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DATE: May 24, 2016

TO: Commissioners and Interested Persons

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SUBJECT: **Notice of Impending Development No. NCC-NOID-0002-16 (Bicycle/Pedestrian Improvements at Interstate 5 Interchanges)** for Public Hearing and Commission Action at the June 8, 2016 Commission Meeting in Santa Barbara

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SUMMARY OF STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Notice of Impending Development (NOID) No. NCC-NOID-0002-16 will authorize bicycle and pedestrian improvements at Interstate 5 (I-5) interchanges with surface streets in the City of Encinitas, including the Santa Fe Drive undercrossing, the Encinitas Boulevard undercrossing and the Leucadia Boulevard overcrossing. The improvements would widen the interchanges to accommodate new sidewalks and bicycle lanes, enhanced pedestrian crossings, and other amenities intended to enhance the experience for pedestrians and bicyclists crossing the I-5 highway, which is necessary to access the coast. The subject NOID also includes construction of a 14-ft. high, 1,991 linear ft. soundwall with transparent paneling to attenuate highway noise for residences located adjacent to I-5. The soundwall would be located on private property adjacent to I-5 on the east side, south of Palomar Airport Road, in the City of Carlsbad. Finally, the NOID includes construction of a 6-ft. high, 571 linear ft. privacy wall that would connect with the existing Scripps Memorial Hospital wall. The privacy wall would be located adjacent to I-5 on the west side, adjacent to Devonshire Drive, in the City of Encinitas. Construction is anticipated to begin in August 2016 and be completed by February 2018.

These improvements are referred to by Caltrans as the "Early Work Package" and consist primarily of community enhancement opportunities identified in the North Coast Corridor Public Works Plan and Transportation and Resource Enhancement Program (NCC PWP/TREP), a comprehensive program of transportation, community and resource enhancement projects within what is known as the "North Coast Corridor", which extends from La Jolla to Oceanside along the North San Diego County coastline. The NCC PWP/TREP was originally approved by the Commission in August 2014 (PWP-6-NCC-13-0203-1) and has been amended by the Commission once since then in March 2016 (PWP-6-NCC-16-0001-1). The standard of review for the NOID is conformity with the policies, design/development strategies and implementation measures of the certified NCC PWP/TREP as amended.

The subject NOID was submitted by District 11 of the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) on April 8, 2016, and was filed as complete on April 15, 2016. The date by which the Commission would have had to take action on the NOID absent an extension of the time limit was May 27, 2016. In this case, Caltrans has agreed to extend the 30-day processing time in order to make the June 2016 Commission meeting.

The proposed development would not impact any wetlands or sensitive habitat areas, and has been designed to be consistent with all applicable policies, design/development strategies, and implementation measures of the NCC PWP/TREP. Therefore, staff is recommending that the Commission determine that the impending development is consistent with the certified NCC PWP/TREP as submitted. The motion and resolution can be found on Page 6. The findings for the determination of the NOID's consistency with the NCC PWP/TREP begin on Page 6.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Further information on the subject NOID may be obtained from Kanani Brown or Gabriel Buhr at (619) 767-2370.

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I. PROCEDURAL ISSUES

PUBLIC WORKS PLAN BACKGROUND AND HISTORY

Section 30114 of the Coastal Act defines public works to include, among other things, the following:

> *(b) All public transportation facilities, including streets, roads, highways, public parking lots and structures, ports, harbors, airports, railroads, and mass transit facilities and stations, bridges, trolley wires, and other related facilities. (…)*
>
> *(c) All publicly financed recreational facilities, all projects of the State Coastal Conservancy, and any development by a special district.*

Section 30605 of the Coastal Act states, in part:

> *To promote greater efficiency for the planning of any public works (…) and as an alternative to project-by-project review, plans for public works (…) may be submitted to the commission for review in the same manner prescribed for the review of local coastal programs set forth in Chapter 6 (commencing with Section 30500).*

A Public Works Plan (PWP) is one of the alternatives available to the Commission and project proponents for Commission review of large or phased public works projects and remains under the authority of the Commission irrespective of coastal permitting jurisdictional boundaries. A PWP is an alternative to project-by-project review for public works (which, in the case of the overarching project of which the current proposal is a part, would require multiple coastal development permits, in multiple jurisdictions, if not processed through a PWP). PWPs must be sufficiently detailed regarding the size, kind, intensity, and location of development to allow the Commission to determine their consistency with the Chapter 3 policies of the Coastal Act (in areas that are pre-LCP certification) or the certified LCP (in post-LCP certification areas). Once the Commission approves a PWP, no coastal development permit is required for a specific project described within it; rather, before commencing each specific project, the project proponent must submit notice in the form of a NOID, which requires the Commission to determine whether the submitted project is consistent with the standards within the PWP, or if conditions are necessary to make it consistent.

Chapter 5 of the NCC PWP/TREP (Coastal Development Policies and Resources) is divided into ten sections with each section containing policies, design/development strategies, and implementation measures, specific to the relevant issue area. The policies and design/development strategies apply to all NCC PWP/TREP improvements, while the implementation measures are project-specific and apply to NCC PWP/TREP improvements that are subject to the NOID review process.

STANDARD OF REVIEW

Sections 30605 and 30606 of the Coastal Act and Title 14, Sections 13357(a)(5), 13359, and 13353-54 of the California Code of Regulations govern the Coastal Commission's review of subsequent development where there is a certified PWP. The standard of review for those portions of the proposed project that are specifically authorized by the PWP component of the NCC PWP/TREP, and for which a Notice of Impending Development has been submitted, is whether the development is consistent with the PWP. Section 13354 requires the Executive Director to review the NOID within five working days of receipt to determine whether it provides sufficient information to determine if the proposed development is consistent with the certified PWP. The notice is to be filed when all necessary supporting information has been received.

Pursuant to Section 13359 of Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations, within thirty working days of the filing of the NOID, the Executive Director shall report to the Commission the pendency of the development and make a recommendation regarding the consistency of the proposed development with the certified PWP. The NCC PWP/TREP includes language that allows this deadline to be extended if Caltrans agrees to waive the 30-day requirement, and in the case of the subject NOID, Caltrans has agreed to extend the processing time in order to make the June 2016 Commission meeting. After public hearing, by a majority of its members present, the Commission shall determine whether the development is consistent with the certified NCC PWP/TREP as submitted, or whether conditions are needed to bring the development into conformance with the NCC PWP/TREP.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION

Throughout the development and early implementation of the NCC PWP/TREP, Caltrans and SANDAG have engaged the local governments in the review process. Focused meetings were held with City staffs beginning in January 2011 and extending through the summer of 2012. In the fall of 2013, Caltrans and SANDAG presented agendized briefings to the City Councils of San Diego, Encinitas, Carlsbad, and Oceanside in order to provide an update on the ongoing PWP document development and process. Staff from Caltrans, SANDAG, and the Commission have had ongoing coordination meetings with the corridor cities since the approval of the NCC PWP/TREP in August 2014 to discuss the preliminary NCC PWP/TREP projects. On March 30, 2016 and April 7, 2016, Caltrans staff consulted with staff from the City of Encinitas to discuss the interchange improvements that are the subject of this NOID.

STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION

The Resource Enhancement and Mitigation Program (REMP) within the NCC PWP/TREP was developed through a collaborative process with representatives from various resource agencies including the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Regional Water Quality Control Board, NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service, the U.S.

Environmental Protection Agency, and the California Coastal Conservancy. The development of the REMP was initiated by members of this group as early as 2010 in order to identify regionally significant restoration and enhancement opportunities within the NCC. Through the NCC PWP/TREP, this group has been formalized as the REMP Working Group and meets quarterly to track and guide progress through the planned implementation phases of the PWP. The specific projects that are the subject of this NOID have been presented to the REMP Working Group through the course of several recent REMP working group meetings convened between 2015 and 16. All comments and feedback received from the REMP Working Group members have been addressed by Caltrans as a part of the subject submittal.

II. MOTION AND RESOLUTION

MOTION:

I move that the Commission determine that the development described in Notice of Impending Development NCC-NOID-0002-16 is consistent with the certified North Coast Corridor Public Works Plan and Transportation and Resource Enhancement Program.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends a **YES** vote. Passage of this motion will result in a determination that the development described in the Notice of Impending Development NCC-NOID-0002-16 is consistent with the certified North Coast Corridor Public Works Plan and Transportation and Resource Enhancement Program, and adoption of the following resolution and findings. The motion passes only by affirmative vote of a majority of the Commissioners present.

RESOLUTION TO DETERMINE DEVELOPMENT IS CONSISTENT WITH NCC PWP/TREP:

The Commission hereby determines that the development described in the Notice of Impending Development NCC-NOID-0002-16 is consistent with the certified North Coast Corridor Public Works Plan and Transportation and Resource Enhancement Program for the reasons discussed in the findings herein.

III. FINDINGS AND DECLARATIONS

A. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The I-5 NCC Project includes improvements and maintenance of existing and future traffic operations on the I-5 highway from La Jolla Village Drive in San Diego to Harbor Drive in Oceanside/Camp Pendleton, extending approximately 27 miles. In July 2011,

Caltrans identified the "8+4 Buffer Alternative" as the Locally Preferred Alternative, which was further supported by its identification as the Least Environmentally Damaging Practicable Alternative during the environmental review process. It consists of two high occupancy vehicle (HOV)/Managed Lanes in each direction separated by a buffer from the existing four general purpose lanes in each direction. Other components include auxiliary lanes, bridge replacements, overcrossing improvements, two new Direct Access Ramps (DARs), interchange improvements, six access points to the HOV lanes, park-and-ride facilities, gateway features, intelligent transportation system features, and retaining and sound walls. The project will be implemented in three phases.

At this time, Caltrans is requesting review of what is referred to by Caltrans as the "Early Work Package" for Phase 1 of the I-5 NCC Project. The Early Work Package that is the subject of this NOID consists primarily of community enhancement projects identified in the NCC PWP/TREP. Caltrans has coordinated with the City of Encinitas, as well as neighborhood communities, to determine which community enhancement opportunities would benefit from early construction anticipated to begin in August 2016 and be completed by February 2018. Selection criteria for projects included in the Early Work Package also required that there would be no impacts to wetlands or sensitive habitat areas associated with any proposed development. The improvements within the Early Work Package will improve how the I-5 highway projects interface with adjacent communities and are described in greater detail below.

The standard of review for the subject NOID is its consistency with the NCC PWP/TREP. Caltrans has submitted Consistency Analyses for the following issue areas: Energy Conservation and Emission Reduction; Public Access and Recreation; Water Quality; Environmentally Sensitive Habitat Areas (ESHA) and Special-Status Species; Archaeological and Paleontological Resources; Coastal Visual Resources; Site Stability and Management (Coastal Hazards); and Agricultural Resources. The analyses discuss the NOID's consistency with the relevant sections of Chapter 5 of the NCC PWP/TREP. The Commission finds that the subject NOID is consistent with all policies and has incorporated all of the applicable design/development strategies and implementation measures of the NCC PWP/TREP, as discussed in greater detail in the findings sections below. The subsequent sections of this staff report include findings for the subject NOID and focus on consistency with the public access and recreation, water quality, and visual resource policies of the NCC PWP/TREP, as there are no impacts to other coastal resources (e.g., agriculture, archaeology/paleontology, ESHA).

Interchange Improvements

Caltrans proposes to widen Santa Fe Drive and Encinitas Boulevard under the I-5 highway to accommodate the addition of pedestrian sidewalks and bike lanes on both the north and south sides of Santa Fe Drive and Encinitas Boulevard within the limits of the interchanges (Exhibit 4). Retaining walls will be constructed on the south and north sides of each interchange, which will be approximately 389 linear feet and 363 linear feet along Santa Fe Drive, and which will be approximately 394 linear feet and 432 linear feet along Encinitas Boulevard. Construction of the walls will create the space needed between the bridge abutments and bridge columns for the proposed separated bike lanes

and sidewalks. Bike lanes will be a minimum of 8 feet wide but will vary in width at some spots up to 12 feet wide. Sidewalks will be Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessible and are designed to be a minimum of 6 feet but will be as wide as 6 feet 8 inches in certain areas. Tie-back walls and soil nail walls will be necessary to widen both interchanges, as there are no plans to widen or modify the I-5 crossings over Santa Fe Drive/Encinitas Boulevard during Phase 1 of the I-5 NCC Project. The existing columns that currently provide support of the I-5 at the undercrossings would remain between the vehicle travel way and the pedestrian and bicycle facility, and a low-profile safety barrier will separate cyclists in the bike lane from vehicular traffic. At Leucadia Boulevard, Caltrans proposes to re-stripe traffic lanes to provide new bike lanes on both sides of the road and install bicycle loop detectors to detect oncoming bicyclists and trigger light signal changes (Exhibit 4). Construction at these three interchanges is anticipated to take approximately fifteen months.

The construction of sidewalks and bike lanes on both sides of Santa Fe Drive and Encinitas Boulevard will require the following ancillary improvements: upgrade of pedestrian crossings; replacement of four traffic signals; modification to four ramp metering systems at the entrance ramps to the highway; additional soffit lighting under the bridges for these facilities; installation and upgrade of roadside signs; and modification of the loop detection for two traffic signals at Leucadia Boulevard. Drainage work is also proposed and includes the following: installation of curb-opening inlets at both Santa Fe Drive and Encinitas Boulevard; extension of an existing reinforced concrete pipe to replace an open concrete channel; construction of inlets at the end of each tie-back wall to capture water from the bridges; realignment of an existing ditch; construction of a bio-swale at the Santa Fe Drive northbound on-ramp; and cleanup of existing culverts that contain mud and trash.

Soundwall

A 14 ft. high, 1,991 linear ft. soundwall is proposed to replace an existing 6-ft. high, 1,778 linear ft. property wall at the Alta Mira Condominiums which are located on the east side of I-5, south of Palomar Airport Road in Carlsbad. The soundwall will provide attenuation of traffic related noise for the adjacent residences. The proposed soundwall will be located on Alta Mira Homeowners Association's property adjacent to the residences facing the I-5 highway from Caminito Azul to Caminito Del Reposo (Exhibit 5). The soundwall will have transparent panels to provide light and maintain visual access. The transparent panels will incorporate bird-strike avoidance measures in the final design. Construction is anticipated to take approximately one year.

