

APPENDIX K – Preparation Guidelines for Project Report

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APPENDIX K – Preparation Guidelines for Project Report

ARTICLE 1 Overview

Important Distinctions

The term project report (PR) refers to the report used to recommend approval of a project. The term draft project report (DPR) refers to a draft version of this report that must be prepared for projects with environmental documents (EDs). Throughout this manual, this distinction is maintained.

Projects with Environmental Documents

If the project requires an ED, a DPR must be prepared prior to the PR (see [Chapter 11 – Public Hearing](#)); unless there is already a satisfactory approved ED by either Caltrans or others. The draft environmental document (DED) must be attached to the DPR.

Following public circulation of a DED, consideration of public comments, and the selection of a preferred alternative, the DPR is revised accordingly to prepare it to become the PR. The final environmental document (FED) must be attached to the PR.

Projects without Environmental Documents

Only a PR is required for projects that are statutorily exempt or Categorical Exempt/Excluded (CE/CE). A signed CE/CE determination form is a mandatory attachment to the PR for many CE/CE projects. See the [Standard Environmental Reference](#) (SER) for details.

Recommendation Important

Both DPRs and PRs should contain a recommendation. This documents what is being approved. A PR should recommend approval of the project. A DPR, when required, should recommend proceeding to a public hearing; if there is no federal

involvement, it should recommend circulation of the DED. For further details, see Article 2, outline Item 2, "Recommendation."

Following the Outline

All appropriate headings in the outline at the end of this appendix should be listed and discussed in the PR and the DPR. Topics listed under Item 7, "Other Considerations as Appropriate" may not apply to some projects, so these should only be discussed if appropriate.

Subject matter that is thoroughly discussed in the DED or FED should not be repeated in its entirety in a PR or a DPR. Instead, the environmental information should be summarized and then cross referenced to the appropriate part of the ED.

ARTICLE 2 Item-by-Item Guidelines for the Project Report Outline

Cover Sheet

PRs and DPRs should have a standard cover sheet to provide project identification information and signatures. Include the following information:

- Title

Indicate "Project Report" or "Draft Project Report," as appropriate.

- District-County-Route, Post Mile (Dist-Co-Rte, PM)

The post mile should be given to the nearest 0.1 mile; if the project is 0.2 mile or more in length, give both the beginning and ending post mile. If different viable alternatives in a DPR have varying limits, use the post miles encompassing all alternatives. The final PR limits should use the limits of the preferred alternative.

- Responsible Unit (RU)

The unit source code of the registered engineer in responsible charge (or other professional) of the technical features of the project—or the oversight engineer.

- Expenditure Authorization (EA)

The multiphase EA, using the "0" phase for the project.

- Program Identification

The program codes as given in the programming document or the project scheduling plan, indicating the kind of work involved.

- On Route _____ From _____ To _____

A brief written description of the project limits, that corresponds to the post miles given above and ties the limits to commonly known physical features on the ground that can be identified on available mapping.

- Vicinity Map

A small map showing the project limits consistent with the brief description and post miles, plus a north arrow. For a person unfamiliar with the project, the map should be sufficient to locate the project at a glance. It should show the features used to identify the project limits: such as roads, streams, junctions or railroads, and the nearest town (unless too distant), plus a note indicating the direction-to and name-of the next town in each direction.

- Right of Way Statement

A statement signed by the district division chief right of way indicating review of the right of way information contained in the PR or DPR and the Right of Way (R/W) data sheet attached to it.

- Recommended Approval

The recommendation for approval, signed by the project manager. It affirms that all engineering and environmental studies have been included.

- Approval

The approval of the PR or DPR, signed and dated by the District Director or by a district division chief to whom that authority has been officially delegated, approves the recommendations of the report. The DPR is used to authorize proceeding to a public hearing and must include this recommendation. The signature date on the PR becomes the official date of State project approval and approval of initiation of plans, specifications and estimates.

Registered Professional's Stamp and Statement

The PR or DPR is usually an engineering document. As such, it requires the seal or stamp of a registered civil engineer or, if not, of another appropriate professional.

The second page of the PR or DPR contains the required stamp or seal and signature of a registered civil engineer who is the person in responsible charge (or similar information if a person of another profession is in responsible charge). The sheet must include a statement indicating that the registered civil engineer attests to the technical information contained herein and the engineering data upon which recommendations, conclusions, and decisions are based, or a similar appropriate statement for another profession. Approval of the PR or DPR is a management decision and is separate from this technical signature of the person in responsible charge.

1. Introduction

A three or four sentence introduction is needed to set the stage for the project. Include limits, purpose, cost, program, fiscal year, and project development category (see [Chapter 8](#) – Overview of Project Development). Cite only appropriate criteria. For example:

It is proposed to widen Route 99 from four lanes to six lanes from Sacramento Road to Yolo Avenue to reduce congestion. Cost was estimated at \$3,000,000 on March 5, 1995, which includes \$500,000 for right of way and utility relocation and \$2,500,000 for construction. The project is proposed to be funded from the Flexible Congestion Relief HB4C Program in the 1993/94 FY. This project has been assigned the Project Development Processing Category 4A because it requires substantial new right of way and increases traffic capacity.

For a DPR

In a DPR, describe the viable alternatives.

For a PR (if appropriate)

In a PR, describe the preferred alternative.

2. Recommendation

Give a recommendation for approval. If cooperative features are described, recommend that the cooperative features be approved and a cooperative agreement be negotiated.

For a DPR

If this is a DPR with an attached DED, recommend approval to publicly circulate the DED and to schedule a public hearing—or recommend that an opportunity for a hearing be offered if appropriate, based on the viable alternatives developed.

For a PR

If this is a PR, recommend that the project be approved using the preferred alternative (if applicable), and that the project proceed to the next phase.

For projects with an FED, a statement must accompany the recommendation that attests that (1) the affected local agencies have been consulted with respect to the recommended plan, that (2) their views have been considered, and (3) that the local agencies are in general accord with the plan as presented. Requests for project approval without this assurance shall not be made except under extenuating circumstances, in which case the request shall contain the reasons for not having local agency concurrence.

