year Intersection Operating Conditions" - Comment - These tables contain false and misleading information.

7-34

Quote from p 3-3, 3.1.1: "Therefore, the project is needed to mitigate traffic impacts that would occur under full buildout of the General Plan".

Comment - As the "with project" data does not account for traffic generated by full build-out of the General Plan the figures shown in the table are nowhere near accurate. This must be corrected.

p. 5-28, 5.5.4 "Environmentally Superior Alternative" Comment – It is highly likely that Alternative B: 4-Lane Roadway, No Future Connections, actually is the Environmentally Superior Alternative. It does everything that the Rainier Cross Town Connector is supposed to do and it DOES NOT facilitate floodplain development.

7-35

p. 6-17 & 18, Table 6.4.11-1. "Cumulative Intersections Operating Conditions" and p. 6-19 & 20, Table 6.4.11-2. "Cumulative AM Peak Hour Mainline Operating Conditions" and p. 6-20, Table 6.4.11-3. "Cumulative PM Peak Hour Mainline Operating Conditions" and

7-36

Comment - These tables contain false and misleading information.

Quote from p 3-3, 3.1.1: "Therefore, the project is needed to mitigate traffic impacts that would occur under full buildout of the General Plan".

7-37

Comment - As the "With Project" data does not account for traffic generated by full build-out of the General Plan the figures shown in the table are nowhere near accurate. This must be corrected.

p. 6-21 & 22, Table 6.4.11-4. "Cumulative Intersections Conditions with Full Rainier Avenue Interchange" and p. 6-23, Table 6.4.11-5. "Cumulative Mainline Operating Conditions with the Full Rainier Avenue Interchange"

7-38

Comment - These tables contain false and misleading information.

Quote from p 3-3, 3.1.1: "Therefore, the project is needed to mitigate traffic impacts that would occur under full buildout of the General Plan".

7-39

Comment – The data does not account for traffic generated by full build-out of the General Plan the figures shown in the table are nowhere near accurate. This must be corrected.

SUMMARY of Rainier Cross Town Connector project as shown in this DEIR

p. 5-2, 5.3 "PROJECT OBJECTIVES"

The project's objectives are to:

- Relieve traffic congestion within the local street networks;

7-40

RESULT – FAIL. Even without the traffic data from build-out of the General Plan, the traffic congestion within Petaluma cannot improve any more than slightly with this project as it is presented.

- Provide a new cross town connection to serve both the east and west sides of the City;

RESULT – PASS. However, with the additional traffic generated by build-out of the General Plan, the Rainier Cross Town Connector will likely be a constant traffic jam on its own.

- Provide enhanced transit, bicyclist, and pedestrian circulation between the east and west side of the City of Petaluma;

RESULT – PASS/ TBD. However the actual need for such amenities is unlikely

- Relieve future traffic demands at the East Washington Street interchange for local traffic crossing east-west across the Highway 101 corridor;

RESULT – FAIL FAIL FAIL. Even with incorrect data, the proposed improvements along East Washington and North and South McDowell are marginal. With the correct data, the traffic in those areas will likely worsen.

- Relieve future traffic demands at the Old Redwood Highway interchange for local traffic crossing east-west across the Highway 101 corridor; and

RESULT – NOT AN ISSUE. This interchange is too far away to be affected.

- **Facilitate opportunities for future connections from adjacent parcels along the roadway** (note: this item is changed significantly from the initial Project Objectives)

RESULT – PASS - AN ABSOLUTE SUCCESS. It is very clear that this is the main objective of this version of the Rainier Cross Town Connector, as opposed to any of the other objectives.

Overall, this version of the Rainier Cross Town Connector will cause more harm than good. It utterly fails to achieve most of the project objectives. Alternative B is better. Alternative is best of all.

7-10

p 3-3, 3.1.1, Planning Background – quote "The project was included as part of the General Plan 2025 to provide east-west connectivity across Petaluma, provide traffic relief on the existing street networks, and provide access to parcels designated for future development in the General Plan 2025. Therefore, the project is needed to mitigate traffic impacts that would occur under full buildout of the General Plan and would need to be constructed as full buildout occurs."

7-11

The traffic data for this Rainier Cross Town Connector does not include ANYTHING from the build-out of the General Plan. If this project is to mitigate traffic impacts that would

occur under full GP build-out, the complete data must be used. To name a few, on the western end of the Rainier Cross Town Connector, full GP build-out includes one and possibly two shopping centers and two housing developments totaling over 650 units. However, it is unlikely that none of these projects will ever be built. The outlet mall expansion was abandoned years ago partially due to the significant amount of the property located in the floodplain. And now with two new shopping centers up and running, the need for it is simply not there. The residential areas are directly next to the freeway and in the Petaluma River floodplain. Is there any logic or need to build there? AND, we do not have sufficient drinking water to supply what we already have here in Petaluma.

7-41

SUGGESTION FOR THE PETALUMA CITY COUNCIL – Please do NOT direct staff to move forward with the preparation of the Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR). It needs to be sent back so that correct traffic data can be generated and the traffic levels can be properly analyzed. The omission of traffic data from full build-out of the General Plan as required is a major problem with this DEIR and it needs to be fixed before it can go forward. After all, isn't traffic relief what the Rainier Cross Town Connector is supposed to do?

7-42

And have you considered that the whole purpose of this all is simply to increase the value of those floodplain properties slated for build-out in the General Plan? It is not hard to see that.

7-43

Thank you.

David Libchitz
Petaluma, CA

RESPONSE TO COMMENT LETTER 7**David Libchitz**

Response 7-1: The comment notes that future connections to the project are not included in the Project Description. The construction and operation of future connections to adjacent parcels are not part of the project. As stated in Section 3.5 Project Objectives, the project would not preclude future connections to be built, but would not build such connections.

Response 7-2: Please see Response 7-1.

Response 7-3: The commenter notes that traffic generated by the full build-out of the General Plan must be taken into consideration. This DEIR is an analysis of the impacts of the Rainier Cross Town Connector. As a roadway project, the project will not generate trips. Rather, trips will be generated by existing development as well as by the future development identified in the General Plan. The traffic generated by other City projects is captured in the cumulative analysis discussion, section 6.4 of the DEIR. Please also see Master Response 1: Cumulative Analysis.

Response 7-4: The comment notes that the proposed schedule is speculative considering the project is not funded. Section 3.3.3 notes that the project's start date is contingent upon implementation of the SCTA MSN C2 project. If this assumption is incorrect, the proposed project would be infeasible in its current design and the EIR would be subject to amendment and recirculation per California Code of Regulations Section 15088.5.

Response 7-5: The comment notes that the traffic generated by the Shasta Avenue collector should be analyzed in the cumulative analysis. As the commenter notes, the traffic associated with Shasta Avenue is included in the Cumulative Analysis scenario under Impact Cumulative TRANS-1. Please also see Master Response 1: Cumulative Analysis.

Response 7-6: The commenter requests that Section 3.4 and Section 3.5 be reversed for better clarity. This comment does not change the content of the document or raise any adequacy issue. Therefore, no changes were made.

Response 7-7: The comment notes that the project objective of not precluding future connections from adjacent parcels along the roadway is contradictory to the first objective of relieving traffic congestion within the local street networks and notes that traffic impacts on the last objective are missing from the traffic analysis. The California Code of Regulations Section 15124(b) requires an EIR project description to include a statement of objectives sought by the proposed project that aids the lead agency in developing a reasonable range of alternatives. It further notes the project objectives should include the underlying purpose of the project. The project objectives do not define the proposed project. The proposed project should be designed to meet the project objectives, including not precluding future connections. The design of the roadway will allow for future connections, with location(s) that would have to be determined based on safe site distance and the profile of the road. Large portions of the roadway have access constraints including Caltrans right-of-way for the US 101 undercrossing, the river and the railroad tracks. Access to Rainier will therefore be limited, and likely consolidated. Any access to the roadway would require the City's approval and would be fully evaluated in project-specific environmental reviews.

Response 7-8: The comment notes the vicinity project “Sid Commons” should contain a full description and location for public disclosure. The proposed project is limited to the Rainier Cross-Town Connector and does not include an environmental analysis on future possible connections. Including such an analysis would be purely speculative since a connection to Sid Commons Driveway has not been designed or proposed in sufficient detail. The City has received an application for proposed residential development of the Sid Commons property and the environmental review is currently underway. The environmental review for Sid Commons will evaluate potential impacts associated with a proposed connection to Rainier Avenue based on the proposal, as appropriate. Other vicinity projects were addressed with regard to their cumulative contribution to future conditions evaluated for the project, and the description and location of proposed or conceptual projects would not change that analysis.

Response 7-9: The commenter asks why the City of Petaluma is severely compromising the ability of the Rainier Cross Town Connector to alleviate traffic congestion by offering a driveway connection to a private developer. The proposed project addressed in this DEIR does not include a private driveway, but can accommodate connections in the future. Width of the roadway can accommodate turn pockets for some connections without compromising the operation of the roadway.

Response 7-10: The comment notes the vicinity projects section is missing the outlet mall expansion project and does not address the outlet mall expansion driveway connection to the project. This DEIR includes all reasonably foreseeable vicinity projects including the outlet mall expansion. Table 4.12-1 of DEIR specifically includes the Rainier Ave/Outlets Expansion Drive intersection (Int ID 19) as does the cumulative impacts analysis (Table 6.4.11-1). Please also see response 7-9.

Response 7-11: The comment notes this DEIR does not include all information under the full build-out of the General Plan. Please see response 7-3.

Response 7-12: The comment notes the project objective of not precluding future connections from adjacent parcels along the roadway is not beneficial to the people of Petaluma. The commenter’s opinion is noted. No change was made to the document.

Response 7-13: The commenter has requested the location and current zoning of Anderson Ranch. It is identified in the DEIR at 196 Cinnabar Avenue, which is near the Petaluma River and railroad tracks off this road. The zoning of this parcel does not affect the historic evaluation of this property, which is described in detail in the section 4.4.1.6 (as referenced in this comment).

Response 7-14: The commenter notes that a 50 foot soil boring has not been obtained to properly assess the project area soils. CEQA does not prescribe specific methods of investigation. The City of Petaluma 2006 study and the USDA 2012 information are existing sources that provide an adequate understanding of soil quality in the project area. As described in Section 4.5 at the design stage a geotechnical investigation will be prepared that provides specific recommendations to address soil stability concerns including but not limited to quality fill material, compaction design, over excavation, and detailed grading requirements. For all roadway projects, the geotechnical investigation is performed during the design phase, once the

proposed project is approved. Construction methods and final design will be based on the results of the geotechnical investigation.

Response 7-15: The commenter notes that the average elevation of 30' should be used for the City of Petaluma and doubts the validity of the elevation and groundwater elevations presented. Please see Response 4-8.

Response 7-16: The comment requested that the reference to Petaluma River's 100-year flood plain be updated and requests clarification on the 100-year flood. The reference to the floodplain figure (i.e., Figure 4.7-2) is updated for the FEIR. Areas within the FEMA-designated 100-year floodplain have a flood risk with at least a 1 percent annual chance of exceedence. However, a specific location within the 100-year floodplain could flood more frequently (e.g., it could also be within the 10-year or the 5-year floodplain). Also, the FEMA-designated 100-year floodplain does not account for inadequate local drainage, such as impacted storm drains, so areas outside of the 100-year floodplain can flood more frequently than the 1 percent annual chance of exceedence.

Response 7-17: The comment notes groundwater elevations are not listed correctly. The groundwater elevations cited in this section correspond to areas near the project boundaries. Depth to groundwater would decrease in areas closer to the river channel because of interactions between surface water and groundwater (e.g., infiltration).

Response 7-18: The comment notes an additional figure showing the locations of potential projects under the full build-out of the General Plan must be included in the DEIR as the project is needed to mitigate traffic impacts that would occur under the full build-out of the General Plan. The full buildout of the General Plan was described in the General Plan 2025 and is incorporated by reference into this EIR. Specific projects that are approved, or proposed and likely to be funded, are included in the traffic analysis; these projects are listed in Section 4.12.3.1. Build out conditions utilize the General Plan build out assumptions, but also planned land use designations that are translated into trip generation. This later method is used because not all projects are known for future conditions, but the planned land uses from the General Plan indicate the growth patterns in the city and can be used to generate appropriate trips and volumes.

Response 7-19: The comment asks if all of the other projects that would occur under the full build-out of the general plan would be required to comply with the City's Floodway and Floodplain Districts Ordinance. Other projects that would occur under full build-out of the General Plan would require separate environmental review. Please see Master Response 1: Cumulative Analysis.

Response 7-20: The comment questions the less than significant determination for the project to increase surface run-off. As described in Impact HYD-5 and HYD-8, the project would improve the existing stormwater drainage system and/or construct its own stormwater drainage system. The stormwater drainage system would be designed per the County's SUSMP guidelines to capture all runoff from new impermeable surfaces, and ensure that the rate of captured runoff entering the Petaluma River would not result in on- or off-site flooding.

Response 7-21: The comment notes it is appalling how much land in the Petaluma River floodplain is currently zoned for development. Commenter's opinion is noted, and no change in the FEIR is needed.

Response 7-22: The comment notes that the City of Petaluma General Plan is a guide and is not a demand for specific projects to be built. The General Plan was used to provide assumed build-out conditions to ensure that cumulative impacts are adequately addressed. A reduced level of development could result in a lower estimate of impacts. Comment noted and no change was made.

Response 7-23: The commenter wants to know if the Petaluma Outlet Mall Expansion and Sid Commons project developers can construct their own access points to more suitable roads. The proposed project does not include a connection to these two developments but does consider this potential future connection as Intersection 19 in the cumulative analysis. Future projects that proposed connections to Rainier Avenue will be required to undergo environmental review in accordance with CEQA to evaluate potential impacts.

Response 7-24: The comment inquires about Table 4.12.10, and notes that the table contains false and misleading information. See Master Response 2 for further discussion on the baseline used for this study. Table 4.12.10 was checked for accuracy and was confirmed that it properly summarizes the analysis results. No change was made to the FEIR.

Response 7-25: The comment notes that a sentence on page 3-3, section 3.1.1 does not recognize the roles of other projects to accommodate for General Plan Build-out. As noted in Section 4.12.3.1 the opening year analysis assumes only partial build-out of the General Plan. Full build-out of the General Plan is presented under Cumulative conditions. See Master Response 1 for further discussion on the Cumulative Analysis assumptions. The FEIR revises Page 3-3 of the DEIR text as follows to better reflect the project's purpose as one of several roadway projects needed to mitigate the traffic impacts under the full buildout of the General Plan:

“Therefore, the project is one of several projects that would be needed to address traffic impacts presented under full build out in the Petaluma General Plan ~~needed to mitigate traffic impacts that would occur under full buildout of the General Plan and would need to be constructed as full buildout occurs.~~”

Response 7-26: The comment notes the project objectives in Section 5.3 do not match Section 3. The FEIR text on page 5-2, Section 5.3 was revised as follows:

“~~Facilitate opportunities for~~ Not preclude future connections from adjacent parcels along the roadway.”

Response 7-27: The comment asks for clarification on the project objectives. See response 7-26.

Response 7-28: The comment notes that most Petaluma residents believe the objective of the Rainier Cross Town Connector is to alleviate traffic on East Washington and North and South McDowell. Comment is noted.

Response 7-29: The comment notes that the information in Table 4.12.10 is false and misleading and therefore the conclusions are suspect. Please refer to Response 7-24.

Response 7-30: The commenter notes that Alternative B: 4-Lane Roadway would not facilitate opportunities for future connections and there is nothing this alternative would preclude that is a benefit to Petaluma. It would not allow for connections and provides a comparison with the proposed project that does provide opportunities for connections.

Response 7-31: The comment notes that Table 5-3 does not include traffic generated by the full build-out of the General Plan. As noted in Section 4.1.12.3.1 the opening year analysis assumes only partial buildout of the General Plan. Full buildout of the General Plan is presented under Cumulative conditions, Section 6.4 of the DEIR. See Master Response 1 for further discussion on the Cumulative Analysis assumptions. See response 7-25 for changes to the FEIR.

Response 7-32: The comment notes that Table 5-4 does not include traffic for the full build-out of the General Plan and looks very similar to Alternative B. See Master Response 1 for further discussion on the Cumulative Analysis assumptions, and Master Response 5 on Cumulative Traffic Operations. The analysis results presented under Cumulative No Project and Cumulative With Project conditions account for traffic generated by full buildout of the General Plan. The analysis results presented in Table 5-4 for intersection #8 were checked against the technical worksheets and it was confirmed the results are presented correctly. See response 7-25 for changes to the FEIR.

Response 7-33: The comment asks why Alternative B prevents property owners/developers from constructing access on their own projects and why it is the City's responsibility to do so. The DEIR describes that the proposed project would not preclude this future access due to the at-grade design but Alternative B does not include at-grade design at these access locations making it very difficult or impossible for these private land owners to install access at a later date. See response 7-25 for changes to the FEIR.

Response 7-34: The comment requests that information in Table 5-5 be revised. See Master Response 5 for further discussion on the Cumulative traffic operations assumptions. The analysis results presented under Cumulative No Project and Cumulative With Project conditions account for traffic generated by full buildout of the General Plan. See response 7-25 for changes to the FEIR.

Response 7-35: The comment suggests that Alternative B is the environmentally superior alternative. While Alternative B might not allow as much development in the floodplain, it would increase environmental resource impacts compared to the proposed project (as described in Section 5.5.2). These include conflict with the General Plan, conflict with population and housing requirements, conflict with plans regarding traffic efficiency, and conflict with a traffic management program (freeway and intersection). Alternative B would decrease two environmental impacts when compared to the proposed project but is still less environmentally superior than the proposed project. As such, no change needed.

Response 7-36: The comment requests that information in Table 6.4.11-1 be revised. See Master Response 5 for further discussion on the Cumulative traffic operations assumptions. The analysis results presented under Cumulative No Project and Cumulative With Project conditions account for traffic generated by full buildout of the General Plan. See response 7-25 for changes to the FEIR.

Response 7-37: The comment notes that if the project is needed to mitigate traffic impacts that would occur under full build-out of the General Plan, the traffic data should include the full build-out. The analysis results presented under Cumulative No Project and Cumulative With Project conditions account for traffic generated by full buildout of the General Plan. See response 7-25 for changes to the FEIR.

Response 7-38: The comment requests that information in Tables 6.4.11-4 & 5 be revised. These sections are provided for informational purposes only. Nonetheless, the analysis results do account for traffic generated by full buildout of the General Plan. The analysis results presented in these sections were checked against the technical worksheets and it was confirmed the results are presented correctly.

Response 7-39: The comments raises concern that traffic data does not account for full buildout under the General Plan. Please see response 7-37.

Response 7-40: The comment notes that the project does not satisfy the project objectives and Alternative B is their preferred alternative. Comment noted.

Response 7-41: The comment notes that the traffic data for the full build-out of the General Plan was not included and notes future development may not have sufficient drinking water. Please see response 7-37. Drinking water for projects identified in the General Plan is beyond the scope of this EIR. This project is intended only to provide future traffic circulation benefits by creating a new cross-town connector.

Response 7-42: The comment urges the Petaluma City Council to recirculate the DEIR with traffic data for the full build-out of the General Plan. Please see response 7-37. The DEIR does include an analysis at full buildout of the General Plan under the Cumulative Conditions discussion, section 6.4. Recirculation is not warranted. Comment noted.

Response 7-43: The comment notes that the purpose of this project seems to be to increase land values for properties in the floodplain. As noted previously, the project is intended to provide future traffic circulation benefits. It would provide opportunities for future connections, in accordance with the General Plan, but is not a purpose of the project.

Comment Letter (CL) - 8

From: [Kremin, Darcy](#)
To: [Craclun, Florentina](#)
Subject: FW: Comments on Draft EIR for Rainier Crosstown Connector
Date: Monday, September 08, 2014 9:23:53 AM
Attachments: [Comment letter on NOP.pdf](#)

Darcy Kremin
 Direct: 510 874 3110 | Cell: 925 207 1089
 Email: darcy.kremin@urs.com

From: Ervin, Olivia [<mailto:OERVIN@ci.petaluma.ca.us>]
Sent: Monday, September 08, 2014 8:52 AM
To: Zimmerman, Jeff; Kremin, Darcy
Subject: FW: Comments on Draft EIR for Rainier Crosstown Connector

From: Fred Etzel [<mailto:fetzel@hennetzel.com>]
Sent: Monday, September 08, 2014 7:11 AM
To: Ervin, Olivia
Cc: Darryl Gugig; Wayne Leach
Subject: Comments on Draft EIR for Rainier Crosstown Connector

Dear Ms. Ervin:

I represent Simon Premium Outlets which owns Petaluma Premium Outlets, 2200 Petaluma Boulevard North, Petaluma, CA. In addition to the Premium Outlets, Simon Premium Outlets owns the 16.30-acre parcel to its north, commonly known as Parcel C, and the 22.89-acre parcel to its south, commonly known as Parcel B. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft EIR on the Rainier Avenue Cross-Town Connector.

Please allow me to refer you to the attached letter dated September 23, 2011 which I sent to the Community Development Department in regard to the Notice of Preparation of an Environmental Impact Report for the proposed Rainier Avenue Cross-Town Connector Project. Please also allow me to incorporate the comments I made in my letter by reference into this email as comments on the Draft EIR.

Specifically with respect to the Draft EIR, I request that you revise Figure 3-2 Project Location and Project Site Boundary and Figure 3-3 Rainier Avenue

8-1

Cross-Town Connector to show the roadway connection between Parcel B and the Rainier Avenue Extension, as depicted in one of the Exhibits attached to my letter. This roadway connection will provide access from the Rainier Cross-Town Connector to Parcel B in order to facilitate the development of this Parcel in accordance with the Petaluma General Plan by either Simon Premium Outlets or others. Development of Parcel B is a “probable future project” within the meaning of 14 Cal. Code of Regulations, Section 15130(b) (1)(A). I also request that Draft EIR Section 3.4 Vicinity Projects, at pages 3-19 and 3-20, be revised to include the development of Parcel B by Simon Premium Outlets or others.

8-1

8-2

Thank you for your attention to this email and please call me if you have any questions or comments.

Fred Etzel

This e-mail and any attachments contain URS Corporation confidential information that may be proprietary or privileged. If you receive this message in error or are not the intended recipient, you should not retain, distribute, disclose or use any of this information and you should destroy the e-mail and any attachments or copies.

RESPONSE TO COMMENT LETTER 8**Frederick Etzel**

Response 8-1: The comment requests that Figures 3-2 Project Location and Project Site Boundary and Figure 3-3 Rainier Avenue Connector be revised to show a connection between Parcel B and the project. The construction and operation of future connections to adjacent parcels are not part of the project. As stated in Section 3.5 Project Objectives, the project would not preclude future connections to be built, but would not build such connections. No change was made.

Response 8-2: The comment requests that Section 3.4 Vicinity Projects be revised to include the development of Simon Premium Outlets. Although, as pointed out by the commenter, this is a viable project the discussion in Section 3.4 is not meant to be exhaustive or exclusive and is only a general discussion of either planned or improved projects within the City of Petaluma. Exclusion of Simon Premium Outlets development does not preclude the project from being developed. As such, no change is needed or was made.



Comment Letter (CL) - 9

Judy Arnold, Chair
Marin County Board of Supervisors

Barbara Pahre, Vice Chair
Golden Gate Bridge,
Highway/Transportation District

Jim Eddie
Golden Gate Bridge,
Highway/Transportation District

Debora Fudge
Sonoma County Mayors and
Councilmembers Association

Madeline Kellner
Transportation Authority of Marin

Jake Mackenzie
Sonoma Mayors and Councilmembers
Association

Stephanie Moulton-Peters
Marin Council of Mayors and
Councilmembers

Gary Phillips
Transportation Authority of Marin

David Rabbitt
Sonoma County Board of Supervisors

Carol Russell
Sonoma Mayors and Councilmembers
Association

Kathrin Sears
Marin County Board of Supervisors

Shirlee Zane
Sonoma County Board of Supervisors

Farhad Mansourian
General Manager

5401 Old Redwood Highway
Suite 200
Petaluma, CA 94954
Phone: 707-794-3330
Fax: 707-794-3037
www.sonomamarintrain.org

September 8, 2014

Attn: Heather Hines, Planning Manager
Community Development Department
City of Petaluma
11 English Street
Petaluma, CA 94952

RE: DEIR Comments, Rainier Cross-Town Connector Project, State
Clearinghouse #2011082032

Dear Heather,

Thank you very much for the opportunity to comment on the Draft EIR for the Rainier Cross-Town Connector Project. The following comprises the comments of the Sonoma-Marine Area Rail Transit (SMART) District on the project. Generally, the comments provided reiterate SMART's objective to operate and maintain a shared passenger/freight railroad. All structures built above and/or adjacent to the railroad will need to be reviewed closely by SMART engineers to ensure safety for passengers, freight operators, and potential overhead vehicular traffic. Additionally, construction phasing will need to be coordinated so that there is no interruption to passenger or freight service on the railroad. Finally, before an application is submitted to the CPUC for the overcrossing, the City should have SMART staff review the application.

9-1
9-2
9-3

Railroad Ownership

The document incorrectly refers to the corridor and tracks as "NWP tracks", "NWP/SMART tracks" or "NWPRR corridor" in several locations. SMART is the owner and dispatcher for this active railroad corridor in Petaluma. Any reference to Northwest Pacific (NWP) should indicate either former ownership or simply the freight operator using SMART tracks, as appropriate. See the following sections and pages: 3.2 p50; 3.3.4.4 p65; 4.1.1.1 p72, 74; 4.8.1.2 p208; Table 4.8-1 p218 5-P-50; 4.11.1.3 p 254; 4.12.4.2 p289. Additionally, the document refers to SMART as "Rapid Transit". SMART is an acronym for Sonoma-Marine Area Rail Transit (4.8.1.2).

9-4

Construction Impacts to the SMART Right-of-Way

Section 3.3.3 discusses project phasing, and indicates that the project anticipates beginning construction starting in 2017. SMART passenger service is scheduled to begin in 2016. Any project construction related activities should be planned so as not to interfere with SMART operations. Any activity occurring above SMART's right of way will require coordination with SMART operations to secure the necessary rights of entry during periods of time that do not interfere with passenger or freight operations.