Devonshire Privacy Wall

At the request of the City of Encinitas and Scripps Memorial Hospital, Caltrans proposes to construct a 6 ft. high, 571 linear ft. privacy wall to provide screening for residences on Devonshire Drive The privacy wall will be located on the west side of I-5 and on the east side of Devonshire Drive, north of Santa Fe Drive in Encinitas (Exhibit 7). The south portion of the wall will tie in at the north end of the existing Scripps Memorial Hospital wall on hospital property and will continue north to Requeza Street. Part of the proposed

wall will be constructed between the highway and a new 5 ft. wide sidewalk along Devonshire Drive. Construction is anticipated to take approximately one year.

B. PUBLIC ACCESS AND RECREATION

Policy 5.3.1 of the NCC PWP/TREP states:

> *Maximum public access to and along coastal and inland recreational resources in the PWP/TREP planning area shall be protected and enhanced, consistent with public safety and sensitive coastal resource needs.*

The interchange improvements at Santa Fe Drive, Encinitas Boulevard, and Leucadia Boulevard are community enhancements that would significantly improve public access to and along the coast. The existing bicycle and pedestrian facilities at these interchanges are limited and do not provide adequate safety for bicyclists and pedestrians traveling under or over the I-5 highway. For example, there are no existing sidewalks or bicycle lanes within the limits of the Santa Fe Drive interchange – only a temporary pedestrian pathway with a concrete barrier on the north side. There are also no existing sidewalks or bicycle lanes on either side of the road at the Encinitas Boulevard undercrossing, forcing pedestrians and bicyclists to use the narrow road shoulders to cross under I-5. Although there are existing sidewalks at the Leucadia Boulevard overcrossing, there are no bicycle lanes and bicyclists must travel in the same lanes as vehicles.

Santa Fe Drive, Encinitas Boulevard, and Leucadia Boulevard are all major east-west roadways in the City of Encinitas that are used to access the coast, and the proposed improvements to bicycle and pedestrian facilities will increase safety and bike/pedestrian circulation on the local roadways. Once the proposed interchange improvements are completed, sidewalks will connect with existing and new City sidewalks (to be completed by the City of Encinitas) on both sides of the highway at both Santa Fe Drive and Encinitas Boulevard, providing a better and safer connection to access the coast. The construction of bicycle lanes at all three interchanges and the installation of bicycle loop detectors at the Leucadia Boulevard overcrossing to detect oncoming bicyclists and allow for signal changes will encourage bicycle circulation, facilitating multimodal public access to coastal recreational resources.

Temporary impacts to public access would occur during construction. Construction activities and staging areas adjacent to the interchanges will temporarily disrupt travel lanes along Encinitas Boulevard and Santa Fe Drive, and construction of the walls will temporarily disrupt adjacent travel lanes. In accordance with design/development strategy (DDS) 1 and DDS 3, temporary impacts to access and recreation from construction and staging will be minimized to the maximum extent feasible. Caltrans has developed a Construction Access Plan and Traffic Management Plan which will maintain vehicular and pedestrian access along construction areas. Signage will be posted at construction sites with the schedule and directions to alternative/temporary access in accordance with DDS 5. A combination of fencing, cones, and flaggers will be utilized. No fencing or other barriers, except as specifically authorized by the subject NOID, will

be placed in a location that would limit public access to pedestrian or bicycle accessways. When safe and feasible, a path will be cleared for pedestrian access at the end of each construction shift. Debris will be collected frequently, stored away from pedestrian/bicycle accessways and will be hauled offsite on a regular basis. These measures are detailed in the Demolition, Staging, Storage, Fueling and Debris/Excess Graded Materials Plan submitted pursuant to implementation measure (IM) 5.3.1. Additionally, Caltrans has developed a project-specific construction schedule identifying dates of construction and planned roadway closures as further required by IM 5.3.1 with an associated Traffic Management Plan. Construction is anticipated to begin in August 2016 and occur for 15 months for the interchange improvements and for one year for the proposed sound and privacy walls.

In accordance with DDS 2, the improvements within the subject NOID are consistent with the Phasing Plan in Chapter 6A of the NCC PWP/TREP for the initial phase (2010-2020). No cooperative maintenance agreements are necessary pursuant to DDS 3 because the soundwall and privacy wall are located on private property and the other improvements are located in Caltrans' right of way. All facilities constructed in the Caltrans right of way will be maintained by Caltrans. Caltrans has conducted ongoing coordination with the affected local jurisdictions regarding project design for each specific development project pursuant to DDS 5.

DDS 4 requires that new pedestrian crossing designs demonstrate compliance with applicable state and federal standards, including the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), and requires documentation of the consultation process with the relevant local and state stakeholders for any available safety upgrades at the pedestrian crossings. The proposed pedestrian crossings at Encinitas Boulevard and Santa Fe Drive under the I-5 highway bridges will meet all applicable ADA requirements.

In conclusion, the Early Work Package project, as proposed, would result in temporary impacts to public access and recreation during construction; however, the impacts would be minimized, and the improvements would enhance public access to and along the coast, as described above. Therefore, the Commission finds that the subject NOID is consistent with the applicable policies, design/development strategies, and implementation measures included in Section 5.3.3 of the NCC PWP/TREP.

C. WATER QUALITY

Policy 5.4.1 of the NCC PWP/TREP states:

> *NCC transportation facility and community enhancement projects shall be sited and designed so that marine resources are maintained, enhanced, and, where feasible, restored. Special protection shall be given to areas and species of special biological or economic significance.*

Policy 5.4.2 of the NCC PWP/TREP states:

> *Uses of the marine environment shall be carried out in a manner that will sustain the biological productivity of coastal waters and healthy populations of all species of marine organisms adequate for long-term commercial, recreational, scientific, and educational purposes.*

Policy 5.4.3 of the NCC PWP/TREP states:

> *Coastal water quality shall be restored by minimizing wastewater discharges, controlling runoff, preventing depletion of ground water supplies and substantial interference with surface water flow, encouraging wastewater reclamation, maintaining natural vegetation buffer areas that protect riparian habitats, and minimizing alteration of natural watercourses.*

No impacts to wetlands or environmentally sensitive habitat areas are proposed as part of the subject NOID. Potential impacts to water quality and marine resources could result from stormwater runoff and from project construction. Drainage work includes installation of curb-opening inlets at both Santa Fe Drive and Encinitas Boulevard, extending an existing reinforced concrete pipe to replace an open concrete channel, constructing inlets at the end of each tie-back wall to capture water from the bridges, realigning an existing ditch, and cleaning existing culverts by removing trash and mud.

The proposed project has been sited and designed to protect and restore natural hydrologic features and minimize the potential for adverse impacts to water quality, consistent with DDS 1 and DDS 3. DDS 1 requires the project to be sited and designed to protect and restore natural hydrologic features, such as groundwater recharge areas, natural stream corridors, floodplains, and wetlands. DDS 3 requires a project-level analysis of potential water quality and marine habitat impacts to ensure runoff management is incorporated early in site design planning integrating existing site characteristics that affect runoff such as topography, drainage, vegetation, soil conditions, and infiltration properties, with strategies that minimize post-project runoff, control pollutant sources, and, where necessary, remove pollutants. The project-level analysis required by DDS 3 includes: field surveys of potential surface water impacts, identification of potentially substantial alteration of water flow and drainage patterns and evaluation of designs and construction techniques to minimize sedimentation, analysis of additional impervious surface and potential mitigation, analysis of future requirements for load reductions of project generated contaminants, wetland delineations, and an analysis of future sea level rise scenarios.