If necessary, make recommendations for programming changes to cost amounts, fiscal year scheduling, or stage construction.

3. Background

- Project History

Discuss the history of the project to-date. Discuss how it got to where it is in the project development process.

Answer these questions: Was the project previously approved and is it now being rescoped? How much project development effort has already been expended? Has any right of way been acquired? Have any issues been identified? As appropriate, give approval dates of the project study report (PSR), etc. How does the current proposal differ, if any, from the approved PSR?

- Community Interaction

Summarize community interaction and contacts (what was expressed and Caltrans' response). Were meetings held with legislators or local politicians, etc.? Were any commitments made? Have any issues developed? Is there support or opposition? Has there been contact with any special interest groups, including contacts with minorities, elderly, physically challenged, non-drivers (transit-dependent), pedestrians, bicyclists, and the economically

disadvantaged? Discuss their needs and what can be done to accommodate these needs.

- Existing Facility

Describe the existing facility within the proposed project limits, as well as contiguous with each end of the proposal. Note right of way widths, access control, capacity adequacy, geometrics, structural section condition, drainage, and any other appropriate information. The level of detail to be given should relate to the proposed alternative project features and existing deficiencies and substandard features and should not give a lot of detail unless it is needed to explain the proposed alternatives.

4. Purpose and Need

4A. Problem, Deficiencies, Justification

Provide a concise discussion on the purpose and need of the project proposal and alternatives, supplemented by attached maps, charts, tables, letters, etc. Project "need" should be stated in a factual and professional manner. Adjectives that promote an unsubstantiated opinion such as "dangerous", "hazardous", or phrases such as "this curve caused six accidents" should not be used.

Answer these questions: What is the problem? Does the discussion set the stage to conclude that the project is needed? Be as specific as possible: How much congestion? How many fatalities? How much flooding? How much maintenance effort is needed?

The data from the PSR or other project initiation document should now be updated to reflect new environmental and additional engineering studies. The discussion should make a convincing case that a solution to a problem is needed and that the purpose of the proposed project is to provide a solution that best solves the transportation problem.

4B. Regional and System Planning

- Identify Systems

Identify the federal and State systems the proposed project is on, including the Interstate System, the National Highway System, the Freeway & Expressway System, the Scenic Highway System, the Interregional Road System, State Highway Extra Legal Load (SHELL) Route System, etc. Identify any master plan relating to the proposal.

- State Planning

Discuss how the alternatives relate to the State planning documents. Discuss the route concept and concept facility as proposed in the route concept report. Describe its placement in the transportation system development plan and the district system management plan. Discuss any other pertinent State plan, such as the California Recreational Trails Plan or the State Implementation Plan for air quality.

- Regional Planning

Discuss how the project alternatives are treated in regional planning documents. Are the proposals consistent with the regional transportation plan (RTP)? If not, what steps are being taken to assure consistency? Where required, state that the RTP was derived from a congestion management plan that included the project (specify which alternatives or indicate "all" alternatives). Refer to Item 6F of the outline for a statement regarding the RTP's conformity to the State Implementation Plan (SIP) for air quality.

- Local Planning

Discuss how the project alternatives are treated in local planning documents. Discuss any pertinent local planning documents. Examples: (1) specific area and subdivision plans and their relationship to ultimate development, (2) the nonmotorized master plan: outlining the potential impacts on non-motorized transportation and pedestrians. Discuss any other planning documents that are pertinent, such as the Coastal Zone Plan, the Air Quality Control Plan, etc. Explain any inconsistencies.

For a PR with a FED

Discuss the compatibility of the preferred alternative with local and regional plans (if not covered in environmental document).

- Transit Operator Planning

When appropriate, discuss coordination with transit operators and their planning in the corridor. Discuss opportunities to enhance transit service, as well as the impacts of project proposals on existing and future transit service (bus stops, ramp metering, by-pass lanes, transit ways, HOV lanes and drop ramps, etc.).

4C. Traffic

- Current and Forecasted Traffic

Give current and forecasted design year values for AADT, peak month ADT (where significant), peak hour and peak hour directional split—including percentage of trucks, if appropriate. Refer to the [Highway Design Manual](#) (Index 103.2 and 603.2) for a discussion of design periods. Briefly state the growth assumptions that provided the basis for the forecast.

- Provide a summary of the collision analysis. The analysis should include, but not be limited to, the primary factors or causes of the accident and the type of collision that can be address with the proposed project.

5. Alternatives

5A. Viable Alternatives

For a DPR

Discuss project alternatives that have not yet been rejected—including variations that will satisfy project goals, be cost effective, and that will avoid or minimize environmental and right of way impacts. The "no-build" alternative shall be discussed for project development categories 1 through 4A.

Provide the same detail of discussion for all viable alternatives. Include appropriate attachments for each viable alternative (DPR cost estimate, R/W data sheet, etc.).

If a proposal or a preferred or recommended alternative is to be identified in the DPR, indicate that approval of the DPR does not constitute approval of the proposal or the preferred or recommended alternative, but that approval will occur after a public hearing.

For a PR with a FED

For a PR with a FED, if appropriate identify the preferred alternative and describe any changes resulting from the comments received from circulation of the environmental document and the public hearing process, including proposed changes in the project design or any mitigating features. Describe the engineering, environmental, and planning rationale for selection of the preferred alternative. For each of the other viable alternatives, retain the detailed description of each, adding an explanation for why each alternative was not selected. If an alternative that was formerly considered viable was

determined to be not viable it should be removed and described under Item 5B.

For Both a PR and a DPR

Where appropriate, discuss the following for each viable alternative: proposed engineering features – nonstandard design features – interim features – HOV lanes – ramp metering – CHP enforcement activities – park and ride facilities – utility involvement – railroad involvement – highway planting – erosion control – noise barriers – nonmotorized and pedestrian features – needed roadway rehabilitation and upgrading – needed structure rehabilitation and upgrading – current construction and right of way cost estimates – effect of special-funded proposal on operation – and other subjects, as needed.