9-5

Additionally, all bridge construction shall be performed to meet the requirements of 49 CFR 214, in order to protect the railroad and rail vehicles during construction. 9-6

Bridge construction standards and bridge impact on SMART ROW.
The overcrossing bridge should be constructed to meet all clearances required by the CPUC and the FRA and take into account future double track. Bridge standards include required fencing of sufficient height as to protect the railway from objects thrown on the tracks, as well as potential crash walls. 9-7

Active Railroad
Section 4.12.1.6 discusses rail activities in the proposed project area. The proposed project planning and construction should consider that NWP freight service is currently operating on the SMART tracks and that SMART passenger service will begin in 2016. Freight service will continue to operate in conjunction with passenger service. Rules relating to Roadway Worker Protection (RWP) will have to be observed. 9-8

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment on the Rainier Cross-Town Connector project, and SMART looks forward to working closely with the City to develop this project in the future.

Sincerely,



Linda Meckel
Senior Planner

Sonoma Marin Area Rail Transit
5401 Old Redwood Highway, Suite 200
Petaluma, CA 94954

RESPONSE TO COMMENT LETTER 9**SMART**

Response 9-1: The comment indicates that all projects built above and/or adjacent to the railroad would need to be reviewed by SMART. The City of Petaluma will provide SMART the opportunity to review or comment on proposed designs and that safety measures for passengers, freight operations and vehicular traffic would be incorporated in project design. This comment does not address the adequacy of the DEIR, as such no change needed.

Response 9-2: The comment requests that construction phasing be coordinated with SMART operations to preclude service interruptions. The City of Petaluma and its contractor would assemble a traffic control plan that would account for SMART operations. This comment does not address the adequacy of the DEIR, as such no change needed.

Response 9-3: The comment requests that the CPUC permit application be reviewed by SMART staff prior to submittal. An appropriate opportunity to review the project design and application will be provided. This comment does not address the adequacy of the DEIR, as such no change needed.

Response 9-4: The comment requests that any reference to NWP/NWPRR owning the railroad tracks near the project be changed to SMART. The commenter further indicates that SMART is not a Rapid Transit system, but an acronym to depict Rail Transit. The FEIR includes the following revisions:

Page 3-19 “Existing sanitary sewer systems and a 33-inch aqueduct lie within the ~~NWP/SMART~~ corridor.”

Page 4.1-2 “With the exception of Highway 101 and the ~~Northwestern Pacific Railroad (NWP)~~ SMART rail tracks, the project site’s location is undeveloped. The area of the proposed Rainier/101 undercrossing is developed as a transportation corridor (Highway 101), while the area to the west of Highway 101 and the Petaluma River includes the SMART rail tracks ~~for the NWP, which is proposed for development of the SMART rail project.~~”

Page 4.1-4 “Visible structures within the project site include Highway 101, the ~~NWP~~SMART tracks and at-grade bridge crossing of the Petaluma River, and electrical housing units for a water pump station near North McDowell Boulevard.”

Page 4.8-2 “Only three parcels contain any development—APN 007-380-002, which is developed with a small, City owned pump station, APN 048-142-016, which is developed with the ~~Northwestern Pacific Railroad (NWP)~~/Sonoma Marin Area Rapid Rail Transit (SMART) tracks, and the State owned and developed Highway 101 right-of-way.”

Page 4.8-12 Table 4.8-1 “~~NWP/SMART~~ corridor”

Page 4.11-2 “A 33-inch aqueduct lies within the ~~NWP/SMART~~ corridor.”

Page 4.12-16 “There is no current passenger ~~or freight rail~~ service in the study area. Freight service on a Northwestern Pacific Railroad line owned by SMART is currently running in the project area ~~operated until 2001.~~”

Page 4.12-20 “There is no current passenger ~~or freight rail~~ service in the study area. Freight service on a Northwestern Pacific Railroad line owned by SMART is currently running in the project area ~~operated until 2001.~~”

Response 9-5: The comment requests that construction phasing be coordinated with SMART operations to preclude service interruptions. The City of Petaluma and its contractor would assemble a traffic control plan that would take into consideration SMART operations.

Response 9-6: The comment requires that all bridge construction meet the requirements of 49 CFR 214. The City of Petaluma design will meet such requirements and all other applicable Federal, State and local mandates.

Response 9-7: The comment requests that bridge design standards meet CPUC and FRA standards and be designed for future double track on the SMART corridor. The City of Petaluma’s project design will meet Federal and State standards for bridge design that would cross an active railway.

Response 9-8: The commenter requests an update of the text in section 4.12.1.6. See Response 9-4.

Comment Letter (CL) - 10



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Napa
Petaluma
Sacramento

CSW/Stober-Stroeth Engineering Group, LLC

Engineers | Land Planners | Surveyors | Landscape Architects

Date: September 8, 2014
File: 5.578.04

Ms. Olivia Ervin, Environmental Planner
City of Petaluma
11 English Street
Petaluma, CA 94952

**RE: DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT
RAINIER CROSS-TOWN CONNECTOR**

Dear Ms. Ervin:

I represent Simon Premium Outlets which owns Petaluma Premium Outlets, 2200 Petaluma Boulevard North, Petaluma, CA. In addition to the Premium Outlets, Simon Premium Outlets owns the 16.30-acre parcel to its north, commonly known as Parcel C, and the 22.89-acre parcel to its south, commonly known as Parcel B. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft EIR on the Rainier Avenue Cross-Town Connector.

The DEIR does an adequate job identifying the cross-town connector project will create roadway access to adjacent parcels designated for development in the General plan that do not currently have access.

However, within the project description the DEIR does not adequately describe how these future connections will be made to the cross-town connector. It identifies other proposed roads including the Shasta Avenue collector and future connections like the Petaluma Outlet mall, but only considers them as cumulative impacts. It does not adequately address the physical feasibility and impacts of these connections by identifying where and how they would connect to Rainier.

10-1

Additionally, the 2025 General Plan Land Use figure 1-1 shows land use designations for a City Park and Rail/Transit node. The DEIR should include a discussion about these designations and any potential connections to the cross-town connector.

10-2

Looking at these connection in further detail will help address the physical feasibility of these connectors and ensure it does not create a physical divide that would impair mobility within the community and to the surrounding parcels.

The DEIR should further address the cost impact of acquiring sufficient right of way for the cross-town connector and if this would be through eminent domain or if it is dependent on future development dedicating right of way.

The DEIR should consider the impacts to dedicating needed right of way in-lieu of development fees.

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CSW ST 2

Ms. Olivia Ervin
City of Petaluma
September 8, 2014
Page 2

The DEIR staff report includes a cost estimate that depends on developer dedicated right of way and developer roadway items that amount to about \$25M. The DEIR should address the details of the developer dependent program and the ability to implement these components into the project.

10-3

Thank you for your attention to this matter and please call me if you have any questions or comments.

Sincerely,

CSW/STUBER-STROEH ENGINEERING GROUP, INC.



Wayne F. Leach
R.C.E. # 54309

Cc: Darryl Gugig, Deputy General Counsel, Simon Premium Outlets
Fred Etzel, Attorney

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RESPONSE TO COMMENT LETTER 10**Wayne Leach**

Response 10-1: The comment notes that the DEIR does not adequately address how and where connections to Parcels B and C would be made. While the traffic generated by these parcels was considered in the cumulative traffic analysis, the precise alignment and configuration of the future connections is not known in sufficient detail to be analyzed and is not proposed by this project. Therefore, a review of impacts from potential connections is beyond the scope of this EIR.

Response 10-2: The comment notes that the 2025 General Plan land use figure shows land use designations for a city park and rail/transit node and requests a discussion about potential connections of these designations to the cross-town connector. As noted in response 10-1 above, the proposed project does not include connections to nearby parcels or land uses. The DEIR section 4.8.3.3 addresses the potential of the proposed project to physically divide the community.

Response 10-3: The comment requests that the DEIR further describe and analyze the impact of acquiring dedicated right-of-way in lieu of development fees. The method of acquisition will be determined at the time that final design and right-of-way is performed, which is after the approval of the FEIR for this project. It would be speculative to address this issue, and it is not necessary to evaluate environmental or community impacts of the project.

In the Matter of:
CITY OF PETALUMA

JOINT MEETING PLANNING COMM. HISTORIC PRESERV.

August 12, 2014

Dianne Jones & Associates

Reporting and Videography

P.O. Box 1736
Pacific Palisades, California 90272
310.472.9882

Comment Letter (CL)-11

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CITY OF PETALUMA

JOINT MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION AND
THE HISTORIC AND CULTURAL PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

TUESDAY, AUGUST 12, 2014

PETALUMA, CALIFORNIA

AGENDA ITEM THREE

PUBLIC MEETING

RE: RAINIER CROSSTOWN CONNECTION AND
REVIEW OF DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

---o0o---

REPORTED BY: DANA DIBASILIO TOGNINI, CSR #10118

1 APPEARANCES:
2
3 CITY OF PETALUMA PLANNING COMMISSION:
4 Commissioner Jennifer Pierre, Chair Pro Tempore
5 Commissioner Gina Benedetti-Petric
6 Commissioner Richard Marzo
7
8 COUNCIL LIAISON:
9 Commissioner Kathy Miller
10
11 STAFF LIAISON:
12 Planning Manager Heather Hines
13
14 APPOINTED MEMBERS:
15 Terry Kosewic, Heritage Homes
16 Kit Schich, Petaluma Museum Association
17
18 STAFF MEMBERS:
19 environmental Planner Olivia Ervin
20 City Engineer Curt Bates
21
22 PUBLIC COMMENT
23 PAGE
24 DAVID LIBCHITZ 28
25

1 Tuesday, August 12, 2014 8:30 o'clock p.m.

2 P R O C E E D I N G S

3 ---o0o---

4 MS. ERVIN: All right. We are moving onto the
5 next agenda item. I am Olivia Ervin, environmental
6 planner. This next segment is the review of the draft
7 environmental impact report for the Rainier Crosstown
8 Connector. The purpose of this hearing this evening
9 is to provide an opportunity for the public and the
10 Commission to comment on the adequacy of the
11 environmental document.

12 The concept for the Rainier Crosstown
13 Connector has been envisioned as a means to alleviate
14 traffic congestion since at least the 1960s. The City
15 of Petaluma is bisected by Highway 101, the SMART Rail
16 corridor and the Petaluma River, which effectively
17 serve as barriers to east-west connectivity. What
18 ends up happening is that all of the traffic is
19 funneled through just a few locations, which results
20 in heavy congestion along those corridors.

21 So to alleviate that congestion, the General
22 Plan did propose the Rainier Crosstown Connector in
23 conjunction with an interchange component. However,
24 that interchange was separated into a distinct element
25 in 2010 through the vote of the Council.

www.diannejonesassociates.com
310.472.9882

3

1 So what you have before you is just the
2 Rainier Crosstown arterial that would provide
3 east-west connectivity and does not include the
4 interchange component at this time. So, again, the
5 objectives of the project really are to alleviate
6 traffic congestion and to provide that east-west
7 connectivity and not preclude the opportunity for
8 future connections.

9 The proposed roadway is a .65-mile segment.
10 It would be four lanes with a median. It would have a
11 Class 2 bike lane, as well six foot sidewalks. It
12 would connect from North McDowell to Petaluma
13 Boulevard North. It would cross underneath Highway
14 101. And then it would be elevated into a bridge that
15 would cross and extend over the Petaluma River and the
16 SMART Rail corridor before returning to an at-grade
17 condition and tying into a new intersection of
18 Petaluma Boulevard North.

19 The project is being introduced at this time
20 to correspond with the Highway 101 Widening Project,
21 and that would raise the profile of the undercarriage,
22 which would support this underpassing portion of it.
23 And that would establish the necessary height and
24 width. The project would -- could initiate following
25 completion of the Caltrans improvements, and that

1 could be as early as 2017, and then it would require
2 about approximately 30 months to complete and could be
3 operational by 2020.

4 The project will require a number of permits
5 and approvals from several different State and Federal
6 agencies, and those are listed here and are described
7 in detail in the Draft Environmental Impact Report.

8 The Draft EIR process was initiated in 2011,
9 with a release of Notice of Preparation, and was
10 circulated for public review in July of -- just last
11 month, and it is -- was noticed in accordance with
12 CEQA and has been made available throughout the City
13 at the typical locations. And the public comment
14 period will close on September 8th, following the City
15 Council hearing.

16 The Draft EIR does identify potentially
17 significant impacts for the categories listed here,
18 and I am going to go ahead and run through those now:
19 As a roadway project, air quality emissions will
20 result from construction and operation. At operation,
21 the emissions are actually expected to decrease due to
22 reduction in the total vehicle miles traveled.

23 There will be a potential health risk impact
24 associated with exhaust emissions due to the
25 short-term operation of heavy-duty construction

1 estimate. And so in order to mitigate that impact,
2 the project is required to implement control measures
3 to limit exhaust.

4 Biological resources have been identified and
5 may be impacted due to the placement of fill within
6 the ordinary high-water mark and adjacent to an
7 riparian habitat adjacent to the river, as well the
8 species that may be present within those natural
9 communities, including both special status species
10 that are protected by the California Department of
11 Fish and Wildlife as well as Federally-listed species
12 and fish species as well.

13 So in order to protect those impacts [sic],
14 the project is required to first avoid and then
15 minimize and offset those impacts where they can't be
16 avoided, and that will be accomplished through
17 measures such as pre-construction surveys, nesting
18 bird surveys restoring and replanting those areas that
19 are to be disturbed, and really providing controls to
20 insure that sediment and pollutant transfer does not
21 enter into the river.

22 There are also cultural resources that have
23 been identified within the project area, including
24 both historic and prehistoric deposits, and the
25 potential exists for the discovery of unknown

1 resources as well, especially approximate to the
2 river. So in order to protect those resources, the
3 project is required to implement an archeological data
4 recovery program, and to insure that ground monitoring
5 occurs whenever there is disturbance within 200 feet
6 of the river bank.

7 For geology and soils, the impacts are
8 identified associated with seismic hazards instability
9 in expansive soils, so mitigation requires the proper
10 treatment of soils, the use of appropriate fill
11 materials, construction techniques and other
12 engineering recommendations that will be set forth in
13 the design level geotechnical and implemented as part
14 of the project.

15 For hydrology and water quality, the project
16 would place new infrastructure within the 100-year
17 flood hazard zone, as identified by the new FEMA maps.
18 And this graphic here (indicating) shows the floodway
19 and the 100-year floodplain, as well as the ordinary
20 high-water mark. The project is required to adhere to
21 the City's no-net-fill standard, and the project would
22 also introduce biosoils in order to offset those
23 increases in permeable surfaces -- impermeable
24 surfaces.

25 Additionally, the project is required to

1 comply with the Army Corps of Engineers 404 Dredge and
2 Fill Permit, as well as the Regional Quality Control
3 Board 401 Water Quality Certificate. And there is
4 also a mitigation that requires a design level
5 hydraulic study be conducted, and that study would
6 demonstrate that the flow parameters are self
7 sufficient and any need to -- any result in increase
8 of the base flood elevation would be addressed therein
9 and would be accommodated, either through a
10 reterracing and/or would have to go through the formal
11 process for rezoning or redesignating that, should
12 that need arise.

13 The preliminary hydraulic studies show that
14 it's an increase of less than one inch, and it's
15 confined to within 200 feet of the bridge. During
16 construction the project may result in impacts due to
17 temporary roadwork and delays at project area
18 intersections. And in order to mitigate that
19 temporary impact, a construction management plan will
20 be implemented throughout the entire phase of
21 construction.

22 And an impact was also identified due to a
23 potential design hazard at the property located at
24 Rainier and North McDowell. And in order to mitigate
25 that impact, there will be a break provided in the

1 median so that those vehicles can access that, and the
2 driveway will also be relocated farther from the
3 intersection to avoid conflict in the design hazard.

4 So at operation, the whole purpose of Rainier
5 Avenue is really to alleviate traffic congestion at
6 several study area intersections. And the project
7 really would improve level of service relative to the
8 no-project condition; however, the level of service at
9 the new intersection at Petaluma Boulevard and Rainier
10 would be deficient at operation, so in order to
11 correct that deficiency, a new westbound left-turn
12 lane and a new northbound right overlap phase would be
13 required and is included as a mitigation measure.

14 A cumulative impact was also conducted as
15 part of the environmental document and identified that
16 the project would correct five of the six deficient
17 intersections that have been studied as part of the
18 ultimate buildout of the General Plan. Those are
19 listed here. The one exception is the intersection of
20 East Washington and Highway 101 would increase from
21 LOSF to LOSE, which is still deficient but, again, a
22 better situation than what would be without the
23 project.

24 The cumulatives analysis also presumes
25 buildout of Shasta Avenue, and that extension is shown

1 here (indicating). And there was two scenarios
2 considered as part of the analysis, one with Shasta
3 and one without the Shasta extension. And
4 essentially, what would happen is that if Shasta were
5 to be built, a portion of the traffic that would go
6 down Rainier would be shifted to Shasta, and so this
7 intersection here could result in a level of service
8 deficiency. And so, again, improvements to that
9 intersection geometrics would correct that deficiency.

10 Okay. In accordance with CEQA an
11 alternatives analysis was conducted, and it included a
12 no-project alternative; an Alternative B, which would
13 be a four-lane configuration that would not have any
14 future connection; and then the Alternative C, which
15 would be a two-lane configuration that would provide
16 for future connections. And the results of the
17 alternatives analysis concluded that in this case
18 there is no clear superior alternative, which CEQA
19 allows.

20 And so in summary, the project would not be
21 growth-inducing beyond what was anticipated and
22 planned for as part of the General Plan; the impacts
23 have been identified and disclosed in the
24 environmental report; mitigation has been introduced
25 that avoids, minimizes and/or offsets those impacts;

1 and there are no remaining unavoidable and significant
2 impacts after mitigation has been incorporated.

3 So at this time, Staff is recommending that
4 the Planning Commission accept public testimony on the
5 Draft EIR, provide any input and comments on the
6 adequacy of the environmental document and recommend
7 that Staff move forward with preparation of the final.
8 And Staff is here to answer any questions, and we have
9 also have the consultant team here this evening as
10 well.

11 CHAIRWOMAN PIERRE: Thank you. Are there
12 questions? Yes, Commissioner Marzo?

13 COMMISSIONER MARZO: I just have a couple
14 questions about, can you explain to me, for the
15 potential vegetated swales, how are they located, why
16 are they -- and I apologize for my ignorance -- but
17 why are they located on either end? Is it based on
18 slope? Is it based on the physical roadway?

Q11-1

19 MS. ERVIN: Yeah, there was a lot of thought put
20 into where those would be. There is some restriction,
21 obviously, in where the site plan is, so that
22 certainly was a driver. And maybe Curt can speak more
23 to this. But, yeah, the idea is that you are
24 capturing the rainwater that would be running off and
25 allowing that to percolate onsite, rather than just

A11-1

1 running off.

2 COMMISSIONER MARZO: So would you then -- would
3 you want it kind of closer? Would you also want
4 something closer to either end of the bridge, if we
5 are talking about runoff?

Q11-2

6 MR. BATES: Yes, the only thing I have to add, is
7 really what you said, is that it's based on the slope
8 of the roadway. Portions of the roadway drain
9 differently, so in order to treat and capture the
10 whole project, you have to have swales in certain
11 areas to capture that.

A11-2

12 COMMISSIONER MARZO: Right, because this road is
13 going to go down, this road is going to go up, this
14 road is going to come back?

Q11-3

15 MR. BATES: Yes.

A11-3

16 COMMISSIONER MARZO: Okay. Thank you.

17 CHAIRWOMAN PIERRE: Any other questions? Council
18 Member Miller?

19 COMMISSIONER MILLER: So I have some questions
20 about the hydrology on the water quality slide and
21 also about the floodplain issue. A lot of times what
22 we hear from people who don't want to see this built
23 is that it's in a floodplain. And so I guess I just
24 want to educate myself and the public about what we do
25 to make that not be a problem so that I can say, with

1 some conviction, that it's not a problem because we do
2 this, this and this. And for me to be able to say
3 that, I need to be able to understand what I am
4 saying.

5 So I guess I just want to talk a little bit
6 and get a little more information on the floodplain
7 issue. A few minutes ago, when you were talking, you
8 referenced a "high-water mark," and I am not sure I
9 see where that is on -- is that on here somewhere?

Q11-4

10 MS. ERVIN: It is, the green line is what is
11 referred to as the ordinary high-water mark, and that
12 is what the Army Corps of Engineers regulates.

A11-4

13 COMMISSIONER MILLER: And then what is "permanent
14 outfall erosion protection" mean? And I also
15 apologize for my ignorance, but I am sure I am not the
16 only one who doesn't know what that means, so that
17 makes me feel a little better about it.

Q11-5

18 MR. BATES: All that means is where there are
19 outfalls into the river, other storm drain pipes or
20 other channels coming into the river, there is some
21 sort of protection that is put down in place, like
22 rock or some sort of material that holds the soil in
23 place so you don't have erosion.

A11-5

24 COMMISSIONER MILLER: Okay. All right. So that
25 explains that. And then with the floodplain, like

1 Commissioner Marzo said, you know, you have got it at
2 grade, and you are going to have it go down a little
3 bit, and then it going to go onto a bridge, and then
4 it's going to come back down and hit grade again, so,
5 obviously looking at the map, the portion of it that
6 is the most subject to the flooding is presumably also
7 the portion of it that's elevated going over -- going
8 over the river and over the railroad tracks right; is
9 that right? I mean, that is what it looks like to me.

Q11-6

10 MR. BATES: That is correct. That's this section
11 here (indicating). Much of this is elevated. There
12 are some bridge abutments, so there would be some wall
13 work in here that will impact that flood area
14 slightly. And where -- as Olivia was discussing
15 earlier, there's a mitigation for the City requirement
16 called "zero-net fill."

A11-6

17 So anything that is impacted by these
18 abutments in here needs to be mitigated, likely a
19 nearby area, probably upstream, through flood
20 terracing or some other work, to accommodate what we
21 call zero-net fill, so there is no net impact.

22 And we did look at this really strongly.
23 When these abutments are installed, there is some
24 effect from river -- from water, rainflows coming down
25 and hitting that abutment and causing a very slight

1 backup. And Olivia mentioned that earlier, I think it
2 was one inch. And that one inch that we are seeing is
3 for an area about 200 feet upstream of the proposed
4 bridge area, and there is no increase in base flood
5 elevations downstream.

6 But to deal with that one-inch increase here,
7 again, we are looking at mitigations of doing some
8 sort of flood terracing work to, again, make that a
9 zero-net improvement. Does that answer the question?

10 COMMISSIONER MILLER: It does.

11 CHAIRWOMAN PIERRE: It's related, I just want
12 follow-up here. So the way I am reading the document,
13 though, is that in order to mitigate for the
14 intersection at Petaluma Boulevard and Rainier, you
15 have to build the Shasta extension, right? That's a
16 mitigation measure, is the Shasta improvements?

Q11-7

17 MR. BATES: We are talking about traffic
18 mitigations now?

19 CHAIRWOMAN PIERRE: Right. In order to mitigate
20 the traffic impact at the Boulevard, my understanding
21 is that then you have to construct the Shasta
22 extension to kind of give a second place for it to
23 come off of Rainier.

A11-7

24 COMMISSIONER MILLER: I thought that Shasta was a
25 different alternative. I thought that having the

1 connectors was part of the Alternative C, with the
2 two-lane Rainier, and that the four-lane Rainier
3 didn't have those connectors.

Q11-8

4 And as just kind of as a point of
5 clarification, is Shasta Avenue the one with the
6 little party planning --

7 CHAIRWOMAN PIERRE: Yes.

8 COMMISSIONER MILLER: Okay. Because I was trying
9 kind of reading that and I just was not sure --

10 CHAIRWOMAN PIERRE: I don't normally drive
11 Cherry, but I go to the park.

12 COMMISSIONER MILLER: I've been there. I just
13 wasn't sure what the name of the street was.

14 MS. HINES: Just to clarify, correct me if I am
15 wrong, but the City has identified a number of places
16 for future connections to Rainier, so the design of
17 this Crosstown Connector, it does not include those
18 connections at this time, but it is being designed to
19 not preclude those. It's a different design if you
20 are going to make those connections, so the project
21 has been designed to have those additional connections
22 sometime in the future. Oftentimes that's around
23 development happening, some of those connections might
24 be made.

A11-8

25 One of the alternatives, when we were trying

1 to think of alternatives to look at, one of the
2 alternatives were how much does the design change if
3 you don't have those future connections, if the bridge
4 gets lighter, thinner, are we able to avoid some of
5 the impacts, especially around the river.

6 So it was one of alternatives we looked at.
7 It then creates it's own impacts, particularly with
8 traffic. So it might be that we can lessen some of
9 the biological-hydro impacts by having a different
10 design of the bridge, but then you are not addressing
11 some of the traffic impacts. So the project as
12 designed doesn't preclude future connections, but it
13 doesn't include those connections, and I will let
14 Olivia --

15 CHAIRWOMAN PIERRE: The Mitigation Measure
16 Cumulative Trans One, says the extension would have an
17 impact around Petaluma Boulevard and basically that
18 you would need to build the Shasta extension to
19 mitigate that cumulative impact or to reconfigure the
20 Rainier at Petaluma Boulevard North. So the way I am
21 reading is this is that to mitigate the cumulative
22 impact at Petaluma Boulevard, you would need -- I am
23 on Page 2-30 in the summary table -- so just talking
24 here, there is kind of like this line, I guess,
25 between what is speculative and what is part of the

1 project and whatnot.

2 I just want to clarify that as proposed it
3 doesn't include the extension, but it's assumed to be
4 part of General Plan build out, it's assumed to be
5 part of the picture we are looking at. So it -- and
6 it's required in order to mitigate a cumulative
7 impact, which then is more construction in the
8 floodplain. So I just wanted to make sure I am
9 following that kind of chain of logic through this
10 EIR.

Q11-9

11 MS. ERVIN: The General Plan does show the
12 proposed Shasta, so that is right here (indicating).
13 That is this connection. So under cumulatives
14 condition, it is assumed that Shasta would be in
15 place. So it's part of the General Plan. It's not a
16 mitigation. But what this analysis says is that if
17 that Shasta were not to be developed, it would
18 basically be very similar to what happens under the
19 2020 operational year because you are not at buildout
20 yet, Shasta doesn't exist, and under that situation
21 without the Shasta, you end up having all of the
22 traffic concentrated at Petaluma and -- at Petaluma
23 Boulevard and Rainier, and that requires an additional
24 turning lane, so.

A11-9

25 COMMISSIONER BENEDETTI-PETRIC: Completely

1 dependant on the timing of the Shasta extension.