A Storm Water Data Report (SWDR) has been prepared for the subject project which incorporates the design/development strategies and implementation measures requiring improvements to minimize impacts to coastal waters through site design and planning and incorporation of BMPs designed to control the volume, velocity, and pollutant load of stormwater leaving the developed areas. The project includes a small amount of new impervious surfaces from the pedestrian and bicycle improvements at the Encinitas Boulevard interchange (0.5 acres of additional impervious surface) and the Santa Fe Drive interchange (0.46 acres of additional impervious surface). Flows from the Encinitas Blvd surface will run to a detention basin and flows from part of the Santa Fe

Drive surface will run to landscaping which will provide polishing. The SWDR includes avoidance and minimization measures per IM 5.4.16, such as the preservation of existing vegetation, ESA areas, and landscape protection areas. All impacted and graded, or exposed surfaces and cut slopes will be treated with erosion control (bonded fiber with no seed) after construction is completed. Preliminary landscaping plans using a California native plant palette in accordance with IM 5.5.1 have been provided; however, final plans will be reviewed by Commission staff as part of the NOID for the extension of HOV lanes through Encinitas from Birmingham Drive to La Costa. Caltrans anticipates submittal of the NOID for the Encinitas HOV project later this year and the construction of that project will overlap with the work proposed in the subject NOID. Thus, the Early Work Package work area overlaps with the HOV work area, and landscape work is anticipated to begin in mid to late 2018 after the HOV freeway widening, drainage, final grading, and bioswale construction are completed at each interchange. Landscaping is scheduled to closely follow roadway construction and will include the removal of non-native plants; installation of new recycled water irrigation system; and planting of native, non-invasive, drought-tolerant trees and groundcovers. Bioswales will also be planted with native grass sod.

All water quality protection and improvement strategies outlined in the SWDR will be maintained for the life of the project pursuant to DDS 26 and IM 5.4.17. In accordance with IM 5.4.2, maintenance BMPs will be implemented to reduce the amount of pollutants discharged into surface waters, including but not limited to, trash and litter removal, road sweeping, and control of chemical use in herbicide, pesticide and fertilizer applications.

A draft Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) has been prepared for the project that identifies construction BMPs that will be implemented to reduce pollutants in stormwater discharges and eliminate non-stormwater discharges during construction. In accordance with DDS 4, the SWPPP and NPDES permits, other applicable jurisdictional requirements, and ultimately, the provisions in the NCC PWP/TREP protecting water quality will be implemented. Pursuant to DDS 5, the SWPPP contains a spill prevention and emergency response plan.

Pursuant to IM 5.4.1, IM 5.4.6, and IM 5.4.7, construction BMPs will be implemented according to applicable BMP Manuals and will include temporary soil stabilization, temporary sediment control, wind erosion control, tracking control, non-storm water management, and waste management and materials pollution control. Plastic netting will be avoided. Additionally, the construction and staging plans ensure that the project will preserve existing vegetation outside the work areas, stabilize slopes with vegetative cover comprised of native plant species and keep the total paved area to a minimum per IM 5.4.5. IM 5.4.9 requires fueling of construction equipment to occur in designated areas at a distance no less than 100 feet from the lagoon, river, or other waterbodies and associated plant communities to preclude adverse water quality impacts.

In conclusion, the Early Work Package project proposed by the subject NOID has been designed consistent with the applicable policies, design/development strategies, and

implementation measures included in Section 5.4.3 of the NCC PWP/TREP. Therefore, the Commission finds that the subject NOID is consistent with the NCC PWP/TREP.

D. VISUAL RESOURCES

Policy 5.7.1 of the NCC PWP/TREP states:

> *Development of NCC transportation facility and community enhancement projects shall be sited and designed in a manner that protects, to the maximum extent feasible, public views to significant coastal resources, including views of the ocean and coastline, coastal lagoons and river valleys, and significant open space areas. New development shall be sited and designed to be compatible with existing development and surrounding areas such that the impacts of grading, operational activities and direct lighting on public views outside of the transportation facilities and community enhancement improvements are limited to the maximum extent feasible.*

Coastal visual resources within the project area that could be affected by the Early Work Package project include public views of natural coastal topography and open space. Although a majority of the project will be located within or directly adjacent to existing highway facilities and along local streets, proposed improvements could potentially impact public views by increasing the urban character through the construction of additional paved surfaces (e.g., bike lanes and sidewalks), new tie-backs, and a new soundwall and privacy wall. However, each of the proposed project components has been sited and designed in accordance with the required NCC PWP/TREP design/development strategies and implementation measures in order to avoid and minimize impacts to visual resources to the maximum extent feasible.

Design solutions that have been incorporated into the project, per DDS 5, include minimization of grading, landform alteration, and vegetation removal; landscape treatments comprised of native vegetation; and addressing potential night-lighting impacts by limiting, shielding and directing lights to only focused areas that are required for operations and safety. Additionally, all project features have been designed to comply with the approved I-5 NCC Project Design Guidelines per IM 5.7.1.

Sound walls and privacy walls are one of the project components considered to have the greatest potential for impact on the visual character of the corridor, as identified in the NCC PWP/TREP. The proposed 14 ft. high, 1,991 linear ft. soundwall on the east side of I-5, south of Palomar Airport Road in Carlsbad would replace an existing 6 ft. high, 1,778 linear ft. property wall on private property (homeowners association property) at the Alta Mira Condominiums. The proposed 6 ft. high, 571 linear ft. privacy wall on the west side of I-5, east of Devonshire Drive, and north of Santa Fe Drive in Encinitas would provide visual screening for residences along Devonshire Drive. While the majority of the existing landscaped buffers between the highway and adjacent land uses would remain intact, some trimming and/or removal of vegetation would be necessary to construct the new walls; however, disturbed slope areas would be landscaped. In

addition, the visual experience of highway travelers could be affected by the introduction of new or taller walls.

To avoid potential visual impacts, the project has incorporated design concepts from the I-5 NCC Project Design Guidelines. In addition, and in accordance with IM 5.7.1, the new soundwall and privacy wall are proposed to include setbacks, articulated layouts, transparent panels (for the Alta Mira soundwall), and architectural detailing. The Alta Mira soundwall design includes four to six-ft. tall transparent panels on top of a masonry block wall to maintain views and light. The soundwall was designed in consultation with the adjacent homeowners. Caltrans has conducted a visual simulation of the soundwall (Exhibit 5) that demonstrates that the proposed wall is compatible with the existing visual character of the east side of the I-5 freeway. Additionally, the soundwall will not obstruct any public views, including views of the ocean or lagoon. The proposed privacy wall has been designed to tie in at the north end of an existing wall located adjacent to Scripps Memorial Hospital. The wall is proposed to be constructed out of masonry block (Orco Buff color) to match the existing wall and will have a split face treatment on the highway side and a smooth face on the Devonshire side with a pilaster at the north end of the wall. The wall will be planted with vines on the freeway side to soften the visual appearance. Caltrans has also conducted a visual rendering of the privacy wall (Exhibit 7) that demonstrates how the wall will be visually compatible with the existing hospital wall.