Information needs for each item follow:

- Proposed Engineering Features

Give a brief description of the engineering features of the alternative. This should include the proposed typical section – horizontal and vertical alignment summary – right of way widths – access control requirements – general geometrics of interchanges and intersections – structural section requirements – drainage structures, and any other appropriate information. Give the anticipated hourly and daily capacity and the projected level of service of the proposal for the design year. If at capacity at the design year, also give the year that capacity is projected to occur.

- Nonstandard Mandatory and Advisory Design Features

Provide a brief summary of all exceptions to design standards and document their approval. Do not repeat all of the background and justification contained in the fact sheet for the exception to design standards. If not approved prior to the PSR approval, any additional proposals deviating from mandatory design standards (either by proposed features or by unmodified existing features) must be reviewed and approved by the design coordinator before approval of the PR. [Chapter 21](#) – Exceptions to Design Standards, discusses the preparation and approval of exceptions to design standards. (See the [Highway Design Manual](#), Index 82.1).

- Interim Features

If improvements to an existing conventional highway are requested by a local agency for the period between the adoption of a freeway route on new alignment and the completion of freeway construction, identify these

improvements as interim improvements and discuss whether they are subject to California Transportation Commission (CTC) policies. Provide justification for exceptions requiring CTC approval, including justification for extra width at State expense. It is expected that a local agency's request for an exception will normally be in the form of a resolution, which should be an attachment. See [Chapter 8](#) – Overview of Project Development for a discussion of interim project policy.

- High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) (Bus and Carpool) Lanes

Summarize the features proposed for bus and carpool lanes, including: typical cross section – buffer type and width – ingress and egress provisions – directions of operation or contra flow operation – operating times – and occupancy requirements. When projects propose high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes, discuss the effects of the HOV facility on safety, congestion, and capacity as required by Vehicle Code Section 21655.5 and by Streets and Highways Code Section 149. See the Traffic Operations Program's [High-Occupancy Vehicle Guidelines](#).

- Ramp Metering

Ramp metering is discussed for any proposals for freeway interchange construction or modification if the freeway segment is included in the ramp metering development plan element of the district's long range operations plan. If capacity is being added to a freeway segment and metering will improve or maintain effective operations on the freeway and parallel arterials, then ramp metering should be included in the project at any urban freeway entrance ramps. Any exceptions must be justified and may be approved as part of a PR approval. The discussion should also include the positions of the involved local agencies and their willingness to commit to ramp metering. Ramp metering policy is outlined in the Traffic Operations Program's [Ramp Meter Design Manual](#).

- California Highway Patrol (CHP) Enforcement Areas

Where enforcement activities of the CHP are affected or needed, summarize any additional facilities to be incorporated to assist in such enforcement (e.g., HOV-lane enforcement areas, ramp-meter enforcement areas, turnouts, special signing, traffic control systems, paving brake check areas, etc.).

- Park and Ride Facilities

Describe any proposed park and ride facilities. Consideration of park and ride facilities is required and should be described on all major transportation construction projects that include, but are not limited to, new freeways, interchange modifications, lane additions, transit facilities, and HOV lanes. If

park and ride facilities are not proposed, discuss why. The results of the consultation with the district park and ride coordinator should be documented and full justification should be given for proposals that are contrary to the park and ride coordinator's recommendations.

- Utility and Other Owner Involvement

Discuss known utilities and whether or not relocation may be required. Refer to the R/W data sheet. This is an attachment. Give results of any investigation of ownership, prior rights, permit obligations, etc., performed to date. Discuss possible impact on project delivery.

Discuss the estimated "Determination of Liability" required for publicly owned and privately owned public utilities that will be constructed as a part of the highway project.

Discuss the estimated "Determination of Liability" required for non utility-owned facilities. This determination is prepared by the district project development unit after appropriate consultation with affected units such as right of way and permits to assist in arriving at a conclusion on cost sharing.

Reference should be made to any approvals the Division of Design (DOD) Chief has granted for exceptions to Caltrans' policy on encroachments. For more information on this subject, see [Chapter 17](#) – Encroachments in Caltrans' Right of Way.

- Railroad Involvement

Discuss any railroad involvement and the district railroad liaison agent's determination of what documents or agreements are required to clear the project. Refer to the R/W data sheet (an attachment).

- Highway Planting

Describe provisions made for replacement planting when existing highway planting must be removed. Describe provisions for revegetation when native plant growth must be removed, particularly through publicly owned parks, U.S. National Forests or State forests, and California Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife lands.

Separate planting projects resulting from these proposals should be described and justification for the planting discussed. Highway planting (revegetation, replacement and new planting) is normally accomplished by a separate project after the highway construction is completed—unless it is legally required to be included as part of the highway construction project (e.g., by cooperative agreement, environmental document, permit or court order). The PR for the highway project should state (as determined by the legal document) whether

the planting is installed as part of the highway construction contract or if it follows highway construction as a separate contract.

Notes: If the landscape coordinator determines that the discussion of planting is not adequate, a supplemental planting PR may be required.

Highway planting and planting restoration projects that are not derived from a highway project are developed using the "Highway Planting and Restoration" format of the PR. See [Chapter 29](#) – Landscape Architecture and [Appendix D](#) – Preparation Guidelines for Project Report (New Highway Planting and Highway Planting Restoration) for more information.

- Erosion Control

Erosion control provided on new construction, reconstruction, or where required to protect the transportation facility and to meet water quality discharge requirements, is summarized separately here and included as part of the total project cost estimate.

- Noise Barriers

Provisions for noise barriers, berms, and other noise reduction features should be described. See [Chapter 30](#) – Highway Traffic Noise Abatement.

- Nonmotorized and Pedestrian Features, etc.

Discuss features provided for nonmotorized transportation and pedestrians as well as provisions that are intended to preserve and enhance the opportunity for safe and convenient bicycle travel.

For most projects proposing nonmotorized facilities, a finding or findings must be made. This should be done in the PR. See [Chapter 31](#) – Nonmotorized Transportation Facilities, Article 2, for required findings.