2 COMMISSIONER MARZO: May I ask a couple
3 questions.

4 CHAIRWOMAN PIERRE: Yes, I didn't mean to
5 interrupt.

6 COMMISSIONER MARZO: As we go through this, it
7 certainly adds some questions. A quick question on
8 the erosion. The erosion protection, who is in charge
9 of maintaining that; is that the City?

Q11-10

10 MR. BATES: It depends who owns the channel. We
11 talked about Corona Road Subdivision a while back, and
12 sometimes the City owns a pipe or a channel --

13 COMMISSIONER MARZO: That's why I asked.

14 MR. BATES: -- the Sonoma County Water Agency, so
15 it depends on what entity owns it.

16 COMMISSIONER MARZO: When is that decided?

17 MR. BATES: Well, we would look at that through
18 the design process.

19 COMMISSIONER MARZO: As part of the design
20 process. Okay.

21 MR. BATES: Yeah, look at which pipes are owned
22 by who and make sure that whatever is built there is
23 built to that agency's standard -- and, I mean, ours
24 of course was -- other agency, and once those
25 improvements are done and accepted by the agency, we

A11-10

1 become responsible for maintaining them.

2 COMMISSIONER MARZO: Got it. Thank you.

3 COMMISSIONER BENEDETTI-PETRIC: May I ask a quick
4 question?

5 CHAIRWOMAN PIERRE: Yes.

6 COMMISSIONER BENEDETTI-PETRIC: I just want to
7 comment on a different vein. Can you remind me --
8 and I probably read it, but I can't remember -- what
9 is the timing, anticipated timing at this point of the
10 SMART bridge work and of the Caltrans 101 phase?

Q11-11

11 MR. BATES: The SMART is expected to commence
12 operations in 2016. SMART has already done work on
13 the Cinnabar bridge, in that area. So is there a
14 specific segment of the SMART track that you are
15 referring to, or just in general what is their timing?

A11-11

16 COMMISSIONER BENEDETTI-PETRIC: Yes.

17 MR. BATES: Yeah, so I think 2016 is probably the
18 best answer. That's when they are expecting to start
19 service.

20 COMMISSIONER BENEDETTI-PETRIC: And what about
21 the Caltrans work?

Q11-12

22 MR. BATES: The Caltrans work for 101, we had
23 that same question to see what the latest schedule
24 was, of SETA and Caltrans, and we are being told that
25 that work is anticipated to occur Fiscal Year '18-'19

A11-12

1 at the latest.

2 COMMISSIONER MILLER: As just a point of
3 information to add to that, I'm the alternate to the
4 SETA for the City Council, and they are looking for
5 money to get that done, so basically they do not have
6 money right now to give.

7 COMMISSIONER BENEDETTI-PETRIC: So they don't
8 have money.

9 MR. BATES: There is a \$90 million shortfall at
10 this point.

11 COMMISSIONER MILLER: Yeah. So, and I know that
12 they are working really hard to get that done, but
13 Petaluma really kind of got the short end of the stick
14 on that.

15 MS. HINES: And if I can add a little bit to that
16 too, part of the importance of this environmental
17 document is that in order -- when Caltrans is ready to
18 go, for them to include that undercarriage piece of
19 it, it was that Petaluma would have the environmental
20 done on the roadway.

21 So that is a big part of it, is when they
22 find the money to do that, we need to make sure that
23 the City is ready to go and that there is not a holdup
24 on our end. And that is one of the reasons, even
25 though all the funding isn't in place right now, that

1 is why this environmental document is before you.
2 CHAIRWOMAN PIERRE: But oftentimes the funding
3 becomes available because you have gone through CEQA
4 as well, so --
5 MS. HINES: Right.
6 MR. BATES: We call that a shelf-ready project.
7 CHAIRWOMAN PIERRE: Shovel ready?
8 MR. BATES: Shelf or shovel ready.
9 COMMISSIONER MILLER: It sits on the shelf until
10 the shovel is ready.
11 COMMISSIONER MARZO: Just for clarification, what
12 is not included and is not in future consideration is
13 the actual 101 interchange because Caltrans is too
14 close to the Washington Street interchanges, correct?
15 MS. ERVIN: It's not proposed at this time as
16 part of this document.
17 COMMISSIONER MARZO: Right.
18 MR. BATES: Just as a note, the interchange is
19 still noted in the City's General Plan and the traffic
20 mitigation fee program, so it's a separate project
21 that we will be looking at separately as we go into
22 the future, the City is collecting impact fees from
23 development projects to put into the traffic
24 mitigation fund for that project and other projects.
25 So, yes --

Q11-13

A11-13

1 COMMISSIONER MARZO: One step at a time.
2 MR. BATES: -- it's separate project, but I just
3 want to make that sure --
4 COMMISSIONER MARZO: Sure.
5 MR. BATES: -- it is something the City will be
6 anticipating or be looking into at some point.
7 COMMISSIONER MARZO: Thank you.
8 CHAIRWOMAN PIERRE: We kind of hijacked Counsel
9 Member Miller's floodplain and water quality and
10 hydrology comments and questions, so I want to go back
11 to you if there is anything else. Sorry about that.
12 COMMISSIONER MILLER: That's okay. So I think
13 that that -- you know, there was something in here,
14 and I thought I marked it, but maybe I didn't, and I
15 don't think I imagined it -- that talked about
16 dredging the river and how it was dredged every eight
17 years or something. Was that in here somewhere or am
18 I thinking of something else that I looked at?
19 CHAIRWOMAN PIERRE: I don't remember that.
20 MS. ERVIN: That was maybe for riverfront more?
21 COMMISSIONER MILLER: No, no.
22 MS. ERVIN: Because I don't think they would be
23 dredging at this lotion.
24 COMMISSIONER MILLER: No, I don't know. Okay.
25 MR. BATES: Dredging would occur downstream at

Q11-14

A11-14

1 the turning basin.

2 COMMISSIONER MILLER: Right. Yeah, with Army
3 Corps of Engineers, right. It was something -- there
4 was something about that somewhere that I read, maybe
5 it was something else that I read today. Too much to
6 digest along with everything else. So we -- there are
7 definitely going to be measures in place that we are
8 not going to have, you know, the bridge washed out and
9 things like that because that's what you hear from
10 people, it's in the floodplain, it's never going to
11 work and it's, you know -- and I just want to be clear
12 that that's not something that we need to worry about
13 too much because it's going to be taken care in the
14 design of it?

Q11-15

15 MR. BATES: Yes, that's correct. There are
16 standard measures for bridge abutment protection to
17 prevent scouring, to prevent erosion, washouts, and
18 that will be included as part of the design project
19 here.

A11-15

20 COMMISSIONER MILLER: All right. Thank you.

21 CHAIRWOMAN PIERRE: Questions, Commissioner
22 Marzo?

23 COMMISSIONER MARZO: No further questions, Chair
24 Pierre.

25 COMMISSIONER BENEDETTI-PETRIC: I have one more

1 follow-up actually. So while I have lived here for
2 the better part of my life, I still feel a little
3 unclear on the big picture and the money trail, which
4 usually lends me greater understanding. Thanks. And
5 you mentioned a \$90 million shortfall. What is the
6 extent of the project -- well, a couple of questions.
7 Is the shortfall referring to A to B, including the
8 SETA money and Caltrans? Is it the whole Maryann
9 (phonetic) that is \$90 million short? Or is it our
10 piece that's \$90 million short?

11 MR. BATES: No, just to be clear -- and thank you
12 -- the \$90 million shortfall is for US 101 widening
13 only. It's not for the Crosstown Connector project.

14 COMMISSIONER BENEDETTI-PETRIC: So that's
15 Caltrans.

16 MR. BATES: That's Caltrans and SETA, that from
17 the Old Redwood Highway where the third lane starts
18 all the way down to, basically the bridge.

19 COMMISSIONER BENEDETTI-PETRIC: Okay. Next
20 question related to that. Thank you. So how much
21 does the City have in coffers right now, from all
22 the myriad fees that we seem to manage to collect from
23 our developers, set aside for this connector; does
24 anyone know?

25 MR. BATES: Well, I am not sure we are prepared

1 to answer that specific question right now, but I can
2 tell you that the City is committed to funding the
3 undercrossing portion of Rainier when Caltrans
4 eventually does their work, presumably in '18-'19 is
5 what we are being told, fiscal year '18-'19. That
6 amount is estimated to be around \$7 million for
7 construction, and about \$8-and-a-half million when you
8 in addition total project costs, including design,
9 environmental --

10 COMMISSIONER BENEDETTI-PETRIC: Construction
11 costs?

12 MR. BATES: Yes, correct. The rest of the
13 project certainly has more cost to it, and that is
14 something that we are in the process of collecting
15 traffic mitigation fees for.

16 COMMISSIONER BENEDETTI-PETRIC: And identifying
17 other --

18 MR. BATES: There is a shortfall at this point,
19 but that's something we would be working on going
20 forward.

21 MS. HINES: Can I add to that too? A couple of
22 things, the way the traffic impact fee works when
23 traffic impact fees are taken in, they are not put in
24 a specific pot for this improvement, you know, for
25 Rainier or for the southern crossing. It's kind of

1 one big pot. And then as priorities come up, it's
2 doled out. I think most recently we have been working
3 on Old Red, correct, so that's been the priority, and
4 that's been wrapping up or will be at some point.

5 The other thing that's been happening with
6 this, for instance, as part of the Deer Creek Village,
7 Merlin Guyer (phonetic) has, or is in the process --
8 or I am not sure where exactly it is -- but he
9 dedicated the needed right-of-way for Rainier along
10 that side. So as development projects come in for
11 those kind of things, we have been able to secure some
12 of that, which in turn facilitates that future
13 development of the roadway.

14 COMMISSIONER MILLER: And just one more thing to
15 add, that's also the Rainier -- funding Rainier is a
16 bit motivator behind the sales tax measure that is
17 going to be on the ballot in November. That's kind of
18 way that we are wanting to fund that shortfall and get
19 that built and get the traffic relief that people
20 want. Oh, and by the way, in my defense about the
21 whole dredging the river thing, it was on the other
22 project that we heard tonight, and it was in the
23 environmental checklist and initial study, so I am not
24 crazy and I just want that out there.

25 COMMISSIONER BENEDETTI-PETRIC: No one thought

1 you were.

2 COMMISSIONER MILLER: I just want to make sure.

3 COMMISSIONER BENEDETTI-PETRIC: I don't think I
4 have anymore questions on the mitigations or the
5 findings or the recommendations here, so I am good.

6 CHAIRWOMAN PIERRE: Okay. I have some questions
7 but they kind of go with my comments, so I think we
8 will take public comment now. I have one comment
9 card, if there are any others that like to comment,
10 please fill out a card, otherwise Dave Libchitz is
11 first, did I get that right?

12 ---o0o---

13 PUBLIC COMMENT

14 ---o0o---

15 MR. LIBCHITZ: Good evening. My name is Dave
16 Libchitz. I live on Wilson Street here in Petaluma.
17 Any of you who know me -- I don't think you do -- but
18 you should know to be scared if I don't have a script.

19 Are any of you concerned about a project this
20 big that is zoned as a dashed line across an aerial
21 photo? If you are not, you should be. I am going to
22 give you some history. The first time I ever heard
23 about Rainier was as crosstown connector was in the
24 late '80's, early '90s. There was a lot of public
25 outrage over it because people couldn't understand

1 why. It would make no sense. There was actually an
2 investigation. It turned out an investment group had
3 purchased a basically worthless piece of property in
4 the floodplain, this close to the freeway, landlocked.

5 Now, think about it: What is the easiest way
6 to simply increase the value of a piece of landlocked
7 piece of property? Get a road to it. So that's when
8 Rainier was first announced to the public, as road
9 access to this landlocked property to artificially
10 inflate the value. Now the kicker is the investment
11 group turned out to include -- I hate to use -- Mayor
12 Patty Hilligaus, and it was also included in the City
13 -- I can't remember if it was the City Manager or the
14 Assistant City Manager at the time -- and high-ranking
15 members of the police and fire department, including
16 one of the chiefs.

17 They were forced to sell their stake in this
18 property due to conflict of interest laws, yet Rainier
19 stayed on the books. For decades Rainier was -- the
20 Rainier Crosstown Connector was used for traffic
21 mitigation for scores of developments along East
22 Washington, North and South McDowell, leading to the
23 traffic problems that we have right now.

24 So let's see. Okay, going to my notes. And
25 everybody was told for decades "Rainier is going to

1 fix downtown traffic, Rainier is going to fix downtown
2 traffic," yet the EIR states that one of the main
3 purposes is to provide access to parcels designated
4 for development in the General Plan.

5 First of all, they are not designated for
6 development, they are allowed for development. So has
7 the public been lied to all these years? As such, the
8 traffic component of the EIR must include traffic from
9 the major developments along the west side of the
10 freeway.

Q11-17

11 And in case you don't know, that includes a
12 high-density apartment complex in the previously
13 mentioned landlocked property and two, count two,
14 shopping centers. You have no idea if these projects
15 will generate enough traffic to saturate Rainier to
16 the point that not only will no traffic improvement be
17 felt downtown, but will make it worse. You have no
18 idea.

19 Calling Alternative A "non-environmentally
20 superior," is an insult. For the question from you,
21 young lady, there will never ever be any State or
22 Federal money for this. It's a local project. It
23 starts and stops inside of Petaluma City limits. We
24 have to, Petaluma has to pay for it if it's to be
25 built.

1 The real purpose, I believe, is to once again
2 inflate the value of some worthless floodplain
3 properties: The two shopping properties, the
4 landlocked property. You tell them you've got an EIR,
5 you tell them you've got -- they already have zone
6 improvements from -- these properties should be zoned
7 floodplain, no build. And now they've got a shopping
8 center, they've got an apartment complex. These
9 properties are worth money. You can't build on them.
10 They are not buildable really.

11 The map that shows the 100-year floodplain
12 that you showed should be large enough to show these
13 major parcels designated for development west of the
14 freeway that Rainier would serve and show all those
15 properties that are in the floodplain, and you see
16 there, they are all there.

17 Rainier is it's a fairytale. Rainier
18 Crosstown Connector is a fairytale. It was invented
19 just to increase the value of those properties. I
20 don't think it ever really was meant to be built.
21 It's silly and it's crazy. And if any of you want to
22 talk to me off line about this, can you raise your
23 hand, and I will drop off my e-mail address. I don't
24 want to broadcast it out. I apologize. Thank you
25 very much for your time.

1 Again, be concerned about this, please.

2 Thank you.

3 CHAIRWOMAN PIERRE: Thank you. Are there any
4 other comments?

5 (No response.)

6 CHAIRWOMAN PIERRE: Okay. Seeing none, we will
7 close the public comment period and begin our
8 discussions. I will start with Ms. Benedetti-Petric
9 at this time.

10 COMMISSIONER BENEDETTI-PETRIC: Yes, that's okay.
11 I am always very concerned and take very seriously
12 every project that comes in front of this Commission,
13 and certainly this one. This project has indeed been
14 ebbing and flowing through the veins of this town for
15 a long time, trying to become a reality through
16 different political climates and through different
17 realities.

18 And while I acknowledge that there may well
19 have been some serious missteps and motivations in the
20 past, I have a lot of confidence in the consultant
21 team and the work that I am looking at in front of me.
22 I am an engineer by profession, and I am fairly
23 rational and logical, and I appreciate the work that
24 goes into and the work that has gone into this
25 particular draft EIR.

1 And I think that -- I think that there is
2 some great benefit to come out of this project, and I
3 would very much like to make sure it isn't a fairytale
4 and that it does serve the needs of the whole
5 community for the better in a lot of ways. So that's
6 my response to our public comment.

7 I am going to stand down on any comments
8 right now on any detail in the mitigation measures. I
9 found the report, and I don't have perhaps as critical
10 an eye as Commissioner Pierre, but I found the report
11 very thorough, and I thought the items were
12 sufficiently addressed to warrant taking this to the
13 next level, and that is worth recommending to Council
14 that we continue with a final EIR and try to get this
15 project moving. So I will stop my comment there.

16 CHAIRWOMAN PIERRE: Okay. Commissioner Marzo?

17 COMMISSIONER MARZO: Thank you very much. In
18 going through the mitigation measures, some were
19 addressed already by Commissioner Miller, and I was
20 happy to see about the archeological data recovery
21 program as well, because the little education that we
22 got with the Cedar Grove area, I think there is --
23 could be some potentially very interesting findings
24 once construction digging begins around there.

25 This obviously -- the history as everyone --

1 it's documented -- it's it flows through the veins of
2 people in this City. I respect all the opinions. I
3 also -- I originally am not from here. I am from the
4 Midwest, and while I am not an engineer or a planner,
5 just trying to get across town on any given afternoon,
6 constantly reminds me that we need some assistance in
7 getting across this town.

8 And so regardless of, you know, past
9 political climates and practices, I think that this
10 project has been looked at, it's been vetted, it will
11 continue to be vetted and looked at with a critical
12 eye, I found the report to be very thorough at this
13 point, and I would recommend that the staff move
14 forward with the preparation for the final EIR. Thank
15 you.

16 CHAIRWOMAN PIERRE: Thank you. Counsel Member
17 Miller?

18 COMMISSIONER MILLER: Yes, I also don't have the
19 technical expertise on environmental impact reports,
20 but to my untrained eye, it looked pretty thorough,
21 and I think it adequately addresses the impacts and
22 the mitigation measures and how we move forward with
23 that. From the perspective of somebody like
24 Commission Marzo, and like everybody up here who
25 regularly tries to get across town, I think this is a

1 very important project for us to get done.

2 You know, we have the majority of people in
3 town who are in favor of getting this built. It will
4 provide -- I believe it will provide traffic relief.
5 You know, I would love to see this one get built. I
6 would love to see the Caulfield South one get built
7 too. You know, we just can't have only three ways to
8 get from east to west. It just doesn't -- it doesn't
9 work.

10 And we don't want to have two separate towns,
11 you know, the east side of town and the west side of
12 town. We want people to be able to go back and forth
13 freely and enjoy all the amenities that both sides of
14 town have to offer. So regardless of the political
15 history of it or, you know, what went on with it in
16 the '80's, it's something that I think the majority of
17 people in town want, the majority of the Council is
18 committed to getting it done, and I think it's very
19 important that, as Mr. Bates said, we have a -- we are
20 ready to go when Caltrans is ready to go so that we
21 can get this done.

22 So those are my comments and, you know, I
23 think I concur with the Staff recommendation that we
24 move it forward to the City Council for consideration
25 of the Draft Environmental Impact Report and begin

1 working on the final EIR.

2 CHAIRWOMAN PIERRE: Okay. Thank you. I don't
3 actually agree with anything that's been said, except
4 for the fact there is a big problem with the
5 circulation in this town. I think we've been looking.
6 We need a mitigation measure. We've been looking at
7 this project. I opened up this EIR, and I was so
8 excited how good it's going to be, and in fact, what I
9 found is there is really hardly any improvement, and I
10 looked back at -- I am looking at Table 4.12-10, and
11 we have three columns: We have existing, no project
12 and with project. And what analysis has done is
13 compared the project to a future condition without the
14 project, instead of to the existing condition.

15 So what we are seeing is actually at Old
16 Redwood Highway in the morning, at the Boulevard at
17 Corona, McDowell at Rainier, the Boulevard at
18 Magnolia, and East Washington Street at Ellis, and
19 southbound onramps would all be worse with this
20 project in the future compared to today.

21 So I get that there is a lot of ways to slice
22 this one up and to look at different comparisons, and
23 we can assume vehicle miles traveled, and we can
24 assume various other projects are in place or whatever
25 in the kind of future no-project, but when we look

1 across this table and you see changes, not in level of
2 services, that's how normally impacts get translated
3 into these letters numbers, which is actually being
4 slated to be removed from the standard of how we look
5 at this, but when you look at the delay of these
6 streets, you see that we are actually increasing
7 delays probably 20, maybe 25 to 50 percent of it
8 instances that aren't on this table.

9 So that's not being captured in the impact
10 assessment because we are actually comparing
11 no-project to with-project, instead of the project to
12 existing. And CEQA guidelines are very clear that you
13 have compare to existing conditions, and that is not
14 what was done in the traffic analysis. And I think
15 that's a really big problem right now. It turns out
16 that when you do that, you don't create a new quote,
17 unquote, "CEQA significant impact," except for in one
18 area that I found.

Q11-18

19 But I think that the disclosure to the public
20 about what we are going to be asked to pay for and
21 support as an infrastructure project, we need to be
22 really clear that there is actually increases in
23 delays from this project. And part of is because
24 obviously if you put a new intersection on the
25 Boulevard or McDowell, you are going to have more

1 traffic at those intersections.

2 But this project is not actually as promising
3 as I was hoping. And this is not political. I have
4 two kids, I am back and forth all the time, back and
5 forth, so there is a huge need, but this analysis is
6 not really capturing, to me, what the real tradeoffs
7 are, and I think we need to capture that.

8 The other big issue for me is the air quality
9 analysis, specifically that the construction impacts
10 are amortized over the 30-year life of the project,
11 which makes no sense because if construction is only
12 occurring for three or five or however many years,
13 that's the number of years the air quality impacts
14 should be divided over.

Q11-19

15 And kind related to that, is that in the
16 biology section, we say okay, we have to avoid the
17 nesting birds, and we have to avoid the fish, so that
18 actually limits, or it changes the distribution of
19 when your construction is happening. But in our
20 impact assessment for air and for traffic
21 construction, we just assume an even split with 8,000
22 truck trips, 8,000 truck trips over the construction
23 period. They don't -- they should be -- we need to
24 have -- I guess my comment on the project description
25 is a better defined construction schedule, so we can

1 say, okay, how are different construction activities
2 being lumped, and how does that translate to local
3 traffic impacts for construction, and how does it
4 translate to air quality impacts. I don't know if
5 that makes sense.

Q11-20

6 So that's a big deal, it's a 30-month
7 construction period with, you know, five months out of
8 the year you can't really be building that bridge, so
9 it has to be redistributed and reanalyzed. I still
10 think that when you look through the analysis, the
11 project is assuming the Shasta Avenue extension is in
12 place because it's assuming the no-project, and the
13 no-project has Shasta in it, and the analysis is
14 comparing the no-project to with-project.

Q11-21

15 MS. ERVIN: Not here though, only under the
16 cumulative.

A11-21

17 CHAIRWOMAN PIERRE: Okay. I can check again.
18 You can respond to the comment, but that is the way I
19 read it, and I will go back and check.

20 The first project objective is kind of --
21 getting back to this -- is relieving traffic
22 congestion on the local street network, but as I am
23 pointing out, I don't think we are doing that. So
24 level of service, I get that, that's a standard
25 comparison, but the delays are increasing, we are

Q11-22

1 having increased delays at all these intersections --
2 Washington and Ellis, Washington and 101, Corona -- I
3 mean, that is not what this project is expected to do
4 for this community.

5 I wanted to thank you for providing the
6 visual simulations, it was really helpful. I am
7 assuming this is a tight City budget, but I appreciate
8 you taking the time to show us what that looks like.
9 I think that's an important piece we can set aside
10 with this. I continue to encourage the City to be
11 doing onsite mitigation, especially on these small
12 wetland impacts. They are small enough that they
13 should be manageable within our own wetland and our
14 own river system.

15 I had a question about why we are assuming
16 such a drastic drop in greenhouse gas emissions
17 between now and 2020 without project. That actually
18 appears to be how we are mitigating our greenhouse gas
19 emissions because we are assuming this pretty
20 substantial drop. It says that between now, 2014, and
21 2020 there is a drop in greenhouse gas emissions from
22 about 53,000 to 46,000 metric tons. And I don't know
23 -- I didn't find -- I think it's based on, like, some
24 Bay Area Air Quality Management District assumption,
25 but I don't know if there is anymore information about

Q11-23

1 that.

2 MS. ERVIN: I can definitely look into that as
3 part of this process.

4 CHAIRWOMAN PIERRE: Okay. Okay. I am a little
5 bit nervous about the postponement of the hydraulic
6 analysis. I felt better when Mr. Bates explained what
7 was going on with the one-inch -- I didn't go look at
8 the indices, so I don't think I saw there was just a
9 one-inch change. But my concern is that if you find
10 that you can't mitigate that in bridge design or
11 abutment design, and then now you've got to do some
12 sort of terracing on the river, you have to mitigate
13 the impacts of doing that mitigation. CEQA makes you
14 follow those impacts. So there could be significant
15 impacts associated with that activity, which we need
16 to account for, so I don't know if there is a way to
17 kind of be more conservative or whatever about river
18 impacts, or maybe you feel really comfortable with the
19 qualitative analysis, but it's just something I think
20 is a potential vulnerability.

Q11-24

21 Again, just using this opening year analysis
22 and this no-project as a baseline, I mean it is
23 assuming, I mean it's basically a miniature cumulative
24 effects analysis because it's saying we are assuming
25 in the no-project, X, Y and Z are going to also be

1 happening, and we are adding our project on that. And
2 some of the things we are assuming in the no-project
3 are actually mitigating the project's impacts.

4 I also just wanted to point out for the
5 record that the northbound ramps from East Washington
6 in the afternoon goes from Level of Service B to C.
7 So that's not just a delay, it's an actual shift in
8 the level of service at that intersection. So that is
9 going northbound, which means -- and I don't know if
10 this is from the west or the east -- but either way,
11 that's a problem: At the p.m., backing up anything
12 getting onto Washington in either direction, that's
13 not mitigation to me.

14 COMMISSIONER BENEDETTI-PETRIC: Which one are you
15 looking at, Jennifer?

16 CHAIRWOMAN PIERRE: Well, I'm just looking at my
17 notes.

18 COMMISSIONER BENEDETTI-PETRIC: Which
19 intersection?

20 CHAIRWOMAN PIERRE: This is East Washington,
21 Northbound 101 ramps.

22 COMMISSIONER BENEDETTI-PETRIC: So it's 12 on the
23 table.

24 CHAIRWOMAN PIERRE: See how in the p.m., in the
25 existing conditions, the delay is 17; and under future

Q11-25

1 conditions it's 24. And it goes from a Level of
2 Service B to a Level of Service C. And the City
3 doesn't consider that significant because they
4 consider A, B, C and D as all kind of okay, but I
5 don't -- I just think when we're talking -- you know,
6 it's one thing when we're are talking about, hey, we
7 are going to build a shopping center and what are the
8 impacts on the circulation, but it's another thing
9 when we are talking about a traffic project to
10 mitigate for traffic.

11 COMMISSIONER BENEDETTI-PETRIC: But it's
12 mitigating for traffic in the worst intersection, and
13 the highest traffic -- the highest volume
14 intersection, many of them.