Community enhancements, including the widening of Santa Fe Drive and Encinitas Boulevard to accommodate new bike lanes and sidewalks on both sides of the local streets will change the visual landscape to a more urban visual character. Bike lanes will be a minimum of 8 ft. wide but will vary in width at some locations up to 12 ft. wide. Sidewalks will be a minimum of 6 ft. wide but will be as wide as 6 ft. 8 in. in certain areas. Sidewalks will be enhanced with a curvilinear alignment and buffer areas to separate pedestrian from bike traffic. Buffer areas will be enhanced with mortared rock cobble to maintain consistency with the existing streetscape. Tie-back walls will be integrally colored “Mesa Buff” with a “Random Flute” surface texture. Cable railing will be stained a dark brown. Bridge slope paving and concrete ditches will be a Mesa Buff color. Overall, these bicycle and pedestrian facility improvements have been designed to enhance overall community character and minimize impacts through integration of design features in accordance with IM 5.7.2, including upgraded pedestrian crossings (Exhibit 3).

DDS 5 requires the following requirements for night lighting: that it be the minimum necessary for operations and safety; should be excluded from viewsheds containing scenic resources wherever feasible; shielded and directed downward to the target area to minimize spill-over; appropriate Kelvin temperature in order to minimize biological impacts; and energy efficient in order to minimize visual impacts and nighttime glare. IM 5.7.1 requires undercrossings to have enhanced lighting and requires lighting standards in Appendix B of the NCC PWP/TREP to be followed. The final lighting design assessed each traffic signal and light location, pole spacing and number, and light intensity and spread. The final design includes updated LED fixtures that are shielded and the relocation of existing traffic signals and light poles to accommodate the new

sidewalks and bike lanes. At each intersection, the net number of traffic signal poles with mounted safety lighting will not increase. At Santa Fe Drive, all of the existing traffic signals and light poles will be replaced with new poles except the pole (with mast arm) at the northwest return at Santa Fe Drive and the southbound off ramp. At Encinitas Boulevard, all of the existing traffic signal and light poles will be replaced with new poles except the two poles at the northeast return at Encinitas Boulevard and Saxony. Traffic signals will be co-located on closed-circuit television (CCTV) poles to minimize the number of poles. This dual-use traffic signal/CCTV pole is a new innovation for Caltrans. In addition, the final lighting design has reduced the number of light poles to the maximum extent possible by co-locating lights and cameras on traffic signals. Existing bridge soffit lighting over the roadway will remain and additional soffit lighting over the new bike lanes will be added for safety. The Lighting Table and Lighting Standards in Appendix B include intersection lighting standards that have been followed. For example, intersection lighting will use LED Roadway 1 Luminaires on 30 ft. poles.

IM 5.7.2 requires affected local jurisdictions to be provided the opportunity to participate in the review of final design plans for project-specific improvements located within their jurisdictions. Early pre-consultation has occurred with the City of Encinitas in order to design the bicycle and pedestrian facilities to connect with proposed City sidewalks and bike facilities in these locations.

In conclusion, the Early Work Package project proposed by the subject NOID would be visually compatible with the existing character of the corridor and would not impair any public views of significant coastal resources. In addition, the NOID has been designed consistent with the applicable policies, design/development strategies, and implementation measures included in Section 5.7.3 of the NCC PWP/TREP. Therefore, the Commission finds that the subject NOID is consistent with the NCC PWP/TREP.

E. CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT

Pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21067 and Sections 15050 and 15051 of Title 14 of the California Code of Regulations, Caltrans is the lead agency, for purposes of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), for the project at issue in this report, as it is the public agency with principal responsibility for carrying out the I-5 related improvements, as well as the larger NCC PWP/TREP. As the lead agency under CEQA, Caltrans certified a Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR) addressing the subject plan on October 23, 2013.[1] Caltrans is also the state-designated lead agency under CEQA for the rail component of the NCC PWP/TREP, and as such, released the LOSSAN FINAL

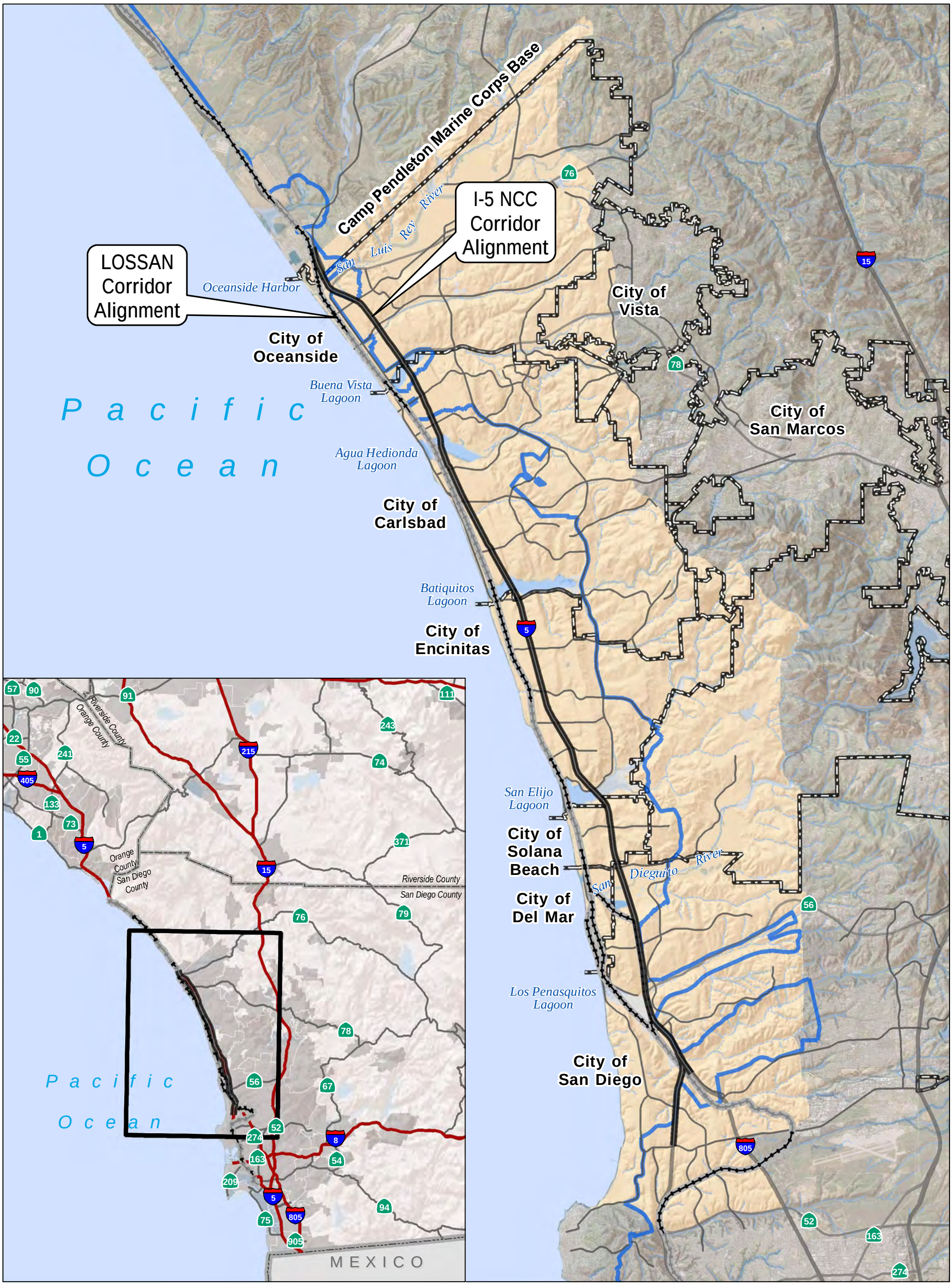
[1] The certification of that EIR is the subject of ongoing litigation in San Diego Superior Court; *Cleveland National Forest Foundation v. California Department of Transportation*, San Diego Superior Court Case No. 37-2013-00078391-CU-TT-CTL. According to Caltrans, the matter has been fully briefed and a hearing date is scheduled for September 16, 2016. However, at this point, no relief has been granted that would affect the status of this EIR. Moreover, for the reasons stated in the Commission's findings in support of its original certification of the NCC PWP/TREP (see July 24, 2014 staff report for PWP-6-NCC-13-0203-1 at pages 26-28), which are incorporated herein by reference, that litigation does not prevent the Commission from taking the instant action on the subject NOID.