- Needed Roadway Rehabilitation and Upgrading

Roadway rehabilitation needs within the alternative limits should be addressed. All projects dealing with widening of existing pavements should include a discussion of the condition of the existing pavements. Discuss the results of a review of the current Pavement Management System Inventory and the field review of the widening project and state if rehabilitation is needed in conjunction with the widening. Include a discussion of deflection study results for asphalt concrete (AC) pavements exhibiting alligator "B" cracking, confirming the rehabilitation need and the rehabilitation strategy thickness.

Projects addressing roadway rehabilitation only are to follow the PSSR approach outlined in [Chapter 9](#) – Project Initiation, no separate PR is needed. Rehabilitation work on existing facilities proposed for relinquishment after construction of the proposed facility should be described in accordance with the guidelines in [Chapter 25](#) – Relinquishments. If the need for rehabilitation work is identified but it is determined that it would need to be programmed as part of another project or as a separately funded project, include that recommendation under outline Item 2., "Recommendation".

- Needed Structure Rehabilitation and Upgrading

For bridge replacement proposals, an analysis of the rehabilitation option must be included.

Projects addressing structure rehabilitation only are to follow the PSSR approach outlined in [Chapter 9](#) – Project Initiation. No separate PR is needed unless a bridge replacement on new alignment is proposed.

- Cost Estimates

The roadway and structure construction costs and right of way costs for the alternative are to be reported. See [Chapter 20](#) – Project Development Cost Estimates, Section 2, and [Appendix AA](#) – Cost Estimates for instructions on preparing cost estimates. Indicate any types of costs that are not included, such as capital outlay support costs. A PR cost estimate (or a DPR cost estimate if appropriate) is to be included as an attachment.

- Right of Way Data

Right of way cost estimates (including utilities relocation costs) are reported on the R/W data sheet. (See the [Right of Way Manual](#).) The R/W data sheet must be included as an attachment to the PR (this should be an update of the R/W data sheet attached to the PSR). The form used by the R/W Branch for preparation of the R/W data sheet.

- Effect of Projects Funded by Others on State Highway

If the project is funded by others, discuss the potential effects the proposal will have on the capacity and operating characteristics of the State highway, as well as what mitigation is required to alleviate adverse impacts. During the PSR phase, a thorough analysis should have been made of the proposal. Include an updated discussion of existing and forecasted traffic and of the capacity of the mainline to absorb additional traffic.

5B. Rejected Alternatives

Very briefly describe all project alternatives that were considered and rejected, explaining the reasons for the rejection. In order to document all alternatives considered, and in particular any alternate mode considerations in a major investment study (MIS), include any alternatives rejected during the system planning and PSR stages. Refer to the ED for more detail.

6. Considerations Requiring Discussion

6A. Hazardous Waste

If no hazardous waste sites were identified in the initial site assessment (which was initially prepared during the PSR phase for projects having potential hazardous waste involvement) a statement to that effect should be included.

For those projects with identified hazardous waste sites, site investigations (SI) should have been prepared and the results of these SIs should be included. Describe the type of material and limits, along with the estimate of costs for cleaning and monitoring the site.

Describe an alternative, if feasible, that will avoid any hazardous waste sites.

For more information on hazardous waste, see [Chapter 18](#) – Environmental Contamination.

6B. Value Analysis

Recommendations from value analysis (VA) studies should be discussed in all PRs. If the recommendations are not implemented, an explanation should be provided. If a VA study was not conducted, a statement must be included that explains why such a study was not conducted.

If one of the project alternatives is the result of the VA study, describe it in outline Item 5, "Alternatives", and describe it as a VA recommendation.

For additional information on VA procedures, see [Chapter 19](#) – Value Analysis.

6C. Resource Conservation

Discuss measures taken to conserve energy and nonrenewable resources. These measures should be aimed at reducing wasteful, inefficient, and unnecessary

consumption of energy and nonrenewable resources in construction, operations and maintenance. At a minimum, the discussion should address the following items:

- Features affecting energy requirements and energy use efficiencies for the various stages of construction, operation, and maintenance, if applicable, including: incorporation of existing structural section into new work – alignment and grades – HOV lanes – truck climbing lanes – materials selection – construction techniques – signals and signing to move traffic efficiently – and others.
- Measures proposed to minimize the consumption, destruction and disposal of nonrenewable resources, including: recycling pavement or use of tires in the pavement structural section materials – maximizing the use of in-place facilities on existing highways, through design innovation, reconstruction and relocation of the facilities – preserving existing materials and facilities, through salvaging and/or incorporating previously salvaged materials or facilities – reducing the use of nonrenewable materials, through material selection and substitution – upgrading of local materials – and use of alternative energy technologies.

Address the recycling of existing AC pavement materials. For projects where existing AC is to be removed, it is to be recycled or stockpiled on State property for future use. If an economical and logistic advantage can be demonstrated, it may be conveyed to the contractor as part of the contract. Full justification must be provided if existing AC is not to be recycled or salvaged for future use. Projects should specify the use of State-owned salvaged AC materials where economically available.

6D.Right of Way Issues

- Right of Way Required

Describe in general the right of way requirements and refer to the R/W data sheet, which should be an attachment to the PR. Describe any right of way issues that influence the design of the project.

For a DPR

Include a discussion and a R/W data sheet for each viable project alternative.

For a PR (if appropriate)

Identify the portion of the discussion pertaining to the preferred alternative. Indicate which R/W data sheet is for the preferred alternative.

- Relocation Impact Studies

Relocation Impact documents, prepared in accordance with the procedures outlined in Chapter 10 of the *Right of Way Manual*, are required on all projects that displace any person or business, and are often complex and time-consuming, particularly if "Last Resort Housing" or "replacement of affordable housing" are involved.

For a DPR

Briefly summarize the draft relocation impact study/statement (DRIS).

For a PR

A final relocation impact study/statement (FRIS) will be completed for the preferred alternative and must be summarized with a reference to the full discussion in the FED.

- Airspace Lease Areas

Describe the project development team's determination as to whether or not the proposed project is in an area of high land values having potential for future airspace leases. Discuss how the geometric plan can accommodate or was modified to accommodate airspace leases, and the results of the district airspace committee review of the appropriateness of incorporating such provisions into the project. Discuss compatibility of airspace lease areas with local land-use plans, as well as the involved local agency's willingness to make a financial commitment for any added costs that may be required. Unless airspace lease provisions are required to mitigate project impacts, any added costs must be borne by others (either public or private sources).