15 CHAIRWOMAN PIERRE: I don't know if I agree with
16 that. If you look across between existing and delay,
17 I think you would see that we have maintained that, or
18 there is some very minor decrease in delay. So I
19 mean, again, looking across from -- I skip over
20 "no-project" because to me that's actually a bogus
21 baseline, I mean it's bogus to me under CEQA, but it's
22 almost irrelevant. I mean, it's a good place to look
23 and say well, if nothing happens, what does this look
24 like? But that's not really -- CEQA says: When you
25 file your NLP, this is what we -- take a snapshot,

1 this is traffic you are experiencing this evening, how
2 will it be with the project? Not, Well, it's this
3 evening, but then we are doing some things that
4 reduces traffic, and then we are going to add our
5 project on that and now what's it look like.

6 So like on Old Redwood, we go from 31 to 30,
7 you know, so p.m., that's a nice mitigation. There
8 are some benefits. I'm saying I think the tradeoffs
9 of the project are not very well articulated because
10 of the baseline issue and using the LOS, which the LOS
11 is a standard approach, so I'm not saying it's not the
12 right approach, I am just saying it is masking some of
13 the tradeoffs that I think we should be considering as
14 a community.

Q11-26

15 And then also at East Washington and Ellis,
16 so basically right at Target, it goes from, in the
17 p.m., from A to C level of service, and that is No.
18 14.

Q11-27

19 COMMISSIONER BENEDETTI-PETRIC: Um-hum
20 (affirmative).

21 CHAIRWOMAN PIERRE: Oh, one of the circulation
22 concerns I have was that for -- you looked at -- so I
23 guess if busses are coming eastbound on Rainier and
24 they want to access the bus facility, so one of the
25 mitigations is to build an elongated left turn and bus

Q11-28

1 only left turn, and that's the way I am reading it.
2 It's under Impact Trans 7. It says it would be
3 mitigated by including a driveway from eastbound
4 Rainier to the facility.

5 MS. ERVIN: My understanding is that it would
6 relocate the driver farther from the intersection and
7 it would include a separate left turn. There would be
8 break to provide the buses to turn in, which is maybe
9 what you are talking about, because that would be a
10 left turn into there.

11 CHAIRWOMAN PIERRE: Right. So it says, "To
12 insure sufficient access for transit vehicles is
13 provided into the operations facility, the City shall
14 provide a driveway into the site from Rainier Avenue.
15 This driveway shall be moved from its existing
16 location to the far west side of the site to maximize
17 the distance from the intersection of Rainier and
18 McDowell, and that the project will provide a break in
19 the median, extend the turn pocket so that transit
20 vehicles can turn left from eastbound Rainier into the
21 facility, and that the break will be marked with a
22 no-left turn except buses sign."

23 That all makes sense, except for that if you
24 look at the fact that traffic on both sides of Rainier
25 now are much worse than they are today. I am

A11-28

1 concerned about is there a backup? I mean, because
2 you are using the same left-turn pocket, so I don't
3 translate traffic models very well. I am just
4 thinking if you are driving eastbound on Rainier, and
5 you want to go left on McDowell, and you have two or
6 even one bus trying to make a left turn, it has a
7 potential to really block traffic up to the west, I
8 think.

9 I just think that is kind of an easy thing to
10 write, but does it really make sense for how we want
11 to this to circulate. I also want to point out that
12 the intersection of Rainier and Petaluma Boulevard
13 North would operate at Level of Service D in the peak
14 p.m.; D, second to last worst.

Q11-29

15 Yeah, I thought that -- so Alternative B is
16 the alternative that has none of the collector
17 streets, right, attached to it? Is that what it is?
18 That's how I have cryptic comments to myself. Sorry.

Q11-30

19 COMMISSIONER BENEDETTI-PETRIC: "Four lane
20 roadway, no future connections."

A11-30

21 CHAIRWOMAN PIERRE: Right. So the main issue
22 with this is that it would not allow for access to
23 parcels designated for future development of
24 residential land uses. I think that's another really
25 big policy consideration, so I don't know that that's

1 the Commission's at this point, but that's something I
2 want to point for the Council, that you know, there is
3 the possibility of actually, under Alternative B, of
4 constructing a connector if we decide that these delay
5 tradeoffs are worth it, that would insure that there
6 is no residential construction in the floodplain, and
7 I think that is probably what you hear more about is
8 -- people probably don't articulate very well -- it's
9 all floodplain.

10 COMMISSIONER MILLER: It's all floodplain.

11 CHAIRWOMAN PIERRE: I think, at least from my
12 read of this, is that it's not issue of the abutments
13 or the bridge, you know, those are kind of one-inch,
14 200 feet, easily mitigated. It's really that you have
15 a connection into these collector streets, and
16 Alternative B appears to just remove that component of
17 the project. And I don't see that it actually does
18 anything worse for traffic because they are not really
19 doing anything that great for traffic in the proposed
20 project.

21 So I think I would like to see a better
22 assessment of how Alternative B would perform. And I
23 get that the EIR says, you know, this would prohibit
24 the City from meeting or make it more difficult for
25 the City to meet its regional housing needs, but it's

Q11-31

1 the floodplain. I mean, I know it's a General Plan
2 issue, but I think that really needs to be part of
3 this conversation.

4 And I think we also need to articulate
5 specifically which residential land uses would be
6 prohibited. So how many units is that? What kind of
7 units are they? You know, what does that look like?
8 Or maybe the Zone A-1 or whatever, I think we just
9 need to have a better sense of what that tradeoff is,
10 if we are not going to have that development.

11 So that's actually the end of my comments. I
12 personally still think we can move towards the final.
13 I don't think there is anything we can't do. Like I
14 said, I don't think the level of service changes, but
15 I think that the public deserves, especially with the
16 sales tax on the ballot for this we deserve to have
17 very articulate information about traffic circulation,
18 that people can really see what this means, and I
19 think it would be really useful to have a CEQA level
20 of service, you know, existing project, and then some
21 sort of layperson narrative. And maybe that comes
22 outside the EIR, you know, so that it's not part of
23 your CEQA record or whatever, but just something where
24 people can say, okay, I can understand.

25 I mean, this is my job, and I don't

Q11-32

1 understand. I just don't. And it's not because it's
2 poorly written, it's just really complicated.
3 Especially when you are looking at this entire City's
4 road network. So if there is a way to kind of narrate
5 the story, I think that would be really helpful for
6 people to be able to consider whether or not this
7 project should move forward.

8 But I personally am not trying to say don't
9 move forward with the final. I just like to get my
10 comments on the record. So thank you.

11 MS. ELVIN: So I am not going to try respond to
12 all of those comments right now. We will definitely
13 be doing that as part of the final.

14 CHAIRWOMAN PIERRE: Yes, definitely. That is
15 what I expect. And I will give it to you in writing
16 as well, but I think for the public's benefit I like
17 to say them and then I will provide them in writing as
18 well and you can copy that for the final. It's easy.

19 If there is not any other comments, then we
20 can take a motion on the resolution proposed.

21 MS. HINES: There is no resolution.

22 CHAIRWOMAN PIERRE: Oh, sorry.

23 MS. HINES: It's just comments. And so we have
24 taken comments, and when we move forward to Council,
25 we will also give them an update on some of the

1 comments that came out.

2 CHAIRWOMAN PIERRE: So the four of us just saying
3 we are comfortable moving with forward is enough for
4 this Item 3 as set forth. All right. Thank you.
5 That's the last item on our agenda. It's before 10:00
6 p.m., very exciting. We will adjourn.

7 (Whereupon, these proceedings
8 concluded at 9:35 o'clock p.m.)

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1 STATE OF CALIFORNIA)
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 2 COUNTY OF MARIN)

3 I, DANA DIBASILIO TOGNINI, a Certified
 4 Shorthand Reporter of the State of California, duly
 5 authorized to administer oaths pursuant to Section 8211
 6 of the California Code of Civil Procedure, do hereby
 7 certify that the foregoing proceedings were reported by
 8 me, a disinterested person, and were thereafter
 9 transcribed under my direction into typewriting and is
 10 a true and correct transcription of said proceedings.

11 I further certify that I am not of counsel or
 12 attorney for either or any of the parties in the
 13 foregoing deposition and caption named, nor in any way
 14 interested in the outcome of the cause named in said
 15 caption.

16 Dated the 24th day of August, 2014.

17
 18 Dana DiBasilio Tognini
 19 DANA DIBASILIO TOGNINI
 20 CSR No. 10118 (California)
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**RESPONSE TO COMMENTS MADE AT THE PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING,
AUGUST 12, 2014**

Commenters include: Dave Libchitz, Jennifer Pierre

Note: Some comments were responded to during the testimony. Where this occurred, the comment is labeled Q11-1, Q11-2, etc., and the subsequent response following the comment is labeled a corresponding A11-1, A11-2, etc. The responses to comments that follow the testimony address all remaining comments that were not adequately addressed in the testimony.

Response Q11-17: The comment is requesting that the traffic section of the DEIR should include traffic from major developments along the west side of the freeway that are included in the General Plan. The cumulative analysis does include all future traffic generated by existing and potential future development envisioned as part of the General Plan buildout. Please see Master Response 1: Cumulative Analysis.

Response Q11-18: The comment inquires about the traffic baseline used to calculate impacts. See Master Response 2 for further discussion on establishing the baseline for this study.

Response Q11-19: The comment inquires about the air quality related impacts and the amortization calculation. See response 3-7.

Response Q11-20: The comment requests a better defined construction schedule so that air and traffic impacts could be better evaluated. The DEIR sections 3 and 4.12 assume a maximum of 8,000 trucks (16,000 truck trips) over 30 months as the highest possible impact in order to determine potential impacts of the project to air and traffic resources. The DEIR also addresses peak and average conditions, such as for the evaluation of construction noise. An EIR is not required to precisely estimate the construction schedule but to use enough information in order to determine the true impact of the project on environmental resources and allow decision-makers to make an informed decision. This construction schedule represents the best available information at the time of writing the EIR and makes a good faith effort to fully disclose potential impacts associated with all aspects of construction. Also see response to comment 3-7.

Response Q11-22: The comment asks about project LOS impacts. See Master Response 3 for further discussion on Opening Year operations and Master Response 5 for further discussion on Cumulative traffic operations. It is correct that delays at intersections are increasing over time. The increase in delays are attributable to planned development identified in the General Plan and would occur regardless if the project was built or not. The proper comparison to identify the project benefits is to compare the Year 2020 With Project analysis results against the Year 2020 No Project analysis results. Similarly, comparing the Cumulative With Project analysis results against the Cumulative No Project analysis results identifies the changes in the future that would be expected with and without the project.

Response Q11-23: The comment inquires about the GHG calculation and the assumptions included in the DEIR. See response 3-7.

Response Q11-24: The comment is requesting additional clarification about how to verify impacts associated with mitigation measures in final bridge design. As noted in Section 4.7 of

the DEIR, the final bridge design would be required to comply with NPDES General Construction Permit, the City of Petaluma Grading Ordinance, the County's SUSMP, and the City's NPDES Phase II Permit. A design that does not meet these requirements would not be permitted and would not be built.

Response Q11-25: The comment inquires about LOS changes at the northbound ramps at East Washington. LOS C is considered an acceptable service level based on the policies presented in the General Plan. Project mitigation is not warranted at this location.

Response Q11-26: The commenter inquires about level of service tradeoffs. See Master Response 2 for discussion on establishing the baseline for this study. See Master Response 4 for discussion on consistency with the General Plan and weighing the benefits of pedestrian, bicycle, and transit access versus vehicle traffic to better understand the trade-offs. This study follows the guidance presented in the General Plan in evaluating all modes of travel including the use of LOS for purposes of determining vehicle operations.

Response Q11-27: The commenter inquires about project impacts at East Washington, similar to the tradeoffs question posed in Q11-26; please refer to that response.

Response Q11-29: The commenter inquires about adding a bus only lane to accommodate bus access. Please see response to comment 3-17.

Response Q11-31: The commenter is requesting that Alternative B be further considered even though it would make it more difficult for the City to meet its regional housing needs. See Response 7-35.

Response Q11-32: The commenter asks about which land uses might be prohibited with Alternative B (4-lanes with no access to parcels). No land uses would be prohibited from being developed, that do not already lack access under the No Project conditions. The project would not create any situation that a parcel does not have access to a road, that already does not have access under existing conditions. Parcels adjacent to the proposed alignment could gain new access under the proposed project (and would not under Alternative B), but beyond the immediately adjacent parcels access would depend on whether a developer created a new road that would allow connections by other parcels, and that scenario would be a speculative estimate. Section 4.8 in the DEIR describes land uses in the area and the project description identifies the locations where room is provided for turning lanes for the proposed project, but identifying parcels that would remain "land locked" in the future if the turning lanes are not provided (Alternative B) is beyond the scope of this EIR.

In the Matter of:
CITY OF PETALUMA

CROSSTOWN CONNECTOR ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

September 08, 2014

Dianne Jones & Associates

Reporting and Videography

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CITY OF PETALUMA

REGULAR MEETING OF THE CITY COUNCIL

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, 2014

PETALUMA, CALIFORNIA

PUBLIC MEETING

AGENDA ITEM 6-C

RE: DISCUSSION AND DIRECTION ON RAINIER
CROSSTOWN CONNECTOR DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

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REPORTED BY: DANA DIBASILIO TOGNINI, CSR No.10118

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A P P E A R A N C E S

CITY OF PETALUMA CITY COUNCIL:

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- Vice Mayor Gabe Kearney
- Council Member Mike Healy
- Council Member Mike Harris
- Council Member Kathy Miller
- Council Member Teresa Barrett
- Council Member Chris Albertson

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- Environmental Planner Olivia Ervin
- Engineering Manager Larry Zimmer
- City Attorney Eric Danly
- City Manager John Brown

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David Keller	29

1 Monday, September 8, 2014 9:04 o'clock p.m.

2 P R O C E E D I N G S

3 ---o0o---

4 MAYOR GLASS: Good evening. It is 9:04. The
5 City Council is back from recess. Let the record show
6 that all seven members of the City Council are present
7 on the dais. We are onto Agenda Item No. 6C. This is
8 discussion, direction on Rainier Crosstown Connector
9 Draft Environmental Impact Report, and we have a Staff
10 report to get to. Thank you.

11 MS. ERVIN: Thank you. Good evening. I am
12 Olivia Ervin, environmental planner for the Planning
13 Division. This evening you have before you the Draft
14 Environmental Impact Report for the Rainier Crosstown
15 Connector. The purpose of the hearing this evening is
16 to provide an opportunity for the Council and the
17 public to comment on the adequacy of the environmental
18 document.

19 The City of Petaluma is bisected by Highway
20 101, Petaluma River and the SMART Rail corridor.
21 These three features effectively serve as barriers to
22 east-west connectivity, and there are relatively few
23 number of crosstown connectors that bypass those three
24 features, so what ends up happening is all of the
25 traffic gets funneled into those few areas, and it

1 ends up resulting in congestion and delay in those
2 effected intersections.

3 So the Rainier Crosstown Connector has been
4 envisioned since at least the 1960 and is included in
5 the City's current General Plan as a proposed arterial
6 in conjunction with an interchange component that
7 would alleviate the demands for east-west
8 connectivity.

9 However, in 2010 the Council voted to
10 separate those two pieces into two distinct elements.
11 So what you have before you today is just the
12 east-west connector portion, and it does not include
13 the interchange component.

14 Again, the primary objectives of the project
15 is really to relieve congestion, to provide the
16 east-west connection activity and to not preclude
17 future connections.

18 The project consists of a .65 mile arterial
19 roadway. It would be four lanes, with a median Class
20 2 bike lanes and 6-foot sidewalks. It would extend
21 from the east at a tie-in at North McDowell Boulevard.
22 It would then pass underneath Highway 101, and then it
23 would extend up into an elevated bridge, where it
24 would cross over the Petaluma River, the SMART Rail
25 tracks, before touching back down to at-grade and

1 tying into a new intersection at Petaluma Boulevard
2 North.

3 So the project is being introduced at this
4 time to correspond to the Highway 101 widening
5 project, which Caltrans is currently pursuing. They
6 are having to raise the profile of that location in
7 order to correct a line-of-sight deficiency, and so
8 that activity would allow for the undercarriage to be
9 elevated to provided the adequate height and width
10 necessary to support Rainer.

11 MAYOR GLASS: I have a question. In terms of the
12 presumption of when construction would begin, this is
13 a presumption of 2017 that Highway 101 widening would
14 begin in Petaluma in 2017?

Q12-1

15 MS. ERVIN: That -- this is for the -- when the
16 construction of Rainer would begin.

A12-1

17 MAYOR GLASS: That seems to me to be
18 overly-optimistic in light of the fact that it's
19 predicated upon the lifting, raising and widening of
20 Highway 101, which is \$390 million short funded, \$90
21 million specifically in the Petaluma area. And the
22 reason I reference that is we are getting ahead of
23 ourselves in the local media using this 2017 presumed
24 construction start date, that appears to be set up to
25 frustrate this community once again on when is this

1 project actually going to happen. What I've heard
2 about Highway 101 is that it's 95 percent designed, it
3 won't be completely designed until funding is
4 acquired, and funding is nowhere in sight and that
5 it's a two-year timeframe between funding being
6 identified and construction beginning on Highway 101,
7 which, as I say, is the pre-stage to beginning an
8 undercrossing; you can't build an undercrossing
9 without something to go under.

10 So I think Staff is misleading the public by
11 publishing a 2017 presumed construction start date on
12 Rainier, in light of the facts.

13 Yes, sir, Mr. Healy?

14 COUNCIL MEMBER HEALY: Yes, so here's -- there is
15 always uncertainty, but the current state of affairs
16 is we are expecting the County of Sonoma to go forward
17 with a quarter cent sales tax measure in a special
18 election in March of next year. Each of the cities
19 has been asked to weigh in on what they would do with
20 their share. And our share, which I believe is now
21 incorporated in the measure that will be on the
22 ballot, would be to dedicate our funds in Petaluma for
23 widening the segment of 101 through Petaluma, which
24 even if you bond it, is not enough to pay for 100
25 percent of the 90-million, plus change, figure you

Q12-2

1 mentioned, but the Transportation Authority's track
2 record is if we get 50 percent of the local match, we
3 have an unparalleled track record of getting State
4 funding to match the rest.

5 So I think 2017 is cautiously optimistic, but
6 it's achievable. And so we can debate whether it
7 could actually happen, but it could.

A12-2

8 MAYOR GLASS: It could. It could. I just want
9 to say that it could happen, but that is that 101
10 could happen, which has to be completed, which would
11 not be like "Bewitched," where you just twitch your
12 nose. So March '17 is March of 2015 for a tax measure
13 to pass, which may require State legislation because
14 we may be exceeding the highest cap allowed under
15 State law to pass a quarter of a percent.

16 I just want to put that out there. The
17 public needs to know what is real. This is a project
18 that's been talked about since 1961. It's nice that
19 we are going to, I think, close one phase of one
20 episode of one segment of it here tonight.

21 Council Member Barrett?

22 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRETT: Actually, I was also
23 concerned with the date as projected. But in thinking
24 about it, does it really affect the Environmental
25 Impact Report if it were delayed, let's say, three

1 more years, would that have an effect on the
2 Environmental Impact Report?

3 MS. ERVIN: It's unlikely that it would. I mean,
4 part of the reason also why the date was chosen was
5 that we would be ready to go because if we had done
6 the analysis way in the future, we couldn't
7 necessarily start as soon as we might would have liked
8 to, so that was another reason that that date was
9 selected.

10 MAYOR GLASS: Is there a danger, if it takes
11 longer than anticipated -- this is really the crux of
12 it -- that the EIR be challenged for being stale
13 because it's more likely a project that's been talked
14 about since 1961 is happening later rather than
15 sooner, as much as we can want to be optimistic.

Q12-3

16 So I am looking at the end result and saying:
17 What happens if it's seven, eight, ten years down the
18 road, will this EIR be stale?

19 MS. HINES: So a couple of things. One is, there
20 is nothing to preclude the work on the Crosstown
21 Connector to begin concurrently with the 101 widening
22 also, because you are working at two either ends, so
23 some stuff could begin before the 101 widening is
24 completed.

25 The other thing with the environmental

1 analysis -- and this always happens when you are
2 looking forward and you are trying to use the best
3 information possible at that time -- if a very
4 prolonged period of time happened, we might have to
5 re-look at the environment analysis, depending on what
6 factors maybe have changed in the environment and the
7 existing condition.

A12-3

8 But it's hard to know that, it's hard to know
9 what year that is, is that after three years, is that
10 after five years, is that after eight years? But that
11 is kind of the situation whenever we are doing these
12 environmental documents, you kind of put forward the
13 best estimate you have on when it would start, when it
14 would finish. And if it's significantly different
15 than that, then, yes, you may need an addendum or some
16 kind of update.

17 MAYOR GLASS: First, Council Member Harris then
18 then Vice Mayor Kearney.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER HARRIS: Thank you, Mr. Mayor, we
20 get a little further along here, but I want to follow
21 up on what Mr. Healy brought up. I was going to speak
22 to this in our Council Liaison. But there was an
23 update at the Sonoma County Transportation Authority,
24 they gave -- Supervisor Mark McGuire and Supervisor
25 Dave Erata gave an update of their measure for the

1 March ballot, like Mr. Healy was referring to. But
2 their plan is actually do presentations with each
3 Council, come to the Council and then talk to the
4 individual Council Members. And then in October they
5 are going to come up with a final roads plan and
6 community engagement and actually have town hall
7 meetings in each of the communities.

8 In November they are going to have the final
9 vote for the road mix, is what they are pushing for,
10 based on the input of all the cities. And then from
11 there, they will have the final vote, and of course
12 they will push for the March -- the first Tuesday in
13 March for the ballot. So that is moving along
14 further. That was the latest update from the Sonoma
15 County Transportation Authority.

16 I was going to speak to that, but it's
17 germane to this subject.

18 MAYOR GLASS: It's germane. Vice Mayor Kearney?

19 Vice Mayor Kearney: So I appreciate the
20 statement that the Mayor has made with regards to
21 this, the dates and the timelines, but I think it's
22 important for folks to be reminded that that's a
23 presumed to begin. It doesn't say it shall begin.
24 And the second thing is, it's contingent upon
25 completion. So I would hate for us, that if this were

1 to go forward, the expansion of Highway 101, if it
2 were to go forward at this projected date, and we
3 didn't already start on this date, it would delay our
4 ability to build Rainier even longer.

5 MAYOR GLASS: I want to make clear -- I thought
6 you were finished.

7 VICE MAYOR KEARNEY: So I think that Staff were
8 given the project to do this work so we are teeing up
9 in order for this project to be shovel ready when we
10 get to this point, so if we were to wait, it just
11 delays the project even more, and I just want to
12 remind folks of that.

13 MAYOR GLASS: Thank you so much. My comments
14 were not directed at waiting. My comments are
15 specifically directed at community presumption of what
16 is achievable when, and I base that on a number of
17 dynamics on a go-forward basis. And this is something
18 that has been around for more than a half a century,
19 and so I don't think it's unreasonable to say that I
20 have serious doubts that it's going to happen in 27
21 months, in light of the still considerable challenges,
22 which are considerable.

23 It doesn't mean it won't be done. It doesn't
24 mean I'm not trying to do it. That's why we secured
25 \$11 million for undercrossing. So please proceed.

1 COUNCIL MEMBER HEALY: Mr. Mayor, one other
2 point, just to follow on Vice Mayor Kearney's point,
3 we absolutely have to be ready with the completed EIR
4 project by the time Caltrans actually goes out to do
5 their work, because if we don't have it done, they
6 will just put a dirt embankment there, and we will not
7 get the undercrossing, and it will never happen. So
8 to delay this process would not be a responsible thing
9 to do.

10 MAYOR GLASS: I am not talking about delay. In
11 fact, if you want to talk about what we have to do, if
12 you look back at the ballot advisory measure that was
13 passed by 72 percent of the voters, in that there was
14 language that said, "No subsequent environmental
15 impact report for any development project would be
16 using Rainer for traffic relief until such time that a
17 financing plan was put in place and all environmental
18 documentation for Rainer had been adopted."

19 And so we certainly moved away from that. I
20 am just saying it is time to put the pedal to the
21 metal and move forward. I am not slowing this down
22 one bit. I suspect this will go through tonight. I
23 am just talking about public perception and framing
24 the expectation of this community. And 2017 is
25 probably not achievable, and people need to accept

1 that in this community, that it probably is not going
2 to happen and this hasn't happened in a half a
3 century. So let's continue so we don't take a half a
4 century tonight arguing about the intention of a
5 statement that made about a timeframe that's 27 months
6 away on something that hasn't been in done in half a
7 century plus. Thank you. Let's proceed.

8 MS. ERVIN: So again, the anticipated timeline
9 for the purpose of the CEQA analysis was that the
10 project would initiate in 2017, it would take
11 approximately 30 months to complete, and it would be
12 operational by 2020.

13 There are a number of State and Federal
14 permits and approvals that will be necessary in order
15 to move forward. Those are summarized here and they
16 are described in detail in the environmental document
17 as well.

18 The notice of preparation was released in 2011.
19 And at that time a public scoping meeting was held.
20 The Draft EIR was circulated, in accordance with CEQA,
21 on July 24th, and has been made available at the
22 typical locations throughout the community.

23 The -- yes. There was a public hearing on
24 August 12th [sic] at the Planning Commission.
25 Commissioners and a member of the public provided

1 comments at that time. And there was discussion
2 regarding flood control and the floodplain. There was
3 concerns about an appropriate use of baseline that
4 were raised during that discussion. Conflicts in the
5 turning movement associated with the operations
6 facility, that I will describe a bit later. And a
7 desire to better understand what the benefits of the
8 relief will actually be for Rainer.

9 And specifically Commissioner Pierre
10 expressed concern that the change in level of service
11 was not as profound of an improvement as she had
12 anticipated and really wanted to be sure that the
13 public was aware of what the traffic modeling actually
14 shows. But overall, the Commission was supportive and
15 recommended that Staff move forward with the final
16 EIR.

17 So additionally, Staff has received comments
18 from the public and several interested parties. We
19 are going through those and assembling all of the
20 comments, and we will be responding to those as part
21 of the Final EIR. Again, the comment period will end
22 today with the close of this hearing.

23 The Draft EIR does identify a number of
24 potentially significant impacts, and those are
25 summarized here. I am going to go ahead and run

1 through those to give a sense of what those consistent
2 of: As a roadway project, there will be construction
3 emissions generated, but at operations the air quality
4 analysis shows that emissions will actually be reduced
5 because of a reduction in the overall vehicle miles
6 traveled. The temporary construction impacts were
7 identified to result in a potentially significant
8 health risk, but with the controls to exhaust
9 emissions added to the vehicles, that can be reduced
10 to levels below significance.