Program EIR/EIS in September 2007, with the Record of Decision issued on March 18, 2009.

As an agency with a certified regulatory program under CEQA Section 21080.5, the Commission must consider alternatives and mitigation measures that would substantially lessen any significant adverse environmental effects that that the proposal would otherwise have on the environment. Section 21080.5(d)(2)(A) prohibits the Commission from approving a proposed development if there are feasible alternatives or feasible mitigation measures available which would substantially lessen any significant adverse effect which the activity may have on the environment. As proposed, there are no feasible alternatives or mitigation measures available which would substantially lessen any significant adverse impact that the activities may have on the environment. Therefore, the Commission finds that the NOID is consistent with CEQA Section 21080.5(d)(2)(A), as well as the applicable provisions of the NCC PWP/TREP.

APPENDIX A – SUBSTANTIVE FILE DOCUMENTS

- PWP No. PWP-6-NCC-13-0203-1
- PWP Amendment No. PWP-6-NCC-16-0001-1
- CDP No. 6-15-2092
- NOID No. NCC-NOID-0005-15



DATA SOURCES: Caltrans, California Coastal Commission, Local Jurisdictions, SanGIS, SANDAG, Imagery: DigitalGlobe March 2008

The Coastal Zone boundary, jurisdiction and Local Coastal Program data in this map are for planning and engineering study purposes only. Data are derived from multiple sources. The digital Coastal Zone boundary, jurisdiction and Local Coastal Program data in this map have not been adopted by the Coastal Commission, and do not supersede the official versions certified by the Coastal Commission as may be amended from time to time. Disclaimer: The State of California makes no representations or warranties regarding the accuracy or completeness of the files or the data from which they were derived. The State shall not be liable under any circumstances for any direct, indirect, special, incidental or consequential damages with respect to any claim by any user or any third party on account of or arising from the use of these Coastal Zone boundary, jurisdiction and Local Coastal Program files or the data from which they were derived. Because the Coastal Zone boundary, jurisdiction and Local Coastal Program data files are merely representational, they and the data from which they were derived are not binding and may be revised at any time.

North Coast Corridor PWP/TREP **FINAL: JUNE 2014**

EXHIBIT NO. **1**

NCC & Regional Map

NOID #NCC-NOID-0002-16

California Coastal Commission

EXHIBIT NO. 2

Project Location Map

NOID #NCC-NOID-0002-16

California Coastal Commission

Photo Simulation #1
Encinitas Boulevard (Santa Fe Drive is similar)