6E. Environmental Issues

For a DPR

DEIS Projects: For projects with a draft environmental impact report/statement (DEIS), the following statement must be included:

The DEIS has been prepared in accordance with Caltrans' environmental procedures, as well as State and federal environmental

regulations. The attached DEIS is the appropriate document for the proposal.

The DEIS is a required attachment.

ND/FONSI Projects: For projects with an unsigned negative declaration (ND), the following statement must be included:

The ND has been prepared in accordance with Caltrans' environmental procedures, as well as State and federal environmental regulations.

The attached ND is the appropriate document for the proposal.

The unsigned ND with the initial study/environmental assessment (IS/EA) is a required attachment.

For a PR

EIR/EIS Projects: For projects with a final environmental impact report/statement (FEIS) no statement is included. Instead, a separate "Certification" sheet is attached to the front of the EIS. See the [Standard Environmental Reference](#), Chapter 4, Exhibit 3. The FEIS is a required attachment.

ND/FONSI Projects: For projects with an ND, the following statement must be included:

The ND has been prepared in accordance with Caltrans' environmental procedures, as well as State and federal environmental regulations.

The attached ND is the appropriate document for the proposal.

The ND with the IS/EA is a required attachment.

CE Projects: For projects statutorily exempt from CEQA, the following statement must be included:

The project is statutorily exempt from CEQA.

For projects categorically exempt (CE) from CEQA, the following statement must be included:

The project is Categorically Exempt under Class (*insert class*) of the State CEQA guidelines.

When appropriate, the following statement should be included:

The project is Categorically Excluded under NEPA.

Before approving a PR containing a CE/CE statement, the individual having authority to approve the project must have the signed CE/CE Form (when required) in-hand (signed by the environmental unit branch chief and the functional unit branch chief), and must review the project to be certain that the project being approved is the same as the one for which the CE/CE determination is made. If there is any question, the environmental unit branch chief must be consulted. The CE/CE Form, when required, must be attached to the PR. The *SER* identifies the types of projects qualifying for a Categorical Exemption/Exclusion.

- Wetlands and Flood Plains

Identify and discuss any impacts on wetlands or encroachment on base flood plains. Describe all efforts taken to avoid these impacts. For further guidelines, consult the following references:

[*Standard Environmental Reference*](#)

[*Highway Design Manual, Topic 804*](#)

- Other Environmental Issues

Briefly describe any other environmental issues that influence the project design or cost and refer to a fuller discussion in the attached ED.

6F. Air Quality Conformity

State that each project alternative is fully compatible with the design concept and scope described in a current Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) as well as a current Federal Regional Transportation Improvement Program (FRTIP) which the regional agency has determined to conform to the State Implementation Plan (SIP) for air quality; otherwise, state that conformity is not required. If one of these statements cannot be made, discuss the consequences. For CMAQ eligibility please see Section 8.

6G. Title VI Considerations

For a PR with a FED

If not specifically identified in the environmental document, describe the provisions made for low mobility and minority groups. Cite specific considerations given to, and provisions made for, low mobility groups such as the young, aged, handicapped, economically disadvantaged, and minority groups. Specific mention shall be made regarding the effect of alternative route proposals on local street traffic within adjacent minority communities as well as regarding the impacts on minority communities that are being bypassed. In addition, provision of and access to transportation facilities should be discussed with regard to the equality of facilities for minority groups as compared to facilities provided for other community groups similarly located. Such facilities include:

- Locations and accessibility of public transit stops
- Ramped curbs at intersections
- Pedestrian and nonmotorized trails and separations
- Continuation of access to shopping, schools, hospitals
- Recreation areas, etc., that were served by an access-controlled highway

6H. Noise Abatement Decision Report Section

For a DPR Only

General

Section 6H fulfills the function of noise abatement decision report (NADR), as defined in [Chapter 30](#) – Highway Traffic Noise Abatement and the [Traffic Noise Analysis Protocol](#). The NADR section presents the noise abatement recommendation based on acoustical and nonacoustical feasibility factors and the relationship between noise abatement allowances and the engineer's cost estimate.

You may elect to use a separate document for the NADR; however, the DPR must contain the tables that pertain to the recommended alternative and a summary of the noise abatement recommendation. A separate document is advised if a project has several alternatives and detailing the noise analysis of each alternative in the DPR is not practical. A separate NADR includes all

elements in this Section 6H, signature and seal of a registered engineer, and signature of design senior which show that quality control and assurance were performed.

Suggested boilerplate language (include the following three paragraphs):

This section represents the Noise Abatement Decision Report (NADR) which:

- Is an evaluation of the reasonableness and feasibility of incorporating noise abatement measures into this project;
- Constitutes the preliminary decision on noise abatement measures to be incorporated into the DED (if applicable); and
- Is required for Caltrans to meet Title 23, Code of Federal Regulation, Part 772 of the Federal Highway Administration standards.

The NADR does not present the final decision regarding noise abatement; rather, it presents key information on abatement to be considered throughout the environmental review process, based on the best available information at the time the DED is published. If a project is subject to federal review, but does not have a circulated ED, the NADR section documents the final noise abatement decision.

The NADR does not address noise barriers or other noise-reducing treatments required as mitigation for significant adverse environmental effects identified under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Results of the Noise Study Report

Provide information to identify the noise study report (NSR) for the project. For example:

The Noise Study Report for this project was prepared by ___[author]___ on ___[date]___ and approved by ___ [Office Chief]___ on ___[date]___.

Provide a summary of key information presented in the NSR for all locations with proposed noise abatement. This should include:

- Identification of locations where noise impacts are predicted to occur;
- Identification of locations for which noise abatement was evaluated;

- A description of evaluated noise abatement, including the type (wall or berm), location, and length of barriers; and
- A table summarizing acoustical feasibility (i.e., noise reduction of at least 5 dB), number of benefited receivers (receiving 5 dB benefit), and reasonable allowances (see Figure K-1 for example).