11 There are a number of biological resources.

12 MAYOR GLASS: Excuse me. Council Member Barrett?

13 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRETT: Do you want a question
14 regarding something to bring it up right then?

15 MS. ERVIN: I am willing to respond however you
16 like.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRETT: Well, I maybe I will
18 wait until --

19 MAYOR GLASS: But if anybody has questions any
20 time, we are going to stop and get questions answered
21 for Council. So proceed, and if a Council Member or
22 anyone else has a question, just pipe up and we'll go.

23 MS. ERVIN: So there are a number of biological
24 resources within the floodplain and the riparian
25 habitat immediately adjacent. And additionally, the

1 structure of the bridge will result in a footprint
2 within the ordinary high water mark. And there is
3 also removal of protected trees in that riparian
4 corridor as well.

5 So there are both State and Federally-listed
6 species in the Petaluma River and potentially in the
7 riparian zone that could be impacted. And so in order
8 to mitigate those, there are a number of measures that
9 are set forth in the environmental document to avoid,
10 minimize and offset those.

11 And these include things like
12 pre-construction and bird nesting surveys, restoring
13 and replanting, limiting the area of disturbance,
14 doing protection measures so that sediment and erosion
15 doesn't run off into the river and limiting work
16 within the river to the dry season. And again, with
17 all of those mitigation measures, impacts to
18 biological resources are expected to be reduced to
19 levels below significance.

20 For cultural resources, there are both
21 historic and prehistoric deposits that have been
22 identified within the project area, and a potential
23 exists for the discovery of unknown artifacts as well.
24 So in order to mitigate this, an archeological
25 recovery program will be implemented, and ground

1 monitoring will be required during all disturbance
2 within 200 feet of the river bank.

3 For geology and soils, the potential impacts
4 are related to seismic activity, soil instability and
5 the presence of expansive soils. The mitigation that
6 is proposed in order address those concerns include
7 the use of appropriate fill, the treatment of soils,
8 and compaction techniques and other such measures that
9 are set forth in the design level geotechnical.

10 For hydrology and water quality, the project
11 would place new infrastructure within the 100 year
12 flood hazard zone, as identified within the most
13 recent FEMA maps. And I have a picture of that here
14 (indicating). What this graphic shows is the the 100
15 year floodplain and the location of the ordinary high
16 water mark. That's the green line. The yellow is the
17 floodway.

18 The project is required to adhere to the
19 City's policy for no-net-fill. And to address that,
20 it would introduce biosoils, which are shown here in
21 red, that would correct for any impervious surfaces
22 that are introduced.

23 The project also requires compliance with the
24 Army Corps Dredge and Fill Permit, the 404, and the
25 Regional Water Quality Board Certificate 401. Those

1 both will help to mitigate impacts to hydrology.
2 Additionally, a design level hydrology study will be
3 prepared, and it will demonstrate the flow parameters
4 and will provide specific recommendations. A
5 preliminary hydrology analysis was conducted, and it
6 showed possibly a one-inch increase within a very
7 confined area of about 100 feet from where the
8 footings would go in.

9 So there is mitigation that is recommended in
10 order to offset any losses in flood conveyance, should
11 the final design indicate that there is any. And
12 those include things like terracing, widening or other
13 means to accommodate that increase in elevation there.

14 During construction activities, the project
15 has the potential to result in temporary delays and
16 detours due to lane closures and road work. But
17 again, that will largely be limited to those areas
18 occurring within the existing right-of-way, and the
19 majority of the project, obviously, is a new roadway
20 and that wouldn't interfere substantially, but in
21 order to address that, a construction management plan
22 will be developed and implemented through all stages
23 of construction.

24 At operation, the whole purpose of Rainer is
25 really to alleviate congestion at the study area

1 intersections, and it would -- it does improve level
2 of service to -- relative to the existing conditions.
3 However, there is one exception to that, and that is
4 at the Petaluma Boulevard/Rainer intersection, which
5 would be deficient at operation.

6 And so in order correct that, there is a
7 mitigation that requires the introduction of a
8 westbound turn lane and a northbound overlap phasing
9 to be part of the roadway geometrics.

10 Oh, sorry, one more thing. Additionally, I
11 mentioned previously the operations facility that's
12 located just at the corner of Rainer and North
13 McDowell, and there is a left-turn lane that would
14 provide for access into that facility. And the
15 concern that was raised there was that there would be
16 a conflict with the buses that were turning there
17 blocking the left turn traffic, so that is something
18 we will looking at.

19 But the mitigation that was set forth in
20 order avoid that conflict there is to provide a break
21 in the median, so that those transit vehicles can make
22 a left turn into their facility and to relocate the
23 driveway farther back from the intersection, so it
24 would be farther west.

25 The cumulative impact analysis was also

1 conducted, and that included an analysis of the
2 General Plan buildout, which does make assumptions
3 about a presumed level of development within
4 undeveloped areas. And the projection finds that it
5 would correct five of the six deficient study area
6 intersections and would bring level of service from F
7 to E at East Washington. So even though that's still
8 considered significant, it would improve with Rainer,
9 relative to the existing condition or the no-project.

10 The cumulative analysis does presume
11 buildout of Shasta Avenue, which is consistent with
12 the General Plan that shows Shasta Avenue as a
13 proposed roadway tying into Rainer. But since it's
14 not currently constructed, there was a no-Shasta
15 scenario that was also evaluated as part of the
16 environmental document. And it was determined that
17 without Shasta, the level of service at Rainer and
18 Petaluma Boulevard intersection would degrade. And
19 again, that measure in the geometrics, that I
20 mentioned earlier to provide an additional turning
21 lane and overlap phase, would correct that deficiency.

22 Also with construction of the Shasta
23 extension, traffic would actually shift to utilize
24 that roadway, and so there would be more vehicle trips
25 moving farther away from the Rainer-Petaluma Boulevard

1 intersection and utilizing Shasta, so that would
2 alleviate some of the congestion there.

3 There is also a cumulatives -- oh, did I just
4 do this? Sorry. Yeah, so this is what I was just
5 talking about, is the re-striping and the use of the
6 turn lane.

7 MAYOR GLASS: Mr. Albertson?

8 COUNCIL MEMBER ALBERTSON: Just for clarification
9 on the Shasta, is that the connection or a second
10 connection to the Rainer? Because the drawings I have
11 seen before, Rainer is coming through, around the old
12 Rancho Feed and out through what is the grass field
13 between the church and Rancho Feed, coming out through
14 that area; that's correct? So this Shasta is a second
15 access into Rainer?

Q12-4

16 MS. ERVIN: That's correct. And that is a
17 cumulative.

A12-4

18 COUNCIL MEMBER ALBERTSON: That's news to me.

19 MS. ERVIN: That is part of the General Plan.
20 That is not part of this project, so this is the
21 cumulative analysis. The Shasta is not being proposed
22 at this time, it is simply being considered as part of
23 the cumulative analysis because that's what the
24 General Plan calls for.

25 COUNCIL MEMBER ALBERTSON: So looking at the

Q12-5

1 potential for down the road.

2 MS. ERVIN: Correct.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER ALBERTSON: Thank you for your
4 help.

A12-5

5 MS. ERVIN: So again, there was an alternative
6 analysis conducted and evaluated: The no-project
7 alternative. Alternative B, which is a four-lane
8 longer bridge span with no connections. And then an
9 Alternative C, which is a two-lane, and would provide
10 for future connections. The analysis actually
11 concluded that there was no clear superior alternative
12 in this instance because there are pros and cons to
13 each. And that's described in more detail in the
14 environmental document.

15 So just in summary, there is no growth
16 inducing impacts beyond what was anticipated in the
17 General Plan. Again, this roadway has been well
18 envisioned and considered for quite a while. The
19 potentially significant impacts have been identified
20 and disclosed. There has been mitigation that has
21 introduced in order to avoid, minimize and/or offset
22 impacts, and there are no significant and unavoidable
23 impacts after mitigation.

24 So Staff is recommending that the Council
25 accept public testimony on the Draft EIR, provide

1 input and make comments on the adequacy, and direct
2 Staff to move forward with preparation of the final.

3 MAYOR GLASS: Thank you.

4 MS. ERVIN: That concludes my presentation. I'm
5 able to answer questions. We also have the consultant
6 team here this evening as well.

7 MAYOR GLASS: We will get to questions for the
8 Council. First we will get to the comments from the
9 public. This is the public comment period on the
10 Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Rainier
11 Crosstown Connector. With that, we will open it up
12 for public comment, starting with Wayne Leach, and
13 then followed by Don Chaney.

14 What we ask is, we are not going to run the
15 clock on speakers. We have very few people in the
16 chamber. I think we can hear everybody on something
17 that's been talked about for 50 years plus, so we want
18 to hear your comments, Mr. Leach. Thank you.

19

20 P U B L I C C O M M E N T

21

22 C O M M E N T S B Y M R . L E A C H

23

24 MR. LEACH: Thank you. I also will be brief. I
25 have a letter as well that basically reflects the

1 comments as well, and I have enough copies for the
2 clerk.

3 My name is Wayne Leach. I am here
4 representing Simon Premium Outlets. They are the
5 Petaluma owners of the Petaluma Permium Outlets. They
6 are also the owners of the parcel that is just north
7 and south of the existing outlet mall.

8 There is also another letter that I think
9 Staff should have received today from Fred Edsel
10 (phonetic). Some of the comments that are contained
11 in there will probably be those that are shared here
12 tonight.

13 As far as the Draft EIR goes, it does do an
14 adequate job identifying the Crosstown Connector
15 project and specifically creating roadway access to
16 some of the adjacent parcels designated for
17 development in the General Plan. However, it does not
18 adequately describe how these future connections will
19 be made. Future connections, like the Petaluma
20 outlet, only considers them as cumulative impacts and
21 does not adequately address the physical feasibility
22 and impacts of these connections by identifying where
23 and how they would connect to Rainer, so we are asking
24 for this to be looked at and addressed a little bit
25 further.

Q12-6

1 And sort of as a side note, within the letter
2 that Fred Edsel had provided, there is actually a
3 graphic in there, that was included in the Notice of
4 Preparation, that showed at least one configuration
5 from the Outlet Center.

6 Also sort of related to that, the 2025
7 General Plan land use, in there is Figure 11 that
8 shows designations for a city park and a rail transit
9 node. And it didn't seem that there was anything in
10 the Draft EIR that addressed that, so any discussion
11 about these designations would be appropriate, and
12 specifically along the same lines, connections to
13 those.

Q12-7

14 Let's see, looking at these connections in
15 further detail will help address the physical
16 feasibility. It will ensure that the project does not
17 create a physical divide that would impair mobility to
18 the surrounding parcels. Also, the D-EIR -- the
19 document further does address the cost impacts of
20 acquiring a sufficient right-of-way for the project,
21 and I think further discussion on that as far as was
22 that through eminent domain processes or whether it's
23 dependent on future development, dedicated
24 right-of-way, I think that should be a part of the
25 discussion as well.

Q12-8

1 The -- also impacts to dedicating the need of
2 right-of-way in lieu of development fees or traffic
3 impact fees would be appropriate to include in that
4 discussion as far as funding goes.

Q12-9

5 And then lastly, the EIR, the Staff report
6 does include a cost estimate that depends on
7 developers dedicating right-of-way and developer
8 roadway items that amount to about \$25 million, and
9 then the document should address the details of this
10 developer-dependent program and the ability to
11 implement these components.

Q12-10

12 So that concludes the comments. Thank you.

13 MAYOR GLASS: Thank you, sir.

14 John Chaney?

15 COMMENTS BY MR. CHANEY

16 MR. CHANEY: This is so I remember. Maybe you
17 remember. I was up here a while ago. It seems like
18 this is something you completely forgot. That is
19 about the same length of time that Rainer has been
20 going on. The name is John Chaney. This EIR does not
21 take into consideration what we are calling middle --
22 "no-net fill on the floodplain," but you've got lot of
23 areas outside of that floodplain that there is a lot
24 of fill going into. It doesn't recognize any of that
25 area, as far as this thing.

Q12-11

1 It's going to cause a minimum thing. We are
2 going to end up again, as the Corps of Engineers
3 Report that originally was put in with the flood fix
4 -- which is not done yet -- which would be nice to
5 have that done before we do Rainer, but that doesn't
6 seem possible.

7 We have all kinds of projects going on, with
8 more water added to that thing. Anybody with any
9 sense that lives here and may be listening to be me
10 that lives in the Payran area: For God's sake, keep
11 that flood insurance. That was the biggest con I ever
12 seen, to have you guys sit here and tell us over the
13 years we couldn't have a FEMA mapping until the flood
14 fix was done. And as soon as big money came in and
15 needed it, it was done. Another political game.

16 We've still got the political goal up there,
17 piles of that. I don't know what to say, but I don't
18 believe this EIR. I don't know how. I am not a
19 hydrologist, but this flood control thing does not
20 meet the thing. How many times have I sat up here and
21 you said the factory outlet -- which you can see, he
22 is ready to build -- "the factory outlet was going to
23 be the above the hundred year flood." It flooded.
24 "The car lots were going to be above the hundred year
25 flood." They flooded.

1 I don't believe it. It's just a matter of
2 time, you guys are going to push that water around
3 that gate, and we are going to flood again, and I am
4 not looking forward to it. Hopefully, it may be that,
5 like so many of the guys that stood up here over the
6 years, I will be at Baltimore (phonetic); it doesn't
7 matter whether it floods or not. Do something with
8 this EIR with that flood work. That's not acceptable.
9 You've got families down there that don't need to go
10 through it again. Homes that have been just totally
11 flooded for no reason but construction. Thank you.

Q12-12

12 MAYOR GLASS: Thank you. I will say to Mr.
13 Chaney about the flood control project; on August 8
14 there was a meeting in San Francisco, which I attended
15 with Lieutenant Coronal John Morrow, who is the new
16 man in charge with the Army Corps of Engineers here.
17 And it's my understanding that there is a possibility
18 -- and I think it's a better possibility than Rainer
19 finishing in 2017 -- but there is a possibility that
20 actually flood control project work will be completed
21 in the spring of 2015.

22 And we received correspondence along those
23 lines. We are working, staying with Congressman
24 Huffman on it. It's not something that's been out of
25 the conscience of any of our City Staff and myself.

1 It's taken too long. It's mostly done. I think
2 Lieutenant Colonel Morrow wants to finish it. So many
3 that have preceded him wanted to finish it. It will
4 get done.

5 With that, we'll go to the next public
6 comment. Colleen Silva. Its Colleen Silva here?

7 (No response).

8 MAYOR GLASS: If not, we will go to the following
9 public comment: David Keller?

10 COMMENTS BY MR. KELLER

11 MR. KELLER: Hi, good evening, Council. David
12 Keller, Petaluma River Council. I distributed written
13 comments to you. There are attachments that I've
14 given to Heather Hines and to your attorney. I will
15 go ahead and send those in electronic form so you can
16 all have those as well tomorrow morning.

17 Gee, it's been a long time working on Rainer,
18 working around Rainer, depending on Rainer. Many
19 promises and many campaigns and many statements from
20 this dais about what we were going to do to relieve
21 traffic congestion in the Washington corridor. And
22 unfortunately, this project still doesn't do it, and
23 you are asking people to stand behind those promises,
24 but I don't think you are going to be able to deliver.

25 First of all, the traffic calculations that

1 were done did not include any of the cumulative
2 development enabled and induced by this project. It
3 passed off all of these cumulative developments as to
4 studies in the General Plan. Well, the purpose of
5 having an EIR on this project is that you get
6 information about this specific project and its
7 impacts.

Q12-13

8 This project provides access, as Mr. Leach
9 referred to, to his property and to a number of other
10 properties, several hundred acres of property that
11 will be on your dias for development proposals. And
12 yet, this EIR fails to account for any of the traffic
13 that is induced and made possible by this access
14 project. So fundamentally this EIR fails the test of
15 being an adequate description of what it's purported
16 to do.

Q12-14

17 It also, in our estimation, improperly and
18 illegally segments the project into parts, so that you
19 have a crosstown connector but not a freeway
20 interchange. And yet, throughout this document, and
21 every document that has been on in this City for the
22 past 40 years, has talked of promised and depended
23 upon having a combined crosstown connector and freeway
24 interchange. This is artificially and improperly
25 segmenting the project.

1 Even Shasta, which is necessary to help
2 reduce future congestion on Petaluma Boulevard, is
3 improperly and illegally segmented from this project
4 and said, "Well, that's another project, we will get
5 to it eventually." It is a critical part of this
6 project. As Mr. Leach also described: This project
7 failes to locate, identify and account for and
8 address, analyze, mitigate any of the connections to
9 the roadway that would happen to provide access to all
10 these developable parcels.

Q12-15

11 And, of course, with intersections on this
12 roadway comes traffic lights, congestion, additional
13 traffic and a change in LOS and a change in the
14 capacity of this Crosstown Connector to provide the
15 relief that you are telling the voters and the
16 taxpayers you will provide. You don't have the
17 information to be able to make that judgment. You do
18 not have the information in which to be able to
19 intelligently say, "I have been informed about this
20 project as CEQA requires, and thus I can make a
21 decision on what we are going to do." You don't know.
22 It's not in the document.

23 And not in the document is the downstream
24 flooding. The only calculation done in the hydraulic
25 technical report was to account for the footprint of

Q12-16

1 the bridge in the floodplain. No project runoff from
2 16 acres of paved surface? How many additional acres
3 of compacted earth? How many additional acres of
4 asphalt to provide access on Shasta to the additional
5 properties that will be developed, to those
6 development properties themselves?

Q12-17

7 This is not a road in the middle of nowhere.
8 This is a road in the middle of what are potentially
9 developable properties that you know, going back 30
10 years, developers have been salivating for a free or
11 cheap ride to get access to these these properties.
12 That's what this project is about.

13 And to fail to include the cumulative impacts
14 of all of that development in this EIR is a failure
15 under CEQA. It is failure to the public to be
16 informed. It is a failure to you to be informed
17 before you make any decisions. And it's a failure to
18 the taxpayers, who are going to have to foot the bill.

Q12-18

19 So I suggest, on those reasons alone -- and
20 there are a bunch of others that are outlined in my
21 letter -- that this Draft EIR go back for revisions to
22 include a number of pieces of missing information, so
23 that you, in fact, can make an informed decision, as
24 is required by CEQA, and as required by the public
25 trust.

1 Several other pieces that are missing -- I
2 need my glasses here -- and I am just going to touch
3 on a couple of these to keep it shorter because, as
4 you know, I can talk for hours but I am not going to
5 do it. I will spare you that.

6 There are a number of mitigations that are to
7 be developed later -- biological, hydraulic,
8 hydrologic -- that's impermissible under CEQA. You
9 have to have the information and the choices in your
10 hands before you can make a decision to proceed. You
11 don't get it out of this EIR. I was surprised when I
12 picked up the copy of the EIR that it was as thin as
13 it was because, you know, I was through the -- sitting
14 in your seat, I was on the Council when we went
15 through the Rainer EIR the last time around, and the
16 level of documentation on that was probably five or
17 six times what you have received on this project.

Q12-19

18 And so what is missing? Some of the pieces
19 that I just talked about are dreadfully missing. I am
20 most disturbed in some ways about the flood impacts of
21 this project and the failure to recognize the gravity
22 of building in the floodplain above the flood project.
23 The Corps of Engineers made it really sterling clear,
24 and I quote them from their final EIS in my comments:
25 "Upstream development that compromises the flood

Q12-20

1 capacity of the project will" -- not might -- "will
2 reduce the protection in Payren and downtown so that
3 by the end of the lifespan" -- "of the 40-year
4 lifespan of the project, the flood protection will be
5 reduced from a one percent storm, 100-year storm, to a
6 40 year storm, a two-and-a-half-percent storm because
7 of development upstream," and all development upstream
8 that they are including is: "every development beyond
9 the 1987 General Plan buildout."

10 These lands were not in the 1987 General Plan
11 buildout. So you are playing with fire, only it's
12 wet. And you are playing with people's lives and
13 property, health, welfare, businesses, from everything
14 below the flood project through downtown, because
15 that's the area that floods.

16 One of the things I asked to do in a revised
17 Draft EIR is to show: What is the impact of the
18 runoff on flood levels, flood frequency and duration
19 of flooding downstream when all this area, which is
20 enabled and induced by this project, is built out? We
21 don't have that information. You don't have that
22 information.

Q12-21

23 And to accept this Draft EIR in its current
24 form is to fail \$100 million worth of flood project
25 that we've paid for. It's to fail everybody who lives

1 downstream, everybody who works downstream, everybody
2 who has invested downstream. Don't do it.

3 You will see there is a lot more in there
4 that I have requested to be done, one of which is to
5 recognize the value of this, the Corona Reach of the
6 river. U.S. Fish and Wildlife, State Fish and
7 Wildlife repeatedly recognizes this as the best
8 remaining riparian forestland-woodlands in the entire
9 Petaluma River Valley, with unique setting, with
10 species that are to be cut, trees to be cut. There is
11 no mapping.

12 I really want to you flag the property, flag
13 the site, flag the project area. Show me where the
14 construction staging and access roads are. None of
15 that is in the EIR. It's omitted completely. And
16 yet, we know that no project of this size can be done
17 without a significant staging area, probably on both
18 sides of the river. None of that is accounted for.
19 It's deficient just in that, no less chopping up this
20 best remaining riparian habitat on the entire Petaluma
21 River Valley so that you can throw a roadway through
22 it without even recognizing the value.

23 And then the EIR talks about, "Well, we will
24 do mitigation on banks somewhere else." There is not
25 even an attempt to locate mitigation for the loss of

Q12-22

1 species, loss of trees, loss of habitat in the project
2 area or immediately adjacent to it.

3 Frankly, all of that floodplain land is a
4 great opportunity for you guys to buy it, take it out
5 of circulation, use that as a central park. Use the
6 funding that you would have to pay for mitigation
7 towards the downpayment on those properties. Do
8 something creative out of this. Do it right or don't
9 do it.

10 We very strongly recommend that you not
11 approve and move forward with this Draft EIR, that you
12 send it back to the workshop and to your consultants
13 for revisions, to answer the questions that have been
14 addressed by myself and other people, come back with a
15 thorough and complete and legally defensible Draft EIR
16 and proceed from there.

17 Thank you very much. If you have any
18 questions, I am happy to answer.

19 MAYOR GLASS: Thank you. I have one more speaker
20 card I want to get to.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER ALBERTSON: I have quick one of
22 Staff.

23 MAYOR GLASS: Okay.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER ALBERTSON: Mr. Leach and Mr.
25 Keller provided us with written documents. Do you

1 have copies of what they gave us? I will make my
2 copies available, but you should have it.

3 MS. ERVIN: Yeah, I was -- I did print something
4 out that came in this evening, and everything else was
5 provided this morning. So I believe I have everything
6 already.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER ALBERTSON: Okay.

8 MS. ERVIN: I will confirm it, but I believe
9 Clair has everything too.

10 MAYOR GLASS: Mr. Danly, do you have everything
11 you need?

12 MR. DANLY: Actually, the only complete hard copy
13 set, Mr. Mayor, Heather has one with attachments and
14 you do, and we will make sure that that's in the
15 record.

16 MAYOR GLASS: All right. With that, I want to
17 make sure -- I have one more speaker that may be I
18 misread the first name. Kathleen Silva? Is Kathleen
19 Silva here?

20 (No response.)

21 MAYOR GLASS: Okay. That's all the speaker cards
22 I have. Is there anyone else from the public that
23 wishes to address the City on the Rainier Crosstown
24 Connector Draft Environmental Impact Report? This may
25 be your final chance to do so if you want to get

1 something into the record.

2 Anything that has been put in the record at
3 the Planning Commission is in the official record.
4 Anything that's been submitted in writing to the City
5 is in the record. And anything that has been
6 submitted this evening is in the record. Anything
7 that has been said verbally here tonight is in the
8 record. Anything that's been said anywhere else
9 probably is not.

10 So with that, we will bring it back to City
11 Council. Public comment is hereby closed, seeing no
12 else come forward. And with that, who wants to lead
13 off the discussion? Council Member Barrett?

14 COLLOQUY

15 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRETT: Yes, I have a lot of
16 comments about this, but luckily I watched the
17 Planning Commission, and so a lot of it was included
18 there and especially in our packet that included
19 Commissioner Pierre's comments. I think that those
20 are very important and really need to be looked at.

21 But I am actually stunned, I guess, by the
22 letter from the Caltrans that we have on our dais
23 today. And on the second page under "project
24 management," Caltrans comments that are on Page 3-1,
25 the "project description," fourth paragraph says that:

1 "In January 2010, the City of Petaluma City
2 Council separated the interchange and
3 Crosstown Connector into two independent but
4 concurrent elements," which I recall us
5 doing.

6 However, it goes on to say, the approved
7 motion actually says that:

8 "The resolution that we passed authorizing
9 suspension" -- and that's underscored --
10 "of the project development process with
11 Caltrans for the Rainer Avenue Interchange
12 Project Independent Element No. 1, proceeding
13 with a project study report for the Rainer
14 Avenue Crosstown Connector, Independent
15 Element No. 2" -- which is what we are
16 looking at this EIR for today."

17 And then what actually sort of surprised me,
18 it says:

19 "The Interchange Ramp Element No.
20 1, Element No. 1, was therefore not
21 concurrent and it was suspended indefinitely.
22 Please correct this language in the EIR."

23 And that's Caltrans speaking, saying that the
24 interchange is suspended indefinitely. I have never
25 seen anything from Caltrans that has said that the

1 interchange is not on the table. And that pretty
2 clearly says: It's not on the table. And I think
3 that that really calls into question our General Plan,
4 which doesn't even include the Crosstown Connector
5 that includes the interchange in order to go forward.

6 And this really is an important statement,
7 and I think it still needs to be addressed by Staff
8 somewhere, perhaps outside of this EIR. But it's
9 important in terms of our General Plan, and I think it
10 really does need to be addressed.

11 Now, in terms of this D-EIR, some of my
12 biggest concerns about it have already been touched by
13 everybody, but I do think they are worth reiterating:
14 The floodplain issue is key. I am really glad that
15 you, Mr. Keller, brought up the quote from the Corps
16 of Engineers saying that any development upstream
17 pretty much negates what we have spent millions and
18 scores of millions of dollars trying to protect the
19 downtown and the Payran area, that is, as Mr. Chaney
20 pointed out, not quite done yet.