EXHIBIT NO. **3**

Interchange Visual Simulation

NOID #NCC-NOID-0002-16

California Coastal Commission

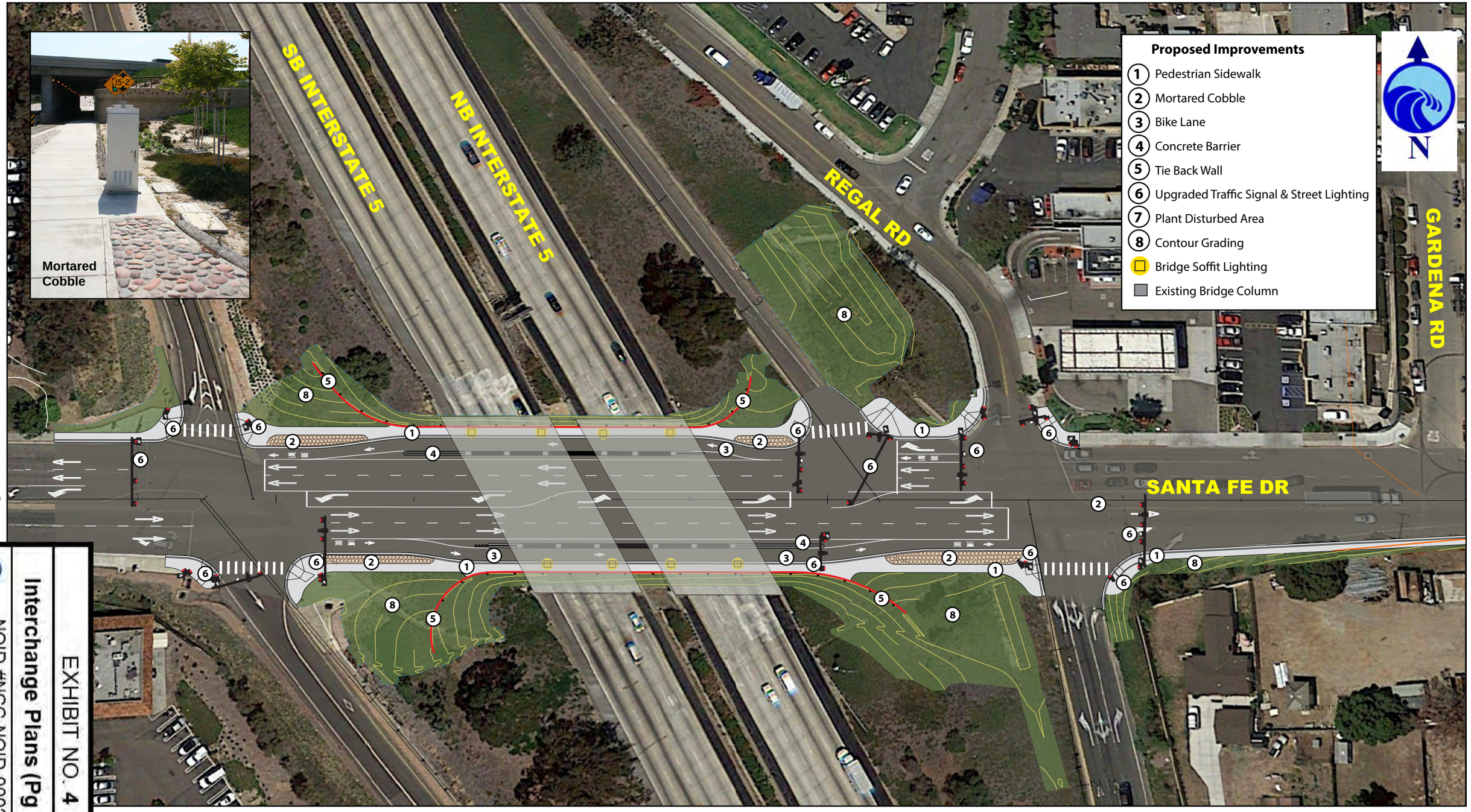


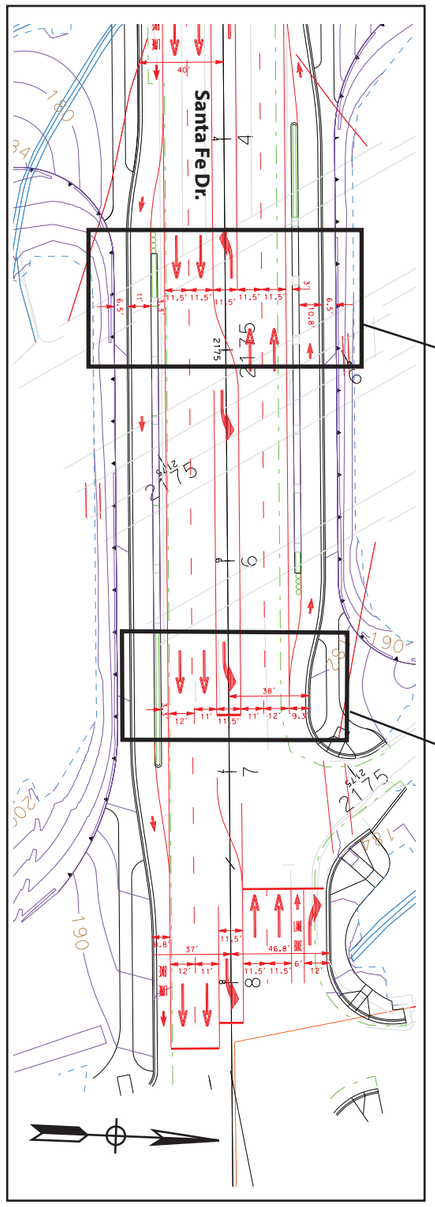
EXHIBIT NO. 4

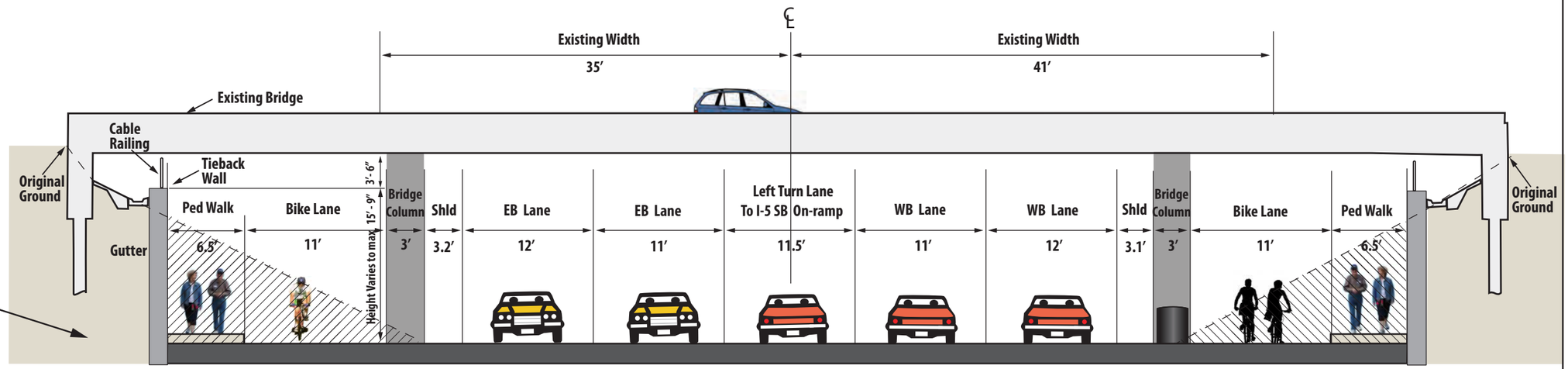
Interchange Plans (Pg 1 of 5)

NOID #NCC-NOID-0002-16

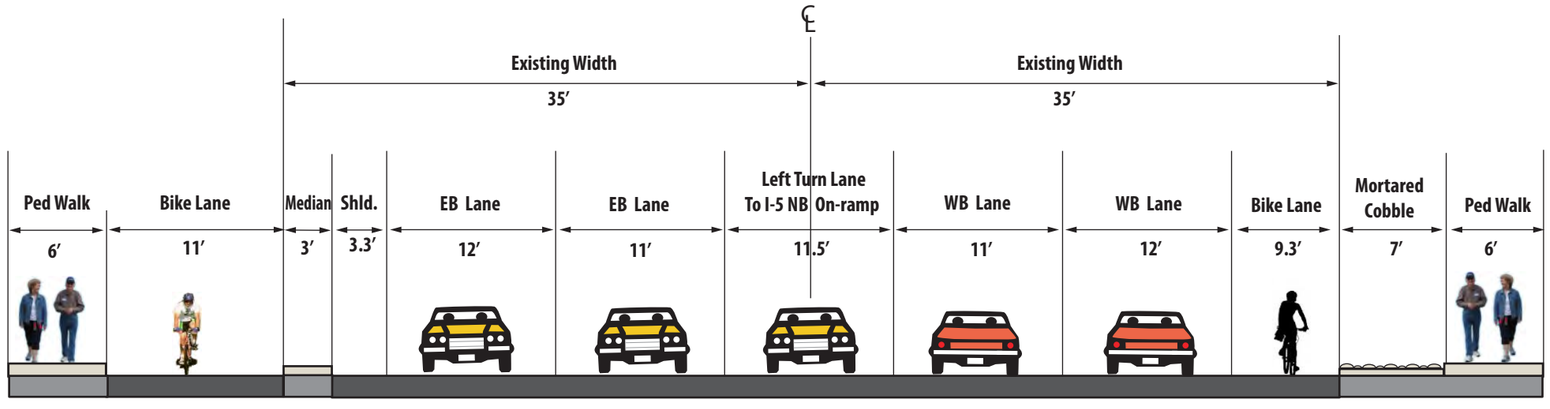
California Coastal Commission

Figure 1
Santa Fe Drive Street Improvements





Santa Fe Dr. Undercrossing Facing West
Typical Cross Section



Sante Fe Dr. Facing West - Intersection of Northbound I-5 On/Off Ramps
Typical Cross Section