Figure K-1 is an example of a table that can be used to summarize information from the NSR.

Figure K-1 Example of a "Summary of Barrier Evaluation from Noise Study Report"

Barrier	Location	Station	Height (feet)	Acoustically Feasible?	Number of Benefited Residences	Reasonable Allowance per Residence	Total Reasonable Allowance
NB1	ROW	23+91 to 26+72	10	No	0	\$0	\$0
			12	Yes	3	\$50,000	\$150,000
			14	Yes	3	\$50,000	\$150,000
			16	Yes	5	\$50,000	\$250,000
NB2	EP	34+97 to 38+72	10	Yes	12	\$54,000	\$648,000
			12	Yes	25	\$54,000	\$1,350,000
			14	Yes	26	\$54,000	\$1,404,000
			16	Yes	28	\$54,000	\$1,512,000
NB3	ROW	26+63 to 29+92	10	Yes	8*	\$52,000	\$416,000
			12	Yes	8*	\$58,000	\$464,000
			14	Yes	8*	\$58,000	\$464,000
			16	Yes	8*	\$58,000	\$464,000

ROW = right of way line

EP = edge of pavement

* Barrier at park based on 800 feet of highway frontage

Factors in the Noise Abatement Decision Report Section

Provide a summary of key information to be used in making the preliminary noise abatement decision. If information varies, provide information for each alternative to be studied. This information should include:

- An indication of acoustical feasibility;

- Number of benefited residences;
- The total reasonableness allowance and engineer's cost estimate for the abatement;
- The total reasonableness allowance and engineer's cost estimate for each barrier and barrier height evaluated (if a barrier is evaluated);
- Comparison of cost versus allowance; and
- If known, preliminary information on secondary effects of abatement such as impacts on cultural resources, scenic views, local biology or hazardous material.

A summary table may be used, see Figure K-1 for example.

The engineer's cost estimate should include costs required to construct the abatement. For noise barriers, include the cost of the wall or berm, footings, traffic control, drainage, modified or additional plantings, miscellaneous items, and a 10% contingency. Any items required to construct the wall should be included. For example, if a retaining wall is required to construct the wall, but not for the project itself, the cost of the retaining wall should be included; if a wall is constructed on a bridge, the cost of modifying the bridge structure to accommodate the wall should be included. Costs to bring roadways to current design standards, such as shoulder widening should not be included.

Costs associated with the mitigation of secondary effects of the abatement should not be included in the abatement construction cost estimate. Examples include costs for mitigation, such as:

- Mitigation of visual effects, such as planting of vines or use of see-through wall materials;
- Mitigation of effects related to hazardous materials (i.e., removal of materials);
- Mitigation of effects on cultural resources (i.e., removal of buried artifacts); and
- Mitigation of effects on biological resources (i.e., replacement of endangered plant species or wildlife habitat).

Wall construction cost should be based on masonry construction, in accordance with Caltrans' standard specifications. If the construction cost is higher than the allowance, alternative construction methods should be evaluated and discussed.

Figure K-2 Example for a "Summary of Abatement Key Information"

Barrier	Height (feet)	Acoustically Feasible?	Number of Benefited Residences	Total Reasonable Allowance	Estimated Construction Cost	Cost Less than Allowance?
NB1	10	No	0	\$0	NA	NA
	12	Yes	3	\$150,000	\$132,000	Yes
	14	Yes	3	\$150,000	\$196,000	No
	16	Yes	5	\$250,000	\$280,000	No
NB2	10	Yes	12	\$648,000	\$500,000	Yes
	12	Yes	25	\$1,350,000	\$660,000	Yes
	14	Yes	26	\$1,404,000	\$980,000	Yes
	16	Yes	28	\$1,512,000	\$1,400,000	Yes
NB3	10	Yes	8*	\$416,000	\$200,000	Yes
	12	Yes	8*	\$464,000	\$264,000	Yes
	14	Yes	8*	\$464,000	\$392,000	Yes
	16	Yes	8*	\$464,000	\$560,000	No

* Barrier at park based on 800 feet of highway frontage.

Nonacoustical Factors Relating to Feasibility

Present the engineer’s evaluation of nonacoustical factors relating to the feasibility of noise abatement. These factors could include:

- Geometric standards, such as minimum sight distances;
- Safety;
- Maintenance;
- Security;
- Geotechnical considerations; and
- Utility relocations.

Preliminary Noise Abatement Decision

There may be situations where several forms of abatement are feasible and have costs that are less than the allowance. For example, in the case of a barrier, different barrier heights could be feasible and have costs that are less than the allowance. In these cases, a recommendation must be made and, in the case of a barrier, a barrier height must be selected. This decision should be made by the project development team. In the case of a barrier, several factors can be considered in making this recommendation:

- Line-of-sight break between a receiver and an 11.5-foot-high truck stack (per Chapter 1100 of the *Highway Design Manual*).
- Absolute noise level. Note that 5 dB (decibel) is a minimum, not a design goal, but a barrier that reduces the absolute noise level to below the severe impact level of 75 dBA (A-weighted decibel)-Leq[h] (1-hour equivalent sound level) could be favored over one that does not.
- Number of benefited receivers.
- Cost per benefited receiver.
- Degree of noise reduction (a barrier that provides only 1 dB of improved noise reduction over a lower barrier and costs substantially more may not be favored over the lower barrier).

Provide a summary discussion of each barrier and identify the recommended barrier and barrier heights for each alternative. Explain why the barrier height was selected. This is the preliminary noise abatement decision.

Explain that this decision is the preliminary noise abatement decision and is subject to change. Use the following text for this explanation.

The preliminary noise abatement decision presented in this report is based on preliminary project alignments and profiles, which may be subject to change. As such, the physical characteristics of noise abatement described herein also may be subject to change. If pertinent parameters change substantially during the final project design, the preliminary noise abatement decision may be changed or eliminated from the final project design. A final decision to construct noise abatement will be made upon completion of the project design.

The preliminary noise abatement decision presented here will be included in the DED, which will be circulated for public review.