21 And I know there was a discussion in the
22 Planning Commission regarding the fact that putting
23 the piers in the water and flood area, floodplain
24 would only increase water one inch. That's not a
25 small amount. That is a lot of water over acre feet.

1 I mean, that one inch of water going back how far,
2 it's a very important amount of water. And it really
3 was not very well addressed.

4 One of the other things that Caltrans culled
5 out, and that I had also noticed here, which I don't
6 remember being discussed at the Planning Commission,
7 was retaining walls being shown in Figure 3.3 in the
8 floodplain. And so I don't know -- retaining walls;
9 that can't happen in a floodplain. So I think that
10 really needs to be seriously addressed. I think that
11 this Draft EIR really underestimates the entire
12 flooding question.

Q12-23

13 And I think that Alternative B is actually a
14 superior, not a neutral alternative, because it
15 doesn't have any onramps or offramps or driveways
16 into, that would allow development into the
17 floodplain. And so therefore, I think it really needs
18 -- the analysis of that alternative really needs to be
19 really looked at. I think it's given very short
20 shrift in this.

Q12-24

21 The other concern I have -- well, there are
22 two other concerns. One is the floodplain. The other
23 is the way the construction air quality is measured.
24 I don't ever -- I never remember seeing something that
25 happens over a 30-month period being amortized. In

1 fact, I've never even heard that word used for that.
2 It's such bizarre notion.

3 The impact happens within 30 months, and
4 actually less than 30 months because there has got to
5 be months when you can't do construction. So that
6 really needs to be looked at in its own time. Not
7 spread out over the life of the 30 years. Hopefully
8 the bridge will last longer than that.

Q12-25

9 And the third thing is that the number one
10 project objective that is outlined in this
11 Environmental Impact Report is to alleviate traffic,
12 and it is not clear that this will do that. And that
13 is incredibly troubling. I can't tell you how
14 troubling I think that is. I mean, I really thought
15 the main concern was going to be getting this thing
16 over the floodplain but I think Alternative B is
17 workable that way, but it doesn't look like it's
18 actually going to provide \$30 million worth of traffic
19 relief. I mean -- and that is just this project.

Q12-26

20 I think that that really needs -- I don't
21 even know if that's an environmental impact or what,
22 you know, because you are looking at a project that
23 actually doesn't fulfill what it's being set -- what
24 we are undertaking it to do. And then you are looking
25 at: Well, how does it fit in environmentally? Well,

1 if it doesn't solve the problem, what difference does
2 that make? It shouldn't go ahead just because doesn't
3 fulfil the project.

4 So this is really -- this was pretty
5 eye-opening, actually. I am very disappointed in the
6 traffic projections. And I am not going to go into
7 everything else in the interest of time in that it has
8 been mentioned, but I really do want to say I thought
9 really good points were brought up at the Planning
10 Commission.

11 I was really disappointed there were only
12 four of you. And thank goodness you guys were all
13 really involved with it and brought up good things,
14 but three people's voices were missing there, and that
15 is really unfortunate because I think that brings up a
16 lot bigger concern. So that's it.

17 MAYOR GLASS: Who wants to go next. Mr. Harris?

18 COMMENTS BY COUNCIL MEMBER HARRIS

19 COUNCIL MEMBER HARRIS: I have a quick question
20 actually. Page 7 just talks about the State clearing
21 house that this Draft EIR goes through and all the
22 responsible and trustees and everything. This may not
23 be a Draft EIR question, but what is the triggering --
24 I doubt it's this -- it made me think of it -- when is
25 the triggering point that asks for the time exception,

Q12-27

1 timeline-wise? Do you know when that is? Is it too
2 early to ask that question?

3 MR. ZIMMER: You are talking about the design
4 exception for the interchange spacing?

5 COUNCIL MEMBER HARRIS: Yes.

6 MR. ZIMMER: That would be prior to going -- or
7 having a PSR project scoping report approved. And we
8 would need a funding plan prior to going to Caltrans
9 to get a PSR started. So it would be in that
10 timeline. So we would need basically our funding set,
11 then we would go to Caltrans and request a PSR, and as
12 part of that, we would ask for that design extension.

A12-27

13 COUNCIL MEMBER HARRIS: Okay. So it's not that
14 State Clearing House. Okay.

15 MAYOR GLASS: The interesting thing about that
16 statement that we would need a funding plan to find
17 out, in the voter measure a few years ago that I
18 referenced, it specifically said before Rainer would
19 ever be used for mitigation in Environmental Impact
20 Reports, there would be a funding plan. So to not
21 have this answered and to have gone forward and be
22 painted into a corner of a box, that is just
23 incredible.

24 It goes to show you how empty an empty
25 promise can be in a ballot statement, when the promise

1 isn't binding. With that, that's subject for another
2 day. With that, we will go on to other Council
3 comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Report.
4 Anyone else? Mr. Healy?

5 COMMENTS BY COUNCIL MEMBER HEALY

6 COUNCIL MEMBER HEALY: Yes, thank you. So I
7 actually submitted my comments and questions in
8 writing, so I am not going to repeat those here.
9 Anyone who wants to read them are more than welcome
10 to. But I did want to touch upon this Caltrans
11 letter, and I guess my interpretation of the
12 suspending with respect to the interchange, is
13 somewhat less alarmist than others because I think
14 that's just their way of restating what we all know,
15 which is that they are not working on it until we have
16 a funding plan, until we do the weeding study, until
17 we come back and do the PSR.

18 I know Mr. Zimmer was standing up trying to
19 try address that. Was there anything Staff wanted to
20 address? I don't think it really tells us anything we
21 didn't know.

22 MR. ZIMMER: I agree with what you had just said.
23 I was surprised to see that as well when I read it
24 because that wasn't what the Council resolution had
25 stated. And my interpretation is the same as yours.

1 COUNCIL MEMBER HEALY: Thank you.

2 MAYOR GLASS: So to be clear, we have no funding
3 plan. Let's just take that away from the statement
4 tonight, that we have no funding plan. We never had
5 one. We may some day have one, but we don't.

6 With that, other comments? Mr. Albertson?

7 COMMENTS BY COUNCIL MEMBER ALBERTSON

8 COUNCIL MEMBER ALBERTSON: I am concerned mostly
9 about the down river flooding issues of this project.
10 Council Member Barrett referenced a one-inch upstream
11 from the project. I would like to see some more
12 numbers as to what the potential flooding issue or
13 water flow issue, not flooding issue -- but the flow
14 of water free-flow through here and the potential for
15 the Payran area, going through the weir and then back
16 up through the auto mall -- the outlet mall.

17 So those would be the issues for me. I would
18 like to see more clarification. Thank you.

19 MAYOR GLASS: Thank you. Council Member Miller?

20 COMMENTS BY COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER

21 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Yes, so I just want some
22 clarification on some issues that were raised by
23 members of the public. It's my understanding that the
24 traffic analysis is based on buildout under the
25 General Plan. Is that right?

Q12-28

1 MS. ERVIN: Yes, that is correct.

A12-28

2 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: So it's taking into
3 account the development of those parcels?

Q12-29

4 MS. ERVIN: That is correct.

A12-29

5 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Okay. And then the
6 second question I had was something Mr. Keller raised
7 about improper segmentation of the project, if there's
8 a -- and I just wondered if anybody that has any
9 insight into that or --

Q12-30

10 MR. DANLY: There is an easy answer. And when
11 people talk about segmentation -- but's it's not the
12 complete answer -- the easy answer is --

13 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: I knew it wasn't going to
14 be.

15 MR. DANLY: So when people usually talk about
16 improper segmentation that's not permitted under CEQA,
17 they are usually talking about -- or piecemealing --
18 they are talking about dividing a project into smaller
19 bits so they seem to not have potentially significant
20 impacts or impacts at all, and to avoid doing an
21 environmental analysis and EIR. So obviously, that's
22 not where we are with this project.

A12-30

23 There is -- I mean, it does have some
24 complexity to it -- and some of it has been discussed
25 tonight -- because there are phases, as has been

1 discussed previously I think by a couple of Members
2 and by Staff. This was -- this EIR and analysis is
3 part of what is kind of a race on the part of Staff to
4 preserve the very possibility of Rainer because, as I
5 think Council Member Healy mentioned -- and that's
6 accurate in terms of my understanding -- if we were
7 not timely in conducting needed environmental analysis
8 about the undercrossing, it wouldn't have a
9 possibility of being included in the widening. And if
10 it weren't included in the widening, it most likely
11 will never occur because that would actually require
12 reconstructing the freeway, re-raising it and a whole
13 host of problems in terms of the freeway. So that's
14 one factor.

15 Another factor is, as has also been
16 mentioned, there are some hurdles with respect to
17 satisfying Caltrans design criteria related to spacing
18 of interchanges. And there is not a current Caltrans
19 approved design process that they are willing to bring
20 forward because that hurdle exists.

21 And therefore, there has been different
22 designs over time to different stages of completion
23 with respect to what interchange configurations might
24 be pursued that have been looked at for purposes of
25 budgeting, for purposes of the Development Impact Fee

1 Program and what should be included for the cost of
2 the -- of the -- to provide for funding by buildout of
3 the Rainer Interchange improvements.

4 But there is currently no design on the books
5 for the full interchange. And that is because of some
6 of these considerations that the Council took the step
7 of creating a phasing distinction between an
8 undercrossing project and the full interchange
9 project, to preserve the possibility. So it's obvious
10 this -- we can't analyze a project that is purely
11 speculative, and CEQA doesn't require that.

12 The -- I guess I would ask maybe just for
13 Staff's help on characterizing how it is that that the
14 current EIR document is -- well, I guess I will say
15 myself, the current EIR document assesss the
16 undercrossing project that was created by the Council
17 action, because that's -- that's one that we have
18 sufficient specificity about for the analysis.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: Just to clarify some of
20 what you are talking about with respect to the
21 interchange that relates to distance between exits on
22 on the freeway and some of those issues that we have
23 talked about in the past, and so what you are saying
24 is that because the interchange is speculative at this
25 point because of some of those Caltrans requirements,

Q12-31

1 that we are not required to do an Environmental Impact
2 Report on that at this time?

3 MR. DANLY: Yes, the City is not committed to a
4 design -- an interchange design. They really can't
5 because of those prerequisites that we've talked
6 about. So this is a fairly complicated effort of -- a
7 Council-directed effort of advancing the project as
8 much as possible so as to continue to secure funding
9 for the project, preserve the possibility of doing the
10 project, and addressing all the legal related CEQA
11 requirements, including the environmental analysis,
12 and I don't know if Staff wants to perhaps add to
13 that.

A12-31

14 MS. ERVIN: The only thing I will add to that is
15 that the Rainer Crosstown Connector is a standalone
16 project that is distinct and separate from the
17 interchange. It can move forward without that and
18 operate completely accordingly and fulfill its
19 objective without that other piece.

20 MAYOR GLASS: Council Member Barrett?

21 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: I'm not done.

22 MAYOR GLASS: Oh. Thank you. Proceed.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER MILLER: So just -- I am almost
24 done. So just -- and I understand that it's that we
25 have to have this shovel ready so that when Caltrans

1 is ready to go, this has to be ready to go because
2 otherwise we've got -- we may not ever get it.

3 So the only other -- the only other comment I
4 had is -- and I raised this in the Planning Commission
5 meeting -- I am concerned about the floodplain issue,
6 and so I would echo Council Member Albertson's request
7 that we get a little more clarity around that when the
8 final EIR comes back to us. Thank you.

Q12-32

9 MAYOR GLASS: Thank you. Council Member Barrett?

10 COMMENTS BY COUNCIL MEMBER BARRETT

11 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRETT: Yes, I was just wanted
12 to ask a question that you brought up. I agree that
13 this was a standalone project and that was the intent
14 of our vote in January 2010, from my perspective. But
15 can you actually call the interchange a purely
16 speculative project and have our General Plan be
17 basing development on the existence of that before
18 2025?

19 MR. DANLY: I don't mean "speculative" in the
20 sense of it is a General-Plan-anticipated project, and
21 it is in the cumulative traffic analyses, as we all
22 know and have visited many times, but precisely what
23 that design is, we don't know what this is. I mean,
24 there has been different designs looked at at various
25 times, and some were called the Caltrans preferred

1 alternative, and some were called the City preferred
2 alternative.

3 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRETT: But I also heard it
4 stated that the reason we don't know that is because
5 have no funding for it. And you can't have a
6 mitigation --

7 MR. DANLY: No, no, that's not what I said. What
8 I actually talked about, we have a mitigation fee
9 program actually that does provide funding for it.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRETT: Well, I think I heard
11 here this evening that there was no -- that we can't
12 have this project, the interchange project, come
13 before Caltrans because we don't have funding for it,
14 and they won't let's us go forward with the PSR until
15 there is funding for it.

16 MR. DANLY: Well, there's -- I would -- I would
17 think it's important to consider the distinction
18 between a funding program and money in hand. So we
19 have -- we have done an analysis and a fee study,
20 prepared it consistent the Mitigation Fee Act for
21 traffic impacts, that looks at cumulative traffic
22 impacts. And it has cost estimates for a Rainer
23 interchange based on some of the factors that we
24 talked about. And that's in the fee program, and
25 those fees are being collected.

1 And it's true that, from a timing standpoint,
2 that the actual possession of those fee proceeds
3 depends on the development occurring first, and that's
4 the projected build-out time. So that's a fee
5 program, it's a funding program, it exists, it's based
6 on the best analysis we have now, but that's not money
7 in-hand for purposes of letting a construction
8 contract. Right? So that's -- I'm not to --

9 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRETT: Or even getting a PSR,
10 let alone a contract.

11 MAYOR GLASS: For those who are keeping score at
12 home, "PSR" stands for "project study report."

13 MR. DANLY: Right. And I am not trying to be
14 cute or debate things with you.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRETT: What I am just saying is
16 I think we're getting dangerously close to saying that
17 we have a mitigation that is not actually economically
18 viable, which then throws the whole -- that becomes a
19 non-viable mitigation under CEQA.

20 MR. DANLY: That's not -- Council Member, that's
21 not what I said. What I said is that we actually have
22 a funding program in place to fund those improvements
23 based on the best estimates that we have currently
24 and, you know, that is the current program.

25 MAYOR GLASS: The interesting crux of it -- it's

1 one of the better discussions we've ever had around
2 this -- because the interesting crux of is that it's
3 being used for traffic relief, and where it's
4 speculative to me is that, the fact that Caltrans
5 doesn't say they will allow an exception. That is
6 what we are looking for, is for an exception from
7 Caltrans to their standard.

8 And they won't tell you whether they will
9 allow an exception, and here we are relying on
10 something as if there is no cloud other than the
11 financing fanning, but the financing would just get you
12 to where you could get a ruling from Caltrans as to
13 whether they will make an exception. That's what is
14 speculative. Right? So that is why we are painted
15 into a corner on traffic.

16 MR. DANLY: Well, then I think maybe we should
17 clarify, Mr. Mayor, that the exception relates to the
18 full interchange, not the undercrossing structure.

Q12-33

19 MAYOR GLASS: No, that's right. That's right.
20 That is why I am glad that this thing was bifurcated
21 because we are look actually at the achievable for
22 traffic relief here. This is a good discussion
23 because it's the first time the community is starting
24 to hear about the complexities of this, rather than
25 who is for or against it, how is it achievable or is

A12-33

1 it even achievable, no matter who is for or against
2 it.

3 Vice Mayor Kearney?

4 VICE MAYOR KEARNEY: So as has happened once
5 before, I am the last one to speak, and so a lot of
6 the things that other people have already been
7 addressed, a lot of my concerns have already been
8 addressed, but I did want to make to highlight the
9 hydrology and water quality -- I don't know why I
10 can't say that word today -- but that we are looking
11 at the impacts of the hydrology of this project and
12 also factoring in the upstream improvements that we
13 have done and how those might be helpful, if at all,
14 with this project. And so I wanted to touch on that.

15 And then there was a slide that goes over the
16 three different options that we had and how not one
17 was better than another. And I think that, you know,
18 when we do discuss this project as an undercrossing,
19 that it's important to remember that not building it,
20 even if it's just an undercrossing, is we are going to
21 be stuck with where we are at now.

22 So it's important for folks to remember that
23 when we have looked at the traffic studies and the
24 protections and looking at full buildout, that doesn't
25 mean that full buildout is going to happen, but that

1 is what we have to study no matter what, when it comes
2 the these reports.

3 And I think sometimes people get a little
4 confused with that, so just to remind folks that that
5 is at full buildout, whether or not that is going to
6 happen. And there are other traffic mitigations that
7 are part of full buildout that aren't being discussed
8 at this point. So I just wanted to touch on that.
9 Thank you.

10 MAYOR GLASS: Thank you. Mr. Healy?

11 COUNCIL MEMBER HEALY: If folks are done, I am
12 prepared to make a motion.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRETT: Before you make a motion
14 can I ask Staff a question?

15 COUNCIL MEMBER HEALY: Sure.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRETT: I think you guys heard a
17 lot -- I mean, I think what we said isn't terribly
18 different from what the Planning Commission said, but
19 I think there was more intensity, particularly about
20 the floodplain issue. And I know that Council Member
21 Miller brought that up at the Planning Commission. So
22 my concern is, do you believe the Draft EIR is in such
23 a state that these issues can be adequately addressed
24 through an F-EIR, or do you think you need to go back
25 and address that separately?

1 MS. ERVIN: That is something that we have been
2 considering and discussed, and we absolutely feel the
3 analysis is completely adequate, and with some
4 additional clarification and some background
5 information, that we can provide that additional
6 information to meet the request.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRETT: Thank you.

8 MAYOR GLASS: Mr. Healy?

9 VICE MAYOR KEARNEY: Sorry to jump in front. I
10 was not satisfied with the mitigation on the Transit
11 Operation Center, so if we can get a little bit more
12 information on that, I think I talk about transit at
13 every meeting here, and I have significant concerns
14 about how the buses will enter and exit and whether or
15 not it's adequately addressed and the flow is mapped
16 out properly with this. Thank you.

17 MAYOR GLASS: Anything else before we entertain a
18 motion by Mr. Healy?

19 (No response.)

20 MAYOR GLASS: Mr. Healy?

21 COUNCIL MEMBER HEALY: Thank you, Mr. Mayor. So
22 I will make a motion at this point to give direction
23 to Staff to move forward with the preparation of the
24 Final Environmental Impact Report. And I would just
25 say that if Staff, at some point in their discretion,

1 feels that there is a need to recirculate a draft,
2 come back and let us know. But unless we hear from
3 you, we will assume that we will be seeing an F-EIR.

4 VICE MAYOR KEARNEY: I will second it.

5 MAYOR GLASS: We have a motion and a second. Is
6 there any further discussion?

7 (No response.)

8 MAYOR GLASS: If not, we will go by the lights.

9 (Whereupon, a vote was held.)

10 MAYOR GLASS: The motion carries unanimously. I
11 want to thank those that came up with this plan way
12 back when to bifurcate the process, City Staff, I
13 think it was Mr. Zimmer, Sue Lacky, Vince Morango,
14 Former Mayor Pam Torliete. The City Council majority
15 at the the time was what people would call an
16 environmental majority, took this approach and maybe
17 not all seven embraced it, I don't really remember,
18 but it's good that we've made this step of progress.
19 The City should have never have been walled in in
20 1962, like it was with this freeway. So with that we
21 will move on.

22 (Whereupon, other unrelated adgenda
23 items were heard and these proceedings
24 concluded at 10:25 o'clock p.m.)
25

1 State OF CALIFORNIA)
)
 2 COUNTY OF MARIN)

3 I, DANA DIBASILIO TOGNINI, a Certified
 4 Shorthand Reporter of the State of California, duly
 5 authorized to administer oaths pursuant to Section 8211
 6 of the California Code of Civil Procedure, do hereby
 7 certify that the foregoing proceedings were reported by
 8 me, a disinterested person, and were thereafter
 9 transcribed under my direction into typewriting and is
 10 a true and correct transcription of said proceedings.

11 I further certify that I am not of counsel or
 12 attorney for either or any of the parties in the
 13 foregoing deposition and caption named, nor in any way
 14 interested in the outcome of the cause named in said
 15 caption.

16 Dated the 20th day of September, 2014.

17
 18 Dana DiBasilio Tognini
 19 DANA DIBASILIO TOGNINI
 20 CSR No. 10118 (California)
 21
 22
 23
 24
 25

**RESPONSE TO COMMENTS MADE AT THE CITY COUNCIL MEETING,
SEPTEMBER 8, 2014**

Commenters include: Wayne Leach, John Chaney, David Keller, Council Member Barrett, Council Member Miller

Note: Some comments were responded to during the testimony. Where this occurred, the comment is labeled Q11-1, Q11-2, etc., and the subsequent response following the comment is labeled a corresponding A11-1, A11-2, etc. The responses to comments that follows the testimony addresses all remaining comments that were not adequately addressed in the testimony.

Response Q12-6: The comment requests additional project description to describe how future connections to nearby parcels would be made in the future. Please see Response 10-1 above.

Response Q12-7: The comment requests a discussion of the city park and rail transit node described in the 2025 General Plan. Please see Response 10-2 above.

Response Q12-8: The comment requests a discussion of the cost of acquiring a sufficient right-of-way for the project. Please see Response 10-3 above.

Response Q12-9: The comment requests a discussion of the impacts associated with dedicating the need of right-of-way in lieu of development fees or traffic impact fees. Please see Response 10-3 above.

Response Q12-10: The comment requests a discussion of the developer-dependent program identified in the Staff report. Please see Response 10-3 above.

Response Q12-11: The comment requests that the DEIR address areas outside of the floodplain where fill would occur as a result of the project. While this is useful information, it is not part of the City of Petaluma Floodway and Floodplain District Ordinance as long as it is not going into waterways covered by sections 404 and 401 of the Clean Water Act. The EIR is used for determining the potential impacts to the environment caused by the project. A description of fill outside the floodplain that is not in waterways covered by Section 404 and 401 is beyond the scope of this EIR.

Response Q12-12: The comment requests that the EIR document how the project would not contribute to flooding in the area. Section 4.7 of the DEIR describes the impacts of building the bridge in the floodplain and describes the mitigations used to limit the project's potential flooding impacts to less than significant levels.

Response Q12-13: The commenter notes that the traffic calculations did not include the cumulative development enabled and induced by this project. The cumulative impacts analysis does consider the traffic generated by all potential development as envisioned under the city's General Plan. Please see Master Response 1: Cumulative Analysis.

Response Q12-14: The comment notes the EIR did not take into account traffic from induced projects. Please see Master Response 1: Cumulative Analysis.

Response Q12-15: The comment notes the EIR fails to locate, identify and account for and address, analyze, or mitigate any of the connections to the roadway that would happen to provide

access to developable parcels. Future access roadways are not currently proposed nor are they analyzed as part of the DEIR. However, the alignment of the Rainier Avenue roadway carefully considered future possible connect points and was designed so as to not preclude possible future access roads or connects. Please see Master Response 1: Cumulative Analysis.

Response Q12-16: The comment notes the document does not discuss downstream flooding. Section 4.7.3.4 notes the project would not change the downstream flood elevations. As such, no change is needed.

Response Q12-17: The comment asks how many additional acres of asphalt the project would use to provide access on Shasta to the additional properties that will be developed. Since the connections to future properties are not part of the project description, this detail is beyond the scope of the EIR.

Response Q12-18: The comment notes that the DEIR does not include cumulative impacts of all of the development [that could connect to the project]. This is incorrect; the cumulative impacts analysis assumes full buildout of the remaining development potential as identified in the General Plan. Please see Master Response 1: Cumulative Analysis.

Response Q12-19: The comment notes there are a number of mitigations being developed later such as biological, hydraulic, and hydrologic, which is not permissible under CEQA. CEQA requires that “formulation of mitigation measures should not be deferred until some future time” (15126.4(a)(1)(B)). However, the mitigations to purchase mitigation credits for impacts to riparian habitat and the mitigation to further study hydraulics during final design are not deferred mitigations. The potentially significant impacts have been identified and mitigation measures have been provided that would avoid, reduce or offset impacts to levels below significance. They are committed mitigation measures that must be undertaken as part of the approval of the project. The City would be bound to the specific steps outlined in each mitigation.

Response Q12-20: The comment notes the DEIR does not recognize the gravity of building in the floodplain above the flood project. This is incorrect, an analysis of floodplain impacts was completed and included in section 4.7.3.4 of the DEIR.

Response Q12-21: The comment asks what is the impact of flooding for the full build-out enabled by the proposed project. Please see Master Response 1: Cumulative Analysis.

Response Q12-22: The comment requests additional information be added to show where the construction staging area and access roads will be. Please note section 3.3.4.5 describes that the construction staging areas would be located within the plan line.

Response Q12-23: The comment notes that retaining walls should not be put in the floodplain. As noted on Figure 3-3, the retaining walls would be a feature of the new bridge and would not impact flooding. Figure 3.3 was modified to exclude the retaining walls.

Response Q12-24: The comment notes that there should be a more detailed discussion of Alternative B because it is a superior alternative. See Response 7-35.

Response Q12-25: The comment inquires about the project construction window. See Response 3-1.

Response Q12-26: The comment inquires about project objective to alleviate traffic. See Master Response 5.

Response Q12-32: The comment requests additional clarity be added to the floodplain issue in the FEIR. Please see Master Response 7: Flooding.

3. CORRECTIONS AND ADDITIONS TO THE DRAFT EIR

The following corrections have been made to the Rainier Avenue Cross-Town Connector Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) in response to the comments received during the public review period. Changes to the DEIR are listed by Section and page number. Additions to the DEIR are identified by underlined text and deletions to the DEIR are identified by strikethrough text. In addition, all applicable Section 4 (Environmental Impact Analysis) impact and mitigation measure revisions reflected below are hereby incorporated into Section 2 (Summary), Table 2-1 (Summary of Environmental Impacts & Mitigation Measures, of the DEIR).

3.1 COVER

There are no changes to this page.

3.2 TITLE PAGE

There are no changes to this page.

3.3 SECTION 1 INTRODUCTION

There is no change to this section.

3.4 SECTION 2 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Page 2-8 “The City of Petaluma will mitigate for impacts on riparian habitat. The final mitigation ratio will be determined during consultation with the resources agencies.”