Figure 2
Santa Fe Drive Typical Cross Section

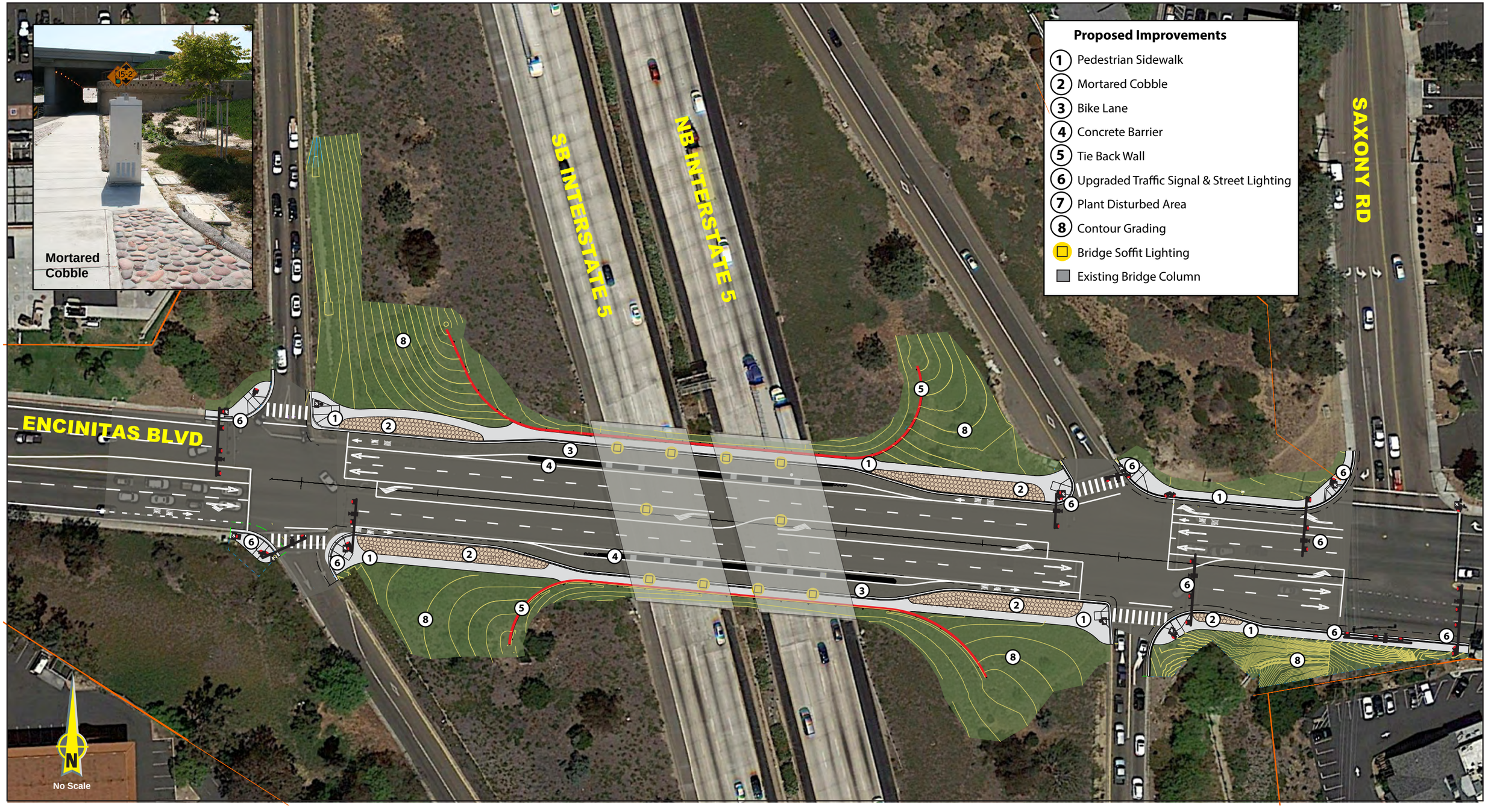
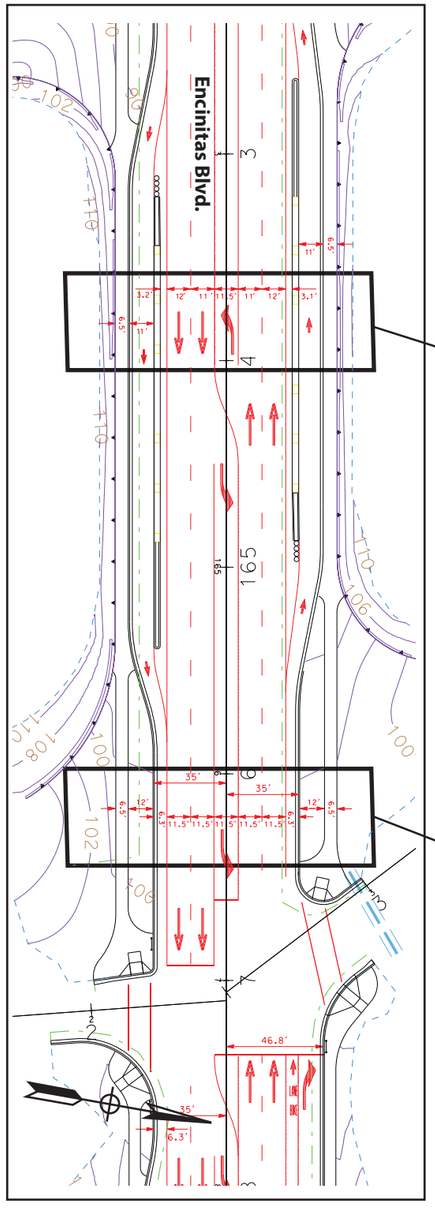
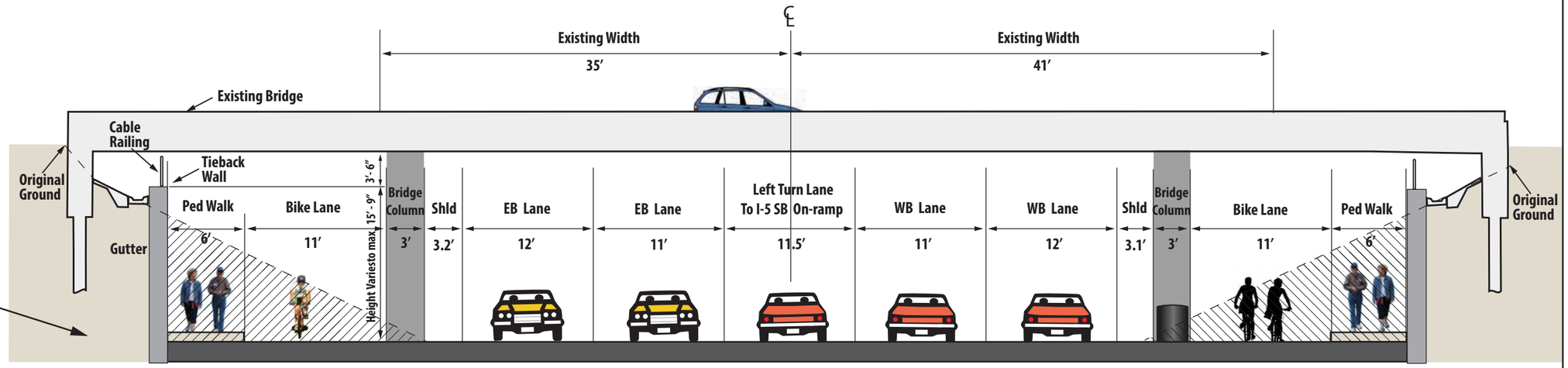