Secondary Effects of Abatement

The noise abatement recommended in the preliminary noise abatement decision may have the potential to result in secondary effects on cultural resources, scenic views, hazardous materials, biology, or other resources. Present a brief discussion of the potential secondary effects associated with the recommended abatement. Base this discussion on the best information available from technical specialists at the time the DPR is prepared.

7. Other Considerations As Appropriate

- Public Hearing Process

For a DPR

Make a recommendation regarding requirements for the public hearing process. For example, recommend that a public hearing be scheduled presenting the developed viable alternatives for public comment—or— recommend that an opportunity for a public hearing be offered, since little public interest has surfaced. For further guidelines, see [Chapter 12](#) – Project Approvals and Changes to Approved Projects, and [Chapter 22](#) – Community Involvement.

For a PR with a FED

Give the date of the public hearing, if held, and the general tenor of comments. State the positions of local agencies. Refer to Item 5A of the outline for a discussion of any changes in the project design or mitigating features resulting from the ED circulation and the public hearing process. If an opportunity for a hearing was offered in lieu of scheduling a hearing directly, include copies of all correspondence received in response to the notice and of any replies. If requests were received and subsequently withdrawn, summarize the events that resulted in the withdrawal. If the requests were not withdrawn, state as factually as possible what useful purpose the hearing may have served or not, as the case may be.

- Route Matters

Freeway Agreements & New Connections: Discuss freeway agreements, when involved (See [Chapter 24](#) – Freeway Agreements). Discuss any new-connection approvals required. Discuss denomination as an access controlled highway, if appropriate (See [Chapter 23](#) – Route Adoptions). New public road connections and new access to freeways and controlled access highways (CAH) are discussed in detail in [Chapter 27](#) – New Public Road Connections.

Route Adoptions: Discuss route adoption requirements or support the determination that adoption is not required where there is deviation from the adopted alignment for engineering reasons. (See [Chapter 23](#) – Route

Adoptions). For any deviations, obtain review and concurrence from the PD Coordinator and document here.

Relinquishments: If existing facility will be superseded, discuss whether it will be relinquished, vacated, abandoned or retained. Give estimated costs of proposed action. See [Chapter 25](#) – Relinquishments.

- Permits

Discuss any permits, licenses, or approvals that are required that may be of special significance or may be a problem to obtain. If special procedures or actions are required, make appropriate recommendations. See [Chapter 13](#) – Project Related Permits, Licenses, Agreements, Certifications (PLAC), and Approvals.

Work by others within the access denial lines of an access controlled highway, as well as retention of subsurface utilities within the right of way, may require approval of the chief of the Division of Design (DOD). See [Chapter 17](#) – Encroachments in Caltrans' Right of Way for more information. Details concerning encroachment permits are discussed in the [Encroachment Permits Manual](#) issued by the Traffic Operations Program. Discuss any coordination that has taken place with federal agencies as a result of the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA)/404 Memoranda of Understanding.

- Cooperative Agreements

Cooperative features, such as funding responsibilities on any project with proposed transfer of funds, or staffing responsibilities for Special Funded Projects for subsequent design, right of way acquisition, or construction, should be clearly outlined in the DPR. Where an EIR/EIS is involved and approval is not expected for some period of time, these recommendations may be deferred to the PR. The discussion should also include the execution dates of other associated cooperative agreements or memoranda of understanding, along with a brief summary of provisions. For more information, see [Chapter 16](#) – Cooperative Agreements and [Chapter 2](#) – Roles and Responsibilities.

Approval of a DPR or PR that recommends approval of cooperative features constitutes authority to finalize negotiations and to submit a draft cooperative

agreement to DOD for legal and procedural review. Unless a preapproved agreement form is used, each agreement draft must be approved by DOD before the final agreement may be submitted to the cooperating agency for execution.

Proposed cooperative agreements involving new construction projects must be covered by a PR. Proposed cooperative agreements that come about as part of the design of a previously approved major construction project, such as a cooperative drainage project on a new freeway, are to be covered by a cooperative agreement report. Do not use a combined "Project Report-Cooperative Agreement Report" format. Either a PR or a cooperative agreement report should be prepared, whichever is appropriate.

- Other Agreements

Features of other needed agreements, such as interagency agreements or maintenance agreements should be outlined.

- Report on Feasibility of Providing Access to Navigable Rivers

This section constitutes the report on the feasibility of providing a means of public access for recreational purposes to any navigable river over which a new bridge is being constructed as required by Section 84.5 of the Streets and Highways Code. The explanation of this policy is found in [Chapter 8](#), Article 6 Public Access to Waterways. Justify and document the position taken on public access to the watercourse. All environmental and engineering aspects must be fully considered, as well as the intent of the Legislature to maximize such public access. Items to consider include, but are not limited to:

- Extent of public use of the waterway for recreational purposes.
- Existing and/or alternative access.
- Access control of the highway facility.
- Environmental impacts of providing public access.
- Right-of-way impacts and costs.
- Construction and support costs.
- Pedestrian accessibility.

- Public Boat Ramps

The explanation of this policy is found in [Chapter 8](#), Article 6 Public Access to Waterways. Use the design scoping index in [Appendix L](#) – Preparation Guidelines for Project Study Report, to document all decisions pertaining to public access. See design information bulletin [DIB 71](#) for details to be considered.

- Transportation Management Plan for Use During Construction

Transportation Management Plans (TMP) are required for all reconstruction, rehabilitation, and other projects (including projects not funded by the State) if it is anticipated that there will be significant traffic delays related to the construction. Describe the general requirements for a TMP, if applicable. In general, a TMP is needed if construction work on an existing roadway already experiencing recurrent delays causes a significant increase in recurrent delays over an extended period of time. Some TMPs might be complex; others may be very simple, with one or two activities added to the traditional traffic-handling practices. Until *TMP Guidelines* are published, contact the Traffic Operations Program's TMP Coordinator for guidance.

Describe any proposed prolonged temporary ramp closures (more than 10 consecutive days) and summarize the results of the economic impact study prepared by the district environmental planning unit. Closures of less than 10 days may require discussion, depending upon circumstances.

Describe detours, including transit route rerouting and nonmotorized rerouting, and other traffic handling features required during construction.