Page 2-30 The first column of “Impact CUMULATIVE TRANS-1” in Table 2-2 identifies 6 intersections as operating at unacceptable levels of service under cumulative conditions. These 6 intersections have unacceptable conditions under the No Project alternative only. With the Rainier Cross-Town Connector project, four of these intersections improve to acceptable levels of service (Old Redwood Highway/North McDowell Boulevard, Petaluma Boulevard North/Corona Road (Skillman Lane), East Washington Street/North McDowell Boulevard, and East Washington Street/Payran Street). One intersection, the East Washington Street/Highway 101 Southbound Ramps, remains at LOS E but has a 17% reduction in volume with the proposed project and is not considered a significant impact. One remaining intersection, Rainier Avenue/Petaluma Boulevard North, would be constructed with the project and would operate at LOS E or F with the project without mitigation. Mitigation is proposed to reduce this impact to less than significant. The corrected version of Table 2-2 for CUMULATIVE TRANS-1 is copied below.

Table 2-2. Summary of Significant Environmental Impacts and Mitigation Measures (DEIR page 2-30)		
Significant Environmental Impact	Mitigation Measure	Level of Impact After Mitigation
Transportation		
<p>Impact CUMULATIVE TRANS-1. Intersection Levels of Service (LOS) would operate at unacceptable LOS E and F during the AM and PM peak hour, respectively, under cumulative conditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Old Redwood Highway/North McDowell Boulevard — LOS E during the PM peak hour • Petaluma Boulevard North/Corona Road (Skillman Lane) — LOS E during the AM and PM peak hours • East Washington Street/North McDowell Boulevard — LOS F during the AM and PM peak hours • East Washington Street/Highway 101 Southbound Ramps — LOS F during the AM and PM peak hours • East Washington Street/Ellis Street — LOS F and E during the AM and PM peak hours, respectively • East Washington Street/Payran Street — LOS E during the PM peak hour <p>With the project in 2020, all intersections would operate at acceptable levels of service under</p>	<p>Mitigation Measure CUMULATIVE TRANS-1: The extension of Rainier Avenue to Petaluma Boulevard North would have an impact on Petaluma Boulevard North. The exact location (intersection) of the impact would depend on the construction timing of the Shasta Avenue extension. At this time there are no design plans for the Shasta Avenue extension and its construction timing relative to the construction of the Rainier Avenue extension is also unknown.</p> <p>If Shasta Avenue extension is not constructed during the buildout of the General Plan then the project would need to provide the intersection configuration at the Petaluma Boulevard North/Rainier Avenue intersection described in Mitigation Measure TRANS-9 in Section 4.12. This intersection configuration would result in acceptable LOS C and LOS D in the AM and PM peak hours, respectively. This would reduce the impact to less than significant.</p> <p>If the Shasta Avenue extension is constructed during the buildout of the General Plan then the project could potentially have an impact at the Petaluma Boulevard North/Sycamore Lane (Shasta Avenue) extension depending on the intersection configuration that is provided at the intersection as part of the Shasta Avenue extension.</p> <p>Restriping the existing westbound approach to Petaluma Boulevard North/Sycamore Lane (Shasta Avenue) to provide an exclusive left-turn lane and a shared left/through/right-turn lane plus an exclusive northbound right-turn lane would improve the intersection to LOS C in the PM peak hour. However, this additional right-turn lane would cause the pedestrian crossing distance to increase which would cause a secondary impact to pedestrians according to criteria set forth in the Petaluma General Plan. In order to reduce impacts to pedestrians resulting from increased crossing distances, a median refuge (at least five feet wide) should be installed for pedestrians crossing the south leg of Petaluma Boulevard.</p> <p>The Shasta Avenue extension project would be required to go through the City approval and CEQA documentation process to identify its impacts and mitigations prior to its construction. Presumably, it would identify the need to improve the Petaluma Boulevard North/Sycamore Lane (Shasta Avenue) intersection.</p>	<p>LTS</p>

<p>cumulative conditions with the project except:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">•<i>East Washington Street/Highway 101 Southbound Ramps – LOS E during the AM peak hour. The project would reduce volumes at this intersection by 17 percent in the AM hour and the project’s impact on this intersection was therefore considered not significant.</i>•<i>Rainier Avenue/Petaluma Boulevard North (without Shasta Avenue Extension – LOS E and F during the AM and PM peak hours, respectively</i>•<i>Petaluma Boulevard North/Sycamore Lane (Shasta Avenue) – LOS F during the PM peak hour</i>		
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3.4.1 Section 3 Project Description

Page 3-1 “In January 2010, the City of Petaluma City Council separated the interchange and cross-town connector into two independent ~~but concurrent~~ elements to allow coordination of the cross-town connector with the Sonoma County Transportation Authority (SCTA) Marin Sonoma Narrows (MSN) C2 project that will undertake mainline and ramp improvements along Highway 101 from just south of Caulfield Lane to just south of Old Redwood Highway. The interchange project was suspended at that time until future analysis and consideration by the City of Petaluma City Council.”

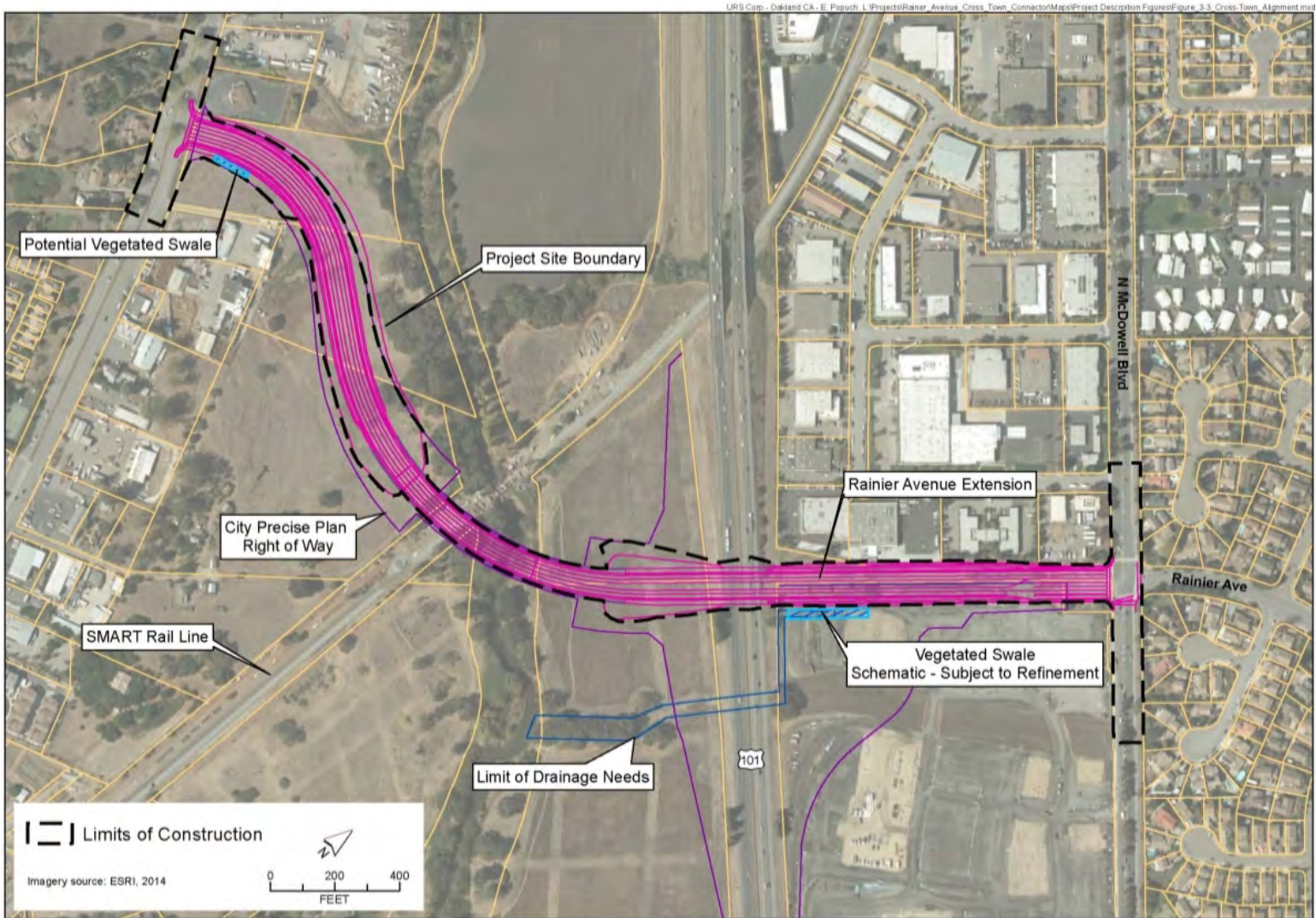
Page 3-3 “The MSN C2 project has been designed and the Record of Decision was published ~~on December 4, 2013~~ in October 2009.”

Page 3-3 “~~Therefore, the project is needed to mitigate traffic impacts that would occur under full build-out of the General Plan and would need to be constructed as full build-out occurs.~~”

“Therefore, the project is one of several projects that would be needed to address traffic impacts presented under full build out in the Petaluma General Plan”

Page 3-8 Figure 3.3 was modified to remove the retaining wall.

Figure 3.3 Construction Limits



URS City of Petaluma
Rainier Avenue Cross-Town Connector Project

Figure 3-3
Construction Limits

Page 3-11 “These facilities would be modified later ~~when~~ if a Rainier Avenue/Highway 101 interchange is constructed.”

Page 3-19 “Existing sanitary sewer systems and a 33-inch aqueduct lie within the ~~NWP~~/SMART corridor.”

Page 3-21 **Table 3-3. Potential Permits and Approvals**

Lead Agency	Permit/Approval
Local	
City of Petaluma	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grading Permit • Street Encroachment Permit
State Agencies	
California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 1602 Streambed Alteration Agreement • Incidental Take Permit • Review and comment on wetlands impacts and sensitive species
California Regional Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit • Section 401 certification for water quality
California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encroachment Permit (<u>If needed</u>) • Maintenance Agreement to establish the roles and responsibilities for maintaining the Rainier Avenue undercrossing
California Public Utilities Commission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approval of Formal Application for bridge crossing over SMART corridor
Federal Agencies	
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section 404 permit for fill activities • Wetland Delineation Approval
United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation with USFWS and NMFS regarding fish and wildlife resource impacts

3.5 SECTION 4 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ANALYSIS

3.5.1 Section 4.1 Aesthetics

Page 4.1-2 “With the exception of Highway 101 and the ~~Northwestern Pacific Railroad (NWP)~~ SMART rail tracks, the project site’s location is undeveloped. The area of the proposed Rainier/101 undercrossing is developed as a transportation corridor (Highway 101), while the area to the west of Highway 101 and the Petaluma River includes the SMART rail tracks ~~for the NWP, which is proposed for development of the SMART rail project.~~”

Page 4.1-4 “Visible structures within the project site include Highway 101, the ~~NWP~~SMART tracks and at-grade bridge crossing of the Petaluma River, and electrical housing units for a water pump station near North McDowell Boulevard.”

3.5.2 Section 4.2 Air Quality

Page 4.2-1 “The project site lies within the City of Petaluma in the ~~adjacent to the~~ southern portion of ~~Sonoma~~ Petaluma Valley, approximately 11 miles north of the San Pablo Bay. ~~The Sonoma Valley that stretches from Santa Rosa to the San Pablo Bay is known as the Cotati Valley at the north end and the Petaluma Valley at the south end. The Petaluma Valley refers to the southern portion of the valley that stretches from Santa Rosa to the San Pablo Bay; the northern portion of this valley is known as the Cotati Valley.~~ To the east, Petaluma Valley is bordered by the Sonoma Mountains, with the San Pablo Bay at the southeast end of the valley.”

“The air pollution potential of the ~~Petaluma~~ ~~Sonoma~~-Valley is generally low due to its link to the Petaluma Gap and its low population density, but could be high under stagnant morning conditions or during eastern or southeastern wind patterns bringing pollution from the Carquinez Strait Region and the Central Valley. if there were significant sources of pollution nearby.”

3.5.3 Section 4.3 Biological Resources

Page 4.3-19 “New plantings shall be monitored by an approved qualified biologist or horticulturalist annually for 3-5 years, or until the banks are adequately revegetated to prevent erosion and sedimentation at these areas and ground cover is equivalent to pre-project conditions.”

Page 4.3-21 “The City of Petaluma shall mitigate for impacts on riparian habitat at a 1:1 ratio or as deemed appropriate by the regulatory agencies. The final mitigation ratio will be determined during consultation with the resources agencies. The City Shall first seek to provide mitigation onsite proximate to the River, then within other nearby areas of the watershed, and as a final option through offsite means via an approved mitigation bank.”

3.5.4 Section 4.5 Geology and Soils

Page 4.5-1 “Elevations in the City of Petaluma range from sea level to approximately ~~2,295~~ over 50 feet above mean sea level.”

3.5.5 Section 4.7 Hydrology and Water Quality

Page 4.7-3 “A portion of the project site is located within the Petaluma River’s 100-year floodplain as indicated by Figure ~~3-3~~ 4.7-2.”

3.5.6 Section 4.8 Land Use and Planning Policy

Page 4.8-1 “Measure I ensures that urban development and provision of city water and sewer services are contained within the UGB through December 31, ~~2018~~2025.”

Page 4.8-2 “Only three parcels contain any development—APN 007-380-002, which is developed with a small, City owned pump station, APN 048-142-016, which is developed with the ~~Northwestern Pacific Railroad (NWP)~~ Sonoma Marin Area Rapid Rail Transit (SMART) tracks, and the State owned and developed Highway 101 right-of-way.”

Page 4.8-12 Table 4.8-1 “~~NWP/SMART~~ corridor”

3.5.7 Section 4.11 Public Services and Utilities

Page 4.11-2 “A 33-inch aqueduct lies within the NWP/SMART corridor.”

3.5.8 Section 4.12 Transportation

Page 4.12-11 Footnote added “The following PeMS Vehicle Detection Stations and Traffic Census Stations were used to collect data for the mainline traffic analysis: 402631, 402632, 402642, 42831, 42822, 42833, 42822, 42819, and 42815. Counts are from dates with 100 percent observed volumes, between 2010 and 2012.”

Page 4.12-16 “There is no current passenger ~~or freight rail~~ service in the study area. Freight service on a Northwestern Pacific Railroad line owned by SMART is currently running in the project area operated until 2001.”

Page 4.12-20 “There is no current passenger ~~or freight rail~~ service in the study area. Freight service on a Northwestern Pacific Railroad line owned by SMART is currently running in the project area ~~operated until 2001.~~”

Page 4.12-22 “~~The LOS traffic analysis in this section uses a dual baseline approach. That is, €~~The project’s LOS traffic impacts are evaluated ~~both against existing conditions and against~~ background (i.e., No Project) conditions as they are expected to be in 2020 (Opening Year) and at the time of the General Plan Buildout (Cumulative Year). This section presents the Opening Year evaluation. The Cumulative Year analysis is presented in Section 56.”

Page 4.12-23 “Opening Year No Project Forecasts. Linear interpolation between existing and Cumulative No Project forecasts was used to develop Opening Year No Project forecasts. This approach accounts for partial build-out of the Petaluma General Plan, including reasonably foreseeable projects in the vicinity of the Project such as Sid Commons and Petaluma Outlet Mall Expansion. Access to these sites would be provided through other nearby roadways such as Graylawn Avenue, Burlington Drive, and the existing Petaluma Outlet Mall without the Rainier Avenue Extension in place.”

Page 4.12-35 “The construction management plan shall be submitted to Caltrans for review and approval prior to commencing construction. Implementation of mitigation measure TRANS-2 would reduce the...”

Page 4.12-39 “The new project intersection at Petaluma Boulevard North/Rainier Avenue includes the following lane geometries:

- Northbound Approach –Two through lanes and one right-turn lane
- Southbound Approach - Two through lanes and one left-turn lane
- Westbound Approach - One left-turn lane and one right turn lane

Without the project, traffic flow is uninterrupted at the location of this proposed intersection, and would remain uninterrupted in the future study years without the project. Consequently, Table 4.12-10 does not list a level of service for the existing or No Build condition. For purposes of comparison to the project, the existing and No Build could be considered “acceptable.” This intersection was forecasted to operate at unacceptable LOS F during the PM peak hour under

Opening Year conditions. This would be a significant impact since the level of service standard for this intersection is D.

Page 4.12-37 and 38 Table 4.12-10 was updated to insert the existing (2010) and future year (2020) dates used in the study:

Table 4.12-10. Opening Year (2020) Intersection Operating Conditions

Int ID	Intersection	Traffic Control	Peak Hour	Existing (2012)		No Project (2020)		With Project (2020)	
				Delay ²	LOS	Delay ²	LOS	Delay ²	LOS
1	Old Redwood Highway/North McDowell Boulevard	Signal	AM PM	31 55	C D ³	31 48	C D	30 32	C C
2	Old Redwood Highway/ Highway 101 Northbound Ramps	Signal	AM PM	12 12	B B	<10 13	A B	<10 12	A B
3	Old Redwood Highway/ Highway 101 Southbound Ramps	Signal	AM PM	21 25	C C	17 20	B B ⁴	18 13	B B
4	Old Redwood Highway/Stony Point Road(Industrial Avenue)	Signal	AM PM	28 32	C C	46 34	D C	50 32	D C
5	Corona Road/North McDowell Boulevard	Signal	AM PM	37 42	D D	40 39	D D	35 35	C ⁵ D
6	Petaluma Boulevard North/Corona Road (Skillman Lane)	Signal	AM PM	39 36	D D	55 72	E E	44 47	D D
7	Rainier Avenue/North McDowell Boulevard ⁶	Signal	AM PM	10 <10	B A	11 <10	B A	33 44	C D
8	Rainier Avenue/Petaluma Boulevard North ⁶	Signal	AM PM	-- --	-- --	-- --	-- --	40 > 80	D F
9	Petaluma Boulevard North /Sycamore Lane(Shasta Avenue)	Signal	AM PM	<10 <10	A A	<10 <10	A A	<10 16	A B
10	Petaluma Boulevard North/Magnolia Avenue (Payran Street)	Signal	AM PM	19 20	B C	21 28	C C	27 42	C D
11	East Washington Street/McDowell Boulevard	Signal	AM PM	38 54	D D	> 80 > 80	F F	44 43	D D
12	East Washington Street/ Highway 101 Northbound Ramps	Signal	AM PM	11 17	B B	23 11	C B	<10 24	A C
13	East Washington Street/ Highway 101 Southbound Ramps	Signal	AM PM	41 28	D C	> 80 51	F D	49 32	D C
14	East Washington Street/ Ellis Street	Signal	AM PM	20 <10	C A	55 37	D D	26 24	C C

Table 4.12-10. Opening Year (2020) Intersection Operating Conditions

Int ID	Intersection	Traffic Control	Peak Hour	Existing (2012)		No Project (2020)		With Project (2020)	
				Delay ²	LOS	Delay ²	LOS	Delay ²	LOS
15	East Washington Street /Payran Street	Signal	AM	20	B ⁴	33	C	24	C
			PM	26	C	48	D	30	C
16	East Washington Street/Lakeville Street	Signal	AM	23	C	29	C	24	C
			PM	28	C	49	D	31	C

Notes: **BOLD** indicates unacceptable conditions.

- Existing represents 2010 (traffic counts were used to verify 2008 data), and future Opening Year is considered 2020.
- Delay is in average delay per vehicle at signalized intersections in seconds.
- This intersection operates below the threshold for LOS E of 55.1 seconds of delay.
- This intersection operates below the threshold for LOS B of 20.1 seconds of delay.
- This intersection operates below the threshold for LOS D of 35.1 seconds of delay.
- Intersection constructed or modified as part of the project. The existing intersection of Rainier Avenue/North McDowell Boulevard would change from a three-way to a four-way intersection with the Project. Rainier Avenue/Petaluma Boulevard North would be a new intersection.

Source: Fehr & Peers July 2013.

Page 4.12-39 “The project would relieve some of the traffic growth and congestion on Corona Road and East Washington Street by providing an additional separated grade crossing of Highway 101. With the project, all three intersections operating unacceptably in Opening Year would improve to an acceptable LOS D or better.

3.6 SECTION 5 ALTERNATIVES

3.6.1 Section 5.3 Project Objectives

Page 5-2 “Facilitate opportunities for Not preclude future connections from adjacent parcels along the roadway.”

3.7 SECTION 6 CEQA-REQUIRED CONCLUSIONS

There is no change to this section.

3.8 SECTION 7 REPORT PREPARATION

There is no change to this section.

3.9 SECTION 8 REFERENCES

There is no change to this section.

4. MITIGATION MONITORING AND REPORTING PROGRAM

Section 21081.6 of the Public Resources Code requires a Lead Agency to adopt a “reporting or monitoring program for the changes made to the project or conditions of project approval, adopted in order to mitigate or avoid significant effects on the environment” (Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program [MMRP], §15097 of the *CEQA Guidelines* provides additional direction on mitigation monitoring or reporting). The City of Petaluma is the Lead Agency and the project sponsor for the Rainier Cross-Town Connector project and is therefore responsible for enforcing and monitoring most of the mitigation measures in this mitigation monitoring and reporting program.

The DEIR was prepared to address the potential environmental impacts of the proposed project. Where appropriate, this document identified project design features or recommended mitigation measures to avoid or to mitigate identified potential impacts to a level where no significant impact on the environment would occur. This MMRP is designed to monitor implementation of the mitigation measures identified for the project in the DEIR.

The MMRP for the Rainier Cross-Town Connector project will be in place throughout all phases of the project. The project sponsor shall be responsible for implementing all mitigation measures unless otherwise noted.

Environmental Impact	Mitigation Measure	Responsible Monitoring Party	Time Frame/Monitoring Milestone
Air Quality/Greenhouse Gas Emissions			
<p>Impact AQ-8: Construction of the project would expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations that could result in cancer and noncancer risks.</p>	<p>Mitigation Measure AQ/GHG-8: All diesel fueled off-road construction equipment shall achieve an 8 percent reduction in diesel particulate matter emissions compared to Tier 2 engines. Acceptable options for reducing emissions to these levels include the use of late model engines, low-emission diesel products, alternative fuels, engine retrofit technology, after-treatment products, add-on devices such as particulate filters, and/or other options as such become available.</p> <p>With mitigation, the impact on the resident can be reduced to 9.8 in one million, which is less than the BAAQMD’s significance threshold of 10 in one million. Therefore the impact on sensitive receptors would be less than significant after mitigation.</p>	<p>City of Petaluma, Construction Contractor</p>	<p>Prior to issuance of construction permits and during construction</p>
Biological Resources			
<p>Impact BIO-3: The project would 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 Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Mitigation Measure BIO-1 to BIO-3, BIO-7, and BIO-8 would be required.</p>	<p>Mitigation Measure BIO-1: In order to reduce potential construction related impacts on riparian habitat associated with the Petaluma River, the City of Petaluma shall implement the following measures:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Construction activities adjacent to the channel of the Petaluma River (specifically, in the coast live oak riparian woodland depicted on Figure 4.3-1 of the Draft EIR) shall be conducted during the dry season (June 15 through October 15) to minimize the release of sediment into the Petaluma River. 2. Disturbance to existing vegetation shall be limited to the project site. 3. Equipment parking, construction access, supply logistics, equipment maintenance, and other construction-related activities shall take place within the designated construction staging area. 4. The amount of disturbance within the project site shall be minimized to the extent necessary to accomplish the proposed project. Topsoil shall be removed, stockpiled, 	<p>Construction Contractor</p>	<p>Pre-construction Construction Post-construction</p> <p>Monitoring for new plantings annually for 5 years, or until the banks are adequately revegetated to prevent erosion and sedimentation at these areas</p>

Environmental Impact	Mitigation Measure	Responsible Monitoring Party	Time Frame/Monitoring Milestone
	<p>covered, and encircled with silt fencing to prevent loss or movement of the soil into the Petaluma River. All disturbed soils shall undergo erosion control treatment prior to the rainy season and after construction is terminated. Treatment typically includes temporary seeding with native species and sterile straw mulch. All topsoil shall be replaced in a manner as close as possible to pre-disturbance conditions.</p> <p>5. Where practicable, all temporarily disturbed areas shall be restored to preconstruction conditions. Temporarily impacted areas shall be revegetated with an appropriate assemblage of native riparian and upland vegetation suitable for the area. New plantings shall be monitored by an approved qualified biologist or horticulturalist annually for 5 years, or until the banks are adequately revegetated to prevent erosion and sedimentation at these areas and ground cover is equivalent to pre-project conditions. Monitoring in a given area may conclude early if adequate ground vegetation coverage has been met for two consecutive years. Additional plantings shall be implemented if adequate vegetation cover is not attained. When practicable, invasive exotic plants shall be removed from the project site.</p> <p>6. All construction material, wastes, debris, sediment, rubbish, vegetation, trash, fencing, etc. shall be removed from the site once the project is completed and transported to an authorized disposal area per all federal, state, and local laws and regulations.</p>		
	<p>Mitigation Measure BIO-2: The City of Petaluma shall implement the following measures during construction to minimize possible discharge of sediment and pollutants into the Petaluma River:</p> <p>1. Install and maintain silt fences immediately downstream of disturbed areas and install and maintain erosion control blankets on all disturbed ground. Project proponents shall</p>	<p>City of Petaluma, Construction Contractor</p>	<p>Pre-Construction Construction</p>

Environmental Impact	Mitigation Measure	Responsible Monitoring Party	Time Frame/Monitoring Milestone
	<p>ensure that sediment-control devices are installed and maintained correctly. The devices shall be inspected frequently (e.g., daily) to ensure they are functioning properly. Controls shall be immediately repaired or replaced or additional controls shall be installed as necessary. Sediment that is captured in these controls may be disposed of on-site in an appropriate approved area, or off-site at an approved disposal site.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Divert concentrated runoff around equipment, vehicles, and materials storage areas. 3. Minimize the amount of construction materials stored on-site. Soil materials stockpiled at the site must be covered with plastic sheeting at the end of each workday until permanently protected with rock ballast materials. 4. Designate areas of the site for the delivery and removal of construction materials. 5. Store materials in a manner that limits exposure to precipitation and controls storm-water runoff. 6. Handle construction materials (e.g., concrete) in a manner that prevents direct discharges into the Petaluma River. The discharge or creation of potential discharge, of any soil material including concrete, cement, silts, clay, sand, or any other materials to the waters of the State is prohibited. 7. Provide pallets or secondary containment areas for chemicals, drums, or bagged materials. If material spills occur, materials and/or contaminants shall be cleaned from the project site and recycled or disposed. 8. Cover waste dumpsters with plastic sheeting at the end of each workday and during storm events. All sheeting shall be carefully secured to withstand weather conditions. 9. Train onsite personnel in spill prevention practices, and provide spill containment materials near all storage areas. All contractors are responsible for familiarizing their personnel with the information contained in the Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan. 		