- Stage Construction

If multiple construction units or stage construction is proposed, describe them and the reasons for them.

- Accommodation of Oversize Loads

A discussion should be included relevant to the policy that State freeways be designed to provide passage for vehicles of unrestricted height while moving in and out of an area; to or from airports, harbors, and testing sites; and to or from ultimate destination for use or assembly. Discuss exceptions to this

policy when an existing city or county facility allows for bypass of the State-restricted facility. Refer to [Chapter 8](#) – Overview of Project Development.

If it is impractical to follow this policy due to engineering controls, excessive costs, or community values considerations, discuss contacts with the impacted industries and describe the mutually satisfactory solution agreed to. A full discussion of the solution must be presented.

- Graffiti Control

Include this section if the project will be in an identified graffiti-prone area. The urban areas of the following counties are considered graffiti-prone: San Diego, Orange, Los Angeles, San Bernardino, Riverside, Ventura, Santa Barbara, Fresno, Santa Cruz, Santa Clara, Alameda, San Mateo, San Francisco, Contra Costa, Marin, Napa, Sonoma, Solano, San Joaquin, and Sacramento. Discuss any special attention given to the design in these areas and describe design features proposed, such as details to prevent vandals from accessing bridges, signs, and walls.

- Other Appropriate Topics

Discuss any other appropriate topic that has a bearing on the approval of the project.

8. Programming

- Programming

Proposal Funding Data: Give the data that is included in the appropriate, latest, official programming document: STIP, SHOPP, TSM Plan, Toll Bridge Program, local agency document, or Tax Measure Authority Expenditure Plan.

For a PRwith an FED

Give the current right of way and construction costs and compare to the programming figures in the current STIP, HSOPP or TSM Plan.

Combining Projects: There are certain occasions where it is cost effective to combine projects from different programs or elements for the purposes of

design or construction. This usually occurs where the projects are in proximity to each other. For the project proposed for combining, describe each program or element of the project that is described as a separate line or entry in the programming document.

Multiple Counties: Where work is proposed in multiple counties, an entry is required for each of the counties, so that county minimums can be accurately determined.

- Funding

Special Funding: If a project has special funding, identify the source of funding, the dollar amount, when funding will be available, etc.

Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) Program Funding: If a project is identified as eligible for CMAQ funding in the PSR, an emission reduction analysis must be completed and attached. California Air Resource Board and Caltrans' approved methodologies for completing the emission reduction analysis can be obtained from the HQ Transportation Programming website:

http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/transprog/federal/cmaq/Official_CMAQ_Web_Page.htm

State-Only Funding: The PR proposing State-only funding should fully explain the need for the exception and should discuss previous efforts to qualify the project for federal participation.

9. Reviews

Cover all major reviews and dates of reviews, particularly from the FHWA transportation engineer, Traffic Operations liaison engineer, DOD reviewer, and DOD coordinator. Identify the reviewer and describe the results of the review, including the resolution of any disagreements. State the type of federal involvement in the project, i.e. exempt, certification acceptance, or project by project (see [Chapter 2](#) – Roles and Responsibilities).

If FHWA review was not obtained, cite reasons for not doing so. If appropriate, include a statement indicating that the FHWA transportation engineer was involved with and reviewed the DED in the district, including whether the proposal is eligible

for federal participation. Note the date of any mandatory design exception fact sheet approvals that are discussed in Item 5A of the outline.

10. Project Personnel

To facilitate contacts with team members responsible for preparation of the DPR or the PR, include their names and telephone numbers in the following general format:

Project Manager	phone #
Project Development Team Leader	phone #
Project Development Unit Supervisor (Senior or Supervisor or both)	phone #
Project Development Unit Project Engineer	phone #
Environmental Unit Supervisor	phone #
Right of Way Branch Reviewer	phone #

11. List of Attachments

All attachments shall be clearly labeled and referenced in the text to assist the reader in following the report's content. Sheets wider than 8 ½ inches are to be folded to open to the right, with identification shown at the right edge.

Mandatory Requirements: At a minimum, all DPRs and PRs should have the following attachments:

- A DED for a DPR; an FED or a signed CE/CE Form (if required) for a PR; see *SER* for guidelines
- Location map
- Appropriate project detail maps to show existing conditions and proposed improvements
- Typical sections
- DPR Cost Estimate approved by the project manager for each viable alternative for the DPR. Indicate preferred alternative in attachment to the PR, if appropriate and include the PR Cost Estimate.
- R/W data sheet (updated version if already in PSR) for each viable alternative for the DPR. Indicate preferred alternative in attachment to PR, if appropriate.

Additional Attachments: The following additional attachments should be included, when appropriate:

- PMS printouts
- Photographs
- Mosaics
- Traffic flow diagrams
- Investigation and signal or median barrier warrant sheets
- Other pertinent items such as resolutions, correspondence
- Site investigation

ARTICLE 3 Template for Project Report

Outline For PROJECT REPORT

1. INTRODUCTION
2. RECOMMENDATION
3. BACKGROUND
4. NEED and PURPOSE
 - A. Problem, Deficiencies, Justification
 - B. Regional & System Planning
 - C. Traffic
5. ALTERNATIVES
 - A. Viable Alternatives
 - B. Rejected Alternatives
6. CONSIDERATIONS REQUIRING DISCUSSION
 - A. Hazardous Waste
 - B. Value Analysis
 - C. Resource Conservation
 - D. Right of Way Issues
 - E. Environmental Issues
 - F. Air Quality Conformity
 - G. Title VI Considerations
 - H. Noise Abatement Decision Report
7. OTHER CONSIDERATIONS AS APPROPRIATE
 - Public Hearing Process
 - Route Matters
 - Permits
 - Cooperative Agreements
 - Other Agreements
 - Involvement with a Navigable Waterway
 - Transportation Management Plan for Use During Construction
 - Stage Construction
 - Accommodation of Oversize Loads
 - Graffiti Control
 - Other Appropriate Topics
8. PROGRAMMING

9. REVIEWS
10. PROJECT PERSONNEL
11. LIST OF ATTACHMENTS