Environmental Impact	Mitigation Measure	Responsible Monitoring Party	Time Frame/Monitoring Milestone
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 10. Sprinkle water on earth fill and disturbed ground surfaces as necessary to minimize wind-blown dust. 11. Maintain all construction equipment to prevent oil or fluid leaks. 12. Use drip pans or other secondary containment measures beneath vehicles during storage. 13. Regularly inspect all equipment and vehicles for fluid leaks. 14. Place wastes (e.g., grease, oil or oil filters, antifreeze, cleaning solutions, batteries, and hydraulic or transmission fluid) in proper containers, store the containers in a designated storage areas, and ultimately recycle the materials. 15. Fuel and service vehicles and equipment that are used during the course of the proposed project in a “safe” area (i.e., outside of sensitive habitats). 16. Wash vehicles and equipment off-site. 17. Treat water containing mud, silt, concrete, etc. from construction activities by filtration, retention in a settling pond, or other means off-site. Fresh cement or concrete shall not be allowed to enter flowing water of streams. Collect construction pollutants and transport them to an authorized disposal area as appropriate and per all federal, state, and local laws and regulations. 18. Store all hazardous material in properly designated containers in a storage area with an impermeable membrane between the ground and the hazardous material. Encircle the storage area by straw waddles to prevent the discharge of pollutants to ground water or runoff into federal species habitats. Ensure that a plan for the emergency cleanup of any hazardous material is available on-site. Ensure adequate materials for spill cleanup are also available on-site. 19. Spill prevention and control BMPs shall be implemented throughout construction activities. Spills, leaks, and other problems of a similar nature shall be resolved 		

Environmental Impact	Mitigation Measure	Responsible Monitoring Party	Time Frame/Monitoring Milestone
	<p>immediately to prevent unnecessary impacts. Workers shall be trained in techniques to reduce the chance for spills, contain and clean up spills, and properly dispose of spilled materials for the potential pollutants that are relevant to each contractor or subcontractor activity. Where applicable, materials shall be stored in covered containers to minimize the chance for spills. A plan for the emergency cleanup of any spills of fuel or other material shall be available on-site. Adequate materials for spill cleanup shall be maintained on-site and readily available to the employees of each contractor or subcontractor for immediate response should a spill occur on-site. Following the completion of project construction, materials storage areas shall be cleared of all construction-related debris.</p>		
	<p>Mitigation Measure BIO-3: The City of Petaluma shall mitigate for impacts on riparian habitat at a 1:1 ratio <u>or as deemed appropriate by the regulatory agencies. The final mitigation ratio will be determined during consultation with the resources agencies. The City Shall first seek to provide mitigation onsite proximate to the River, then within other nearby areas of the watershed, and as a final option through offsite means via an approved mitigation bank.</u></p>	<p>City of Petaluma</p>	<p>Post-construction Monitoring required consistent with any permit requirements</p>
	<p>Mitigation Measure BIO-7: Prior to construction, a qualified arborist shall determine which trees need to be removed and whether they are protected. For all trees removed, the City of Petaluma shall require replacement trees at the following ratios:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ All protected trees, determined by the project arborist to be in good or excellent health, and/or with moderate to good structure, shall be replaced on a one-to-one trunk diameter basis. (Example: A 24-inch protected tree in good or excellent condition must be replaced with new trees totaling 24 inches in trunk diameters.) ○ All protected trees, determined by the project arborist to 	<p>City of Petaluma</p>	<p>Pre-construction Construction Post-Construction</p>

Environmental Impact	Mitigation Measure	Responsible Monitoring Party	Time Frame/Monitoring Milestone
	<p>have fair or marginal health, and/or with marginal structure, shall be replaced on a two-to-one trunk diameter basis. (Example: A 24-inch protected tree in fair-to-marginal condition must be replaced with new trees totaling 12 inches in trunk diameter.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ All protected trees, determined by the project arborist to have poor health or structure, are not required to be replaced. <p>If replacement trees cannot be planted within the project boundaries, the City shall find suitable off-site location(s) for the required trees.</p>		
	<p>Mitigation Measure BIO-8: The City of Petaluma shall prepare a replanting plan that shall identify where, how many, and what types of trees shall be replanted. The replanting site shall be monitored yearly and an annual report shall be sent to CDFW and USACE. At the end of the five-year monitoring period, the site shall be considered successful if at least 75 percent of the tree plantings survive.</p>	City of Petaluma	Pre-Construction, Post-Construction Monitor site yearly for five years
<p>Impact BIO-4: The project would 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.</p>	<p>Mitigation Measure BIO-1 to BIO-3 would be required.</p>		
<p>Impact BIO-5: The project would have a substantial adverse effect, either directly or indirectly through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special-status species in local or regional plans, policies, regulations, or</p>	<p><u>Amphibians</u></p> <p>Mitigation Measure BIO-1, BIO-2, and BIO-4 would be required.</p> <p>Mitigation Measure BIO-4: The City of Petaluma shall implement the following measures to avoid and minimize potential impact and disturbance of the California red-legged frog and</p>	City of Petaluma, Construction Contractor	Pre-Construction Construction

Environmental Impact	Mitigation Measure	Responsible Monitoring Party	Time Frame/Monitoring Milestone
<p>by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.</p>	<p>Western pond turtle:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Construction activities adjacent to the Petaluma River (Figure 4.3-4) shall be conducted during the dry season (June 15 through October 15) as practicable. 2. A qualified USFWS-approved biologist shall conduct preconstruction surveys of all ground disturbance areas within suitable habitats in the project site to determine if California red-legged frogs and Western pond turtles are present prior to the start of construction. These surveys shall be conducted within 48 hours prior to the initiation of construction activities in habitats where these species have the potential to occur. <p>Preconstruction surveys to detect western pond turtles should focus on suitable aerial and aquatic basking habitat such as logs, branches, rootwads, and riprap, as well as the shoreline and adjacent warm, shallow waters where pond turtles may be present below the water surface beneath algal mats or other surface vegetation. Where feasible, preconstruction surveys to detect western pond turtle nesting activity should be concentrated within 0.25 mile of suitable aquatic habitat and should focus on areas along south- or west-facing slopes with bare hard-packed clay or silt soils or a sparse vegetation of short grasses or forbs. If western pond turtles or their nesting sites are found, the biologist shall contact the CDFW to determine whether relocation and/or exclusion buffers and nest enclosures are appropriate. If the CDFW approves of moving the animal, the biologist shall be allowed sufficient time to move the western pond turtle(s) from the work site before work activities begin.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Prior to construction, a qualified biologist shall conduct training sessions to familiarize all construction personnel with the following: identification of California red-legged frog and their habitat, Western pond turtle and their habitat, general provisions and protections afforded by the Endangered Species Act, measures implemented to 		

Environmental Impact	Mitigation Measure	Responsible Monitoring Party	Time Frame/Monitoring Milestone
	<p>protect the species, and a review of project site boundaries.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. A USFWS-approved biologist shall be present during construction activities that could result in harm to these species. The approved biologist shall have stop-work authority in the event that a California red-legged frog or Western pond turtle is found within the project site 5. The project site shall be delineated with temporary high-visibility orange-colored fence at least 4 feet in height, flagging, or other barriers. Signs shall be posted that clearly state that construction personnel and equipment shall not move outside of the marked area. The fencing shall be inspected by the USFWS-approved biologist and maintained daily until project completion. The fencing shall be removed only when all construction equipment is removed from the site. No construction activities shall take place outside the delineated project site. 6. To avoid attracting predators, food-related trash shall be kept in closed containers and removed daily from the project site. 7. At the end of each day, all construction-related holes or trenches deeper than 1 foot shall be covered to prevent entrapment of potential California red-legged frog. <p>During the process of reviewing the USACE permit application, the USACE would determine if they need to enter into consultation with the USFWS for impacts on the federally listed California red-legged frog. If consultation with the USFWS for the California red-legged frog is needed, the City of Petaluma would comply with all the terms and conditions required by the USFWS.</p>		
	<p><u>Fish</u></p> <p>Mitigation Measure BIO-1, BIO-2 and BIO-5 would be required.</p> <p>Mitigation Measure BIO-5: The City of Petaluma shall implement the following measures avoid and minimize impact and</p>	<p>City of Petaluma, Construction Contractor</p>	<p>Pre-Construction Construction</p>

Environmental Impact	Mitigation Measure	Responsible Monitoring Party	Time Frame/Monitoring Milestone
	<p>potential disturbance of the Central California Coast steelhead DPS, green sturgeon and Sacramento splittail.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Construction activities, including pile driving, in the Petaluma River shall be conducted during the dry season (June 15 through October 15) to avoid interfering with adult spawning migrations or the outmigration of smolts. 2. During construction of cofferdams and dewatering of the Petaluma River, a fish rescue effort would be conducted by qualified biologists in the isolated waters of the river, if necessary. 3. Prior to construction, a qualified biologist shall conduct training sessions to familiarize all construction personnel with the following: identification of protected salmonids and their habitats, general provisions and protections afforded by the Endangered Species Act, measures implemented to protect the species, and a review of project site boundaries. <p>Designated critical habitat for the Central California Coastal steelhead is present within the project site. Installation of the cofferdam and falsework would temporarily disturb but not modify the PCEs. Therefore this impact would be <i>less than significant</i>.</p> <p>The USACE would determine if they need to enter into consultation with the National Marine Fisheries Service for impacts on the federally listed Central California Coastal Steelhead DPS and green sturgeon DPS. If consultation with the NMFS for the Central California Coast California steelhead DPS and green sturgeon DPS is needed, the City of Petaluma would comply with all the terms and conditions required by the NMFS.</p>		
	<p><u>Birds</u></p> <p>Mitigation Measure BIO-6 would be required.</p> <p>Mitigation Measure BIO-6: The City of Petaluma shall implement the following measures to avoid and minimize impacts</p>	<p>City of Petaluma, Construction Contractor</p>	<p>Pre-Construction Construction</p>

Environmental Impact	Mitigation Measure	Responsible Monitoring Party	Time Frame/Monitoring Milestone
	<p>on migratory birds and other nesting raptors:</p> <p>If construction is scheduled during the nesting season of migratory birds (February 1 through August 30) trees in the project site shall be surveyed for nesting migratory birds within the following buffers of the construction site:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 150 feet for nesting raptors ○ 500 feet for nesting passerines <p>The surveys shall be conducted no more than 15 days prior to the start of any ground disturbing activities. If an active nest is found prior to construction or during construction activities, the following measures would be implemented:</p> <p>A qualified biologist, in consultation with CDFW, shall determine the appropriate buffer size and delineate the buffer using ESA fencing, pin flags, and/or yellow-caution tape. A buffer zone shall be maintained around all active nest sites until the young have fledged and are foraging independently. In the event that an active nest is found after the completion of preconstruction surveys and after construction begins, all construction activities shall need to be stopped until a qualified biologist has evaluated the nest and erected the appropriate buffer around it.</p>		
<p>Impact BIO-6: The project would not conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance.</p>	<p>Mitigation Measure BIO-7 and BIO-8 would be required.</p>		
<p>Cultural Resources</p>			
<p>Impact CULT-2: The project would result in substantial adverse changes to a historic resource.</p>	<p>Mitigation Measure CULT-1: The City shall implement an archaeological data recovery program (ADRP) prior to the commencement of project construction. The City shall employ a professional archaeologist to conduct an ADRP. The professional archaeologist and the City of Petaluma shall meet and consult to</p>	<p>City of Petaluma</p>	<p>Pre-Construction</p>

Environmental Impact	Mitigation Measure	Responsible Monitoring Party	Time Frame/Monitoring Milestone
	<p>determine the scope of the ADRP.</p> <p>The archaeologist shall prepare a draft ADRP that would be submitted to City of Petaluma for review and approval. The ADRP would identify how the proposed data recovery program would preserve the significant information the archaeological resource is expected to contain (i.e., the ADRP would identify the scientific/historical research questions that are applicable to the expected resource, the data classes the resource is expected to possess, and how the expected data classes would address the applicable research questions). Data recovery, in general, shall be limited to the portions of the historical property that could be adversely affected by the proposed project. Destructive data recovery methods would not be applied to portions of the archaeological resources if nondestructive methods are practical.</p>		
<p>Impact CULT-3: The project could adversely affect expected prehistoric site deposits.</p>	<p>Mitigation Measure CULT-2: To reduce potential impacts on prehistoric site deposits during construction, the City of Petaluma shall retain the services of a qualified archaeological consultant that has expertise in California prehistory to monitor ground-disturbing activity within 200-feet of the top-of-bank on either side of the Petaluma River. The archeological monitor shall be present on the project site according to a schedule agreed upon by the archeological consultant and the City. The schedule would take into account only those project construction activities that could have effects on significant archeological deposits. After considering the types of project activities and the probabilities of encountering a significant archaeological deposit, the City and the consulting archaeologist shall adjust the monitoring frequency accordingly or implement a cessation of the monitoring schedule altogether.</p> <p>If an intact archeological deposit is encountered, all soil disturbing activities in the vicinity of the deposit shall cease. The archaeological monitor shall have the authority to stop work and temporarily redirect crews and heavy equipment until the deposit is evaluated. The archaeological monitor shall immediately notify the</p>	<p>City of Petaluma, Construction Contractor</p>	<p>Construction</p>

Environmental Impact	Mitigation Measure	Responsible Monitoring Party	Time Frame/Monitoring Milestone
	<p>City of Petaluma of the encountered archaeological deposit. The archeological monitor shall, after making a reasonable effort to assess the identity, integrity, and significance of the encountered archaeological deposit, present the findings of this assessment to the City.</p> <p>If the City of Petaluma, in consultation with the archeological monitor, determines that a significant archeological resource (i.e., an historical resource or unique archaeological resource) is present and that the resource could be adversely affected by the proposed project, the City of Petaluma shall implement an ADRP as outlined in Mitigation Measure CULT-1 if avoidance of the archaeological deposit is not feasible.</p>		
<p>Impact CULT-4: The project could result in potentially significant impacts on unknown archaeological resources, including human remains.</p>	<p>Mitigation Measure CULT-3: To limit the potential for significant impacts on unknown archaeological resources, including human remains, the City of Petaluma shall include the following contract specifications for ground-disturbing activities, including excavation and grading:</p> <p>In the event of accidental discovery of cultural resources, such as structural features or unusual amounts of bone or shell, artifacts, human remains, architectural remains (such as bricks or other foundation elements), or historic archaeological artifacts (such as antique glass bottles, ceramics, horseshoes, etc.), work would be suspended at that location and City of Petaluma staff would be contacted. A qualified cultural resource specialist would be retained and would perform any necessary investigations to determine the significance of the find. The City of Petaluma would then implement any mitigation deemed necessary for the recordation and/or protection of the cultural resources. In addition, pursuant to Sections 5097.97 and 5097.98 of the California Public Resources Code and Section 7050.5 of the California Health and Safety Code, in the event of the discovery of human remains, all work shall be halted and the County Coroner shall be immediately notified. If the remains are determined to be Native American, guidelines of the Native American Heritage Commission would be</p>	<p>City of Petaluma</p>	<p>Pre-Construction Construction</p>

Environmental Impact	Mitigation Measure	Responsible Monitoring Party	Time Frame/Monitoring Milestone
	adhered to in the treatment and disposition of the remains.		
<p>Impact CULT-5: The project could adversely affect unidentified paleontological resources.</p>	<p>Mitigation Measure CULT-4: In the event of unanticipated paleontological discoveries, the City of Petaluma shall notify a qualified paleontologist who shall document the discovery as needed, evaluate the potential resource, and assess the significance of the find under the criteria set forth in the guidelines adopted by the Society of Vertebrate Paleontology CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5. In the event of an unanticipated discovery of a breas, true, and/or trace fossil during construction, excavations within 100 feet of the find shall be temporarily halted or diverted until the discovery is examined by a qualified paleontologist (per Society of Vertebrate Paleontology standards (SVP 1995). The paleontologist shall notify the appropriate agencies to determine procedures that would be followed before earthmoving or grading is allowed to resume at the location of the find. If the City determines that avoidance is not feasible, the paleontologist shall prepare and recommend to the City an excavation plan for mitigating the effect of the project on the qualities that make the resource important, and such plan, if accepted by the City, shall be implemented. The plan shall be submitted to the City for review and approval.</p>	<p>City of Petaluma, Construction Contractor</p>	<p>Construction</p>

Environmental Impact	Mitigation Measure	Responsible Monitoring Party	Time Frame/Monitoring Milestone
Geology/Soils			
<p>Impact GEO-5: The project could expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving seismic-related hazards: strong seismic ground shaking and ground failure, including liquefaction.</p>	<p>Mitigation Measure GEO-1: The City of Petaluma, or its technical consultant, shall prepare a geotechnical investigation and report prior to completing project design. The report shall be prepared in accordance with Section 17.31.180 of the City’s Grading and Erosion Control Ordinance and shall include an adequate description of the geology of the site, and conclusions and recommendations regarding the effect of geologic conditions on the proposed project. The report shall include data regarding the nature, distribution and strength of existing soils, potential for ground shaking, liquefaction, subsidence, soil expansion, shallow groundwater, landslides, collapse, lateral spreading, and corrosive soils. The report shall include conclusions and recommendation for grading procedures and design criteria for corrective measures to limit the potential for the project to expose people to seismic-related hazards including ground shaking and ground failure, and liquefaction as necessary (City of Petaluma 2012). In addition, project design and construction would conform with the current best standards for earthquake resistant construction in accordance with the California Building Code (Seismic Zone 4), and consistent with the City of Petaluma’s General Plan policy 10-P-1.D.</p> <p>The City shall implement all site-specific mitigation measures recommended in the geotechnical investigation prior to or during construction, as appropriate. Typical mitigation measures included in a Grading and Erosion Control Plan may include, but are not limited to: providing fill material quality, location, and compaction design requirements, overexcavating the existing soils, and/or providing specific grading requirements.</p>	<p>City of Petaluma, Construction Contractor</p>	<p>During Final Design Stage Pre-Construction Construction</p>
<p>Impact GEO-6: The project would 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,</p>	<p>Mitigation Measure GEO-1 would be required.</p>		

Environmental Impact	Mitigation Measure	Responsible Monitoring Party	Time Frame/Monitoring Milestone
subsidence, liquefaction, collapse, or affect the stability of structures.			
Impact GEO-7: The project would be located on an expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1-B of the Uniform Building Code, creating substantial risks to life or property.	Mitigation Measure GEO-1 would be required.		
Hydrology & Water Quality			
Impact HYD-9: The project would place structures within a 100-year flood hazard area which would impede or redirect flood flows.	<p>Mitigation Measure HYD-1: The City shall prepare a hydraulic design study at later stages of project design that shall determine the project’s potential to alter the river’s flood flows at the bridge location and upstream and downstream of the bridge. The hydraulic design study shall utilize HEC-RAS or a similar hydraulic model to determine the bridge’s potential to increase the base flood water surface elevation within the regulatory floodway due to features that would be built in the floodway.</p> <p>The revised hydraulic analysis would be conducted to quantify the rise in base flood elevation in the floodway after compliance with the City’s no net fill policy. The quantity of fill placed within the Petaluma River’s 100-year floodplain would include any fill related to erosion/scour protection measures (rock protection), the bridge features (abutments, retaining walls, bents), and outfalls. The hydraulic design study would incorporate these changes and would also include design measures such as benching or widening the channel near the bridge crossing to maintain flood flow conveyance.</p> <p>Following final project design, including the design of measures to comply with the City’s floodway ordinance, the City would reevaluate the hydrologic and hydraulic effects of the project, particularly the bridge features, as part of the substantiation process required by the City’s ordinance. If this reevaluation determines that the project would still result in a base flood elevation increase in the regulatory floodway (even if the increase</p>	City of Petaluma	During Final Project Design Stage

Environmental Impact	Mitigation Measure	Responsible Monitoring Party	Time Frame/Monitoring Milestone
	is minimal), the City would obtain a CLOMR for the project from FEMA, and request a NFIP map revision.		
<p>Impact HYD-10: The project would 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.</p>	<p>Mitigation Measure HYD-1 would be required.</p>		
<p>Transportation</p>			
<p>Impact TRANS-7: The project could increase hazards due to a design feature or incompatible uses.</p>	<p>Mitigation Measure TRANS-1: To ensure that existing access for transit vehicles is provided into the Operations Facility, the City shall provide a driveway into the site from Rainier Avenue. This driveway shall be moved from its existing location to the far west side of the site to maximize the distance from the intersection of Rainier Avenue/North McDowell Boulevard. In addition, the project shall provide a break in the median and extend the turn pocket so that transit vehicles can turn left from eastbound Rainier Avenue into the Operations Facility. This break in the median shall be marked with a “No Left Turn Except for Buses” sign to ensure that no other vehicles use this break in the median to turn.</p>	<p>City of Petaluma</p>	<p>Pre-Construction Construction</p>
<p>Impact TRANS-8: The project could cause substantial temporary construction traffic-related impacts.</p>	<p>Mitigation Measure TRANS-2: The City of Petaluma Public Works Department or its contractor shall prepare a construction management plan. The plan shall include at least the following items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Development of a construction truck route that appears on all construction plans to limit truck and auto traffic on nearby streets. b. Comprehensive traffic control measures, including scheduling of major truck trips and deliveries to avoid peak hour traffic hours, detour signs if required, lane closure procedures if required, sidewalk closure 	<p>City of Petaluma, Construction Contractor</p>	<p>Pre-Construction Construction Post-Construction</p>

Environmental Impact	Mitigation Measure	Responsible Monitoring Party	Time Frame/Monitoring Milestone
	<p>procedures if required, cones for drivers, and designated construction access routes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> c. Evaluate the need to provide flaggers or temporary traffic control at key intersections along the haul route. d. Notification procedures for adjacent property owners and public safety personnel regarding when major deliveries, detours, and lane closures will occur. e. Location of construction staging areas for materials, equipment, and vehicles if there is insufficient staging area within the Project work zone. f. Identification of haul routes for movement of construction vehicles that will minimize impacts on vehicular and pedestrian traffic, circulation and safety, and provision for monitoring surface streets used for haul routes so that any damage and debris attributable to the haul trucks can be identified and corrected by the City and its contractor. g. A process for responding to, and tracking, complaints pertaining to construction activity, including identification of an on-site complaint manager. <p>Documentation of road pavement conditions for all routes that would be used by construction vehicles both before and after project construction. Roads found to have been damaged by construction vehicles shall be repaired to the level at which they existed prior to project construction.</p>		
<p>Impact TRANS-9: The project could conflict with an applicable congestion management program including intersection levels of service standards.</p> <p><i>(Petaluma Boulevard North/Rainier Avenue)</i></p>	<p>Mitigation Measure TRANS-3: The City of Petaluma shall include in its project design an additional westbound left turn lane and a northbound right overlap phase at the intersection of Petaluma Boulevard North/Rainier Avenue.</p> <p>With this additional westbound left turn lane and a northbound right overlap phase, the project’s impacts on study intersections under Opening Year conditions would be reduced to <i>less than significant</i> because this intersection would operate at LOS D in the PM peak hour.</p>	<p>City of Petaluma</p>	<p>During Final Project Design Pre-Construction Construction</p>

Environmental Impact	Mitigation Measure	Responsible Monitoring Party	Time Frame/Monitoring Milestone
	<p>However, from a pedestrian viewpoint it would be preferable to keep this intersection as compact as possible to provide shorter pedestrian crossing distances. Therefore, with the implementation of Mitigation Measure TRANS-3, the city shall provide a median refuge (at least 5 feet wide) for pedestrians crossing Rainier Avenue.</p>		
Cumulative Impacts			
Transportation			
<p>With the project in 2020, all intersections would operate at acceptable levels of service under cumulative conditions with the project except:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •<i>East Washington Street/Highway 101 Southbound Ramps – LOS E during the AM peak hour. The project would reduce volumes at this intersection by 17 percent in the AM hour and the project’s impact on this intersection was therefore considered not significant.</i> •<i>Rainier Avenue/Petaluma Boulevard North (without Shasta Avenue Extension – LOS E and F during the AM and PM peak hours, respectively</i> •<i>Petaluma Boulevard North/Sycamore Lane (Shasta Avenue) – LOS F during the PM peak hour</i> 	<p>Mitigation Measure CUMULATIVE TRANS-1: The extension of Rainier Avenue to Petaluma Boulevard North would have an impact on Petaluma Boulevard North. The exact location (intersection) of the impact would depend on the construction timing of the Shasta Avenue extension. At the time of writing there are no design plans for the Shasta Avenue extension and its construction timing relative to the construction of the Rainier Avenue extension is also unknown.</p> <p>If Shasta Avenue extension is not constructed during the buildout of the General Plan the Rainier Avenue/Petaluma Boulevard North intersection would operate at LOS E (AM) and F (PM). To mitigate this impact, the project would need to provide the intersection configuration at the Petaluma Boulevard North/Rainier Avenue intersection described in Mitigation Measure TRANS-3. This intersection configuration would result in acceptable LOS C and LOS D in the AM and PM peak hours, respectively. This would reduce the impact to <i>less than significant</i>.</p> <p>If the Shasta Avenue extension is constructed during the buildout of the General Plan then the project could potentially have an impact at the Petaluma Boulevard North/Sycamore Lane (Shasta Avenue) extension depending on the intersection configuration that is provided at the intersection as part of the Shasta Avenue extension.</p> <p>Restriping the existing westbound approach to Petaluma Boulevard</p>	<p>City of Petaluma</p>	<p>During Final Design Stage Construction Post-Construction depending on buildout</p>

Environmental Impact	Mitigation Measure	Responsible Monitoring Party	Time Frame/Monitoring Milestone
	<p>North/Sycamore Lane (Shasta Avenue) to provide an exclusive left-turn lane and a shared left/through/right-turn lane plus an exclusive northbound right-turn lane would improve the intersection to LOS C in the PM peak hour. However, this additional right-turn lane would cause the pedestrian crossing distance to increase which would cause a secondary impact to pedestrians according to criteria set forth in the Petaluma General Plan. In order to reduce impacts to pedestrians resulting from increased crossing distances, a median refuge (at least five feet wide) should be installed for pedestrians crossing the south leg of Petaluma Boulevard.</p> <p>The Shasta Avenue extension project would be required to go through the City approval and CEQA documentation process to identify its impacts and mitigations prior to its construction. Presumably, it would identify the need to improve the Petaluma Boulevard North/Sycamore Lane (Shasta Avenue) intersection.</p>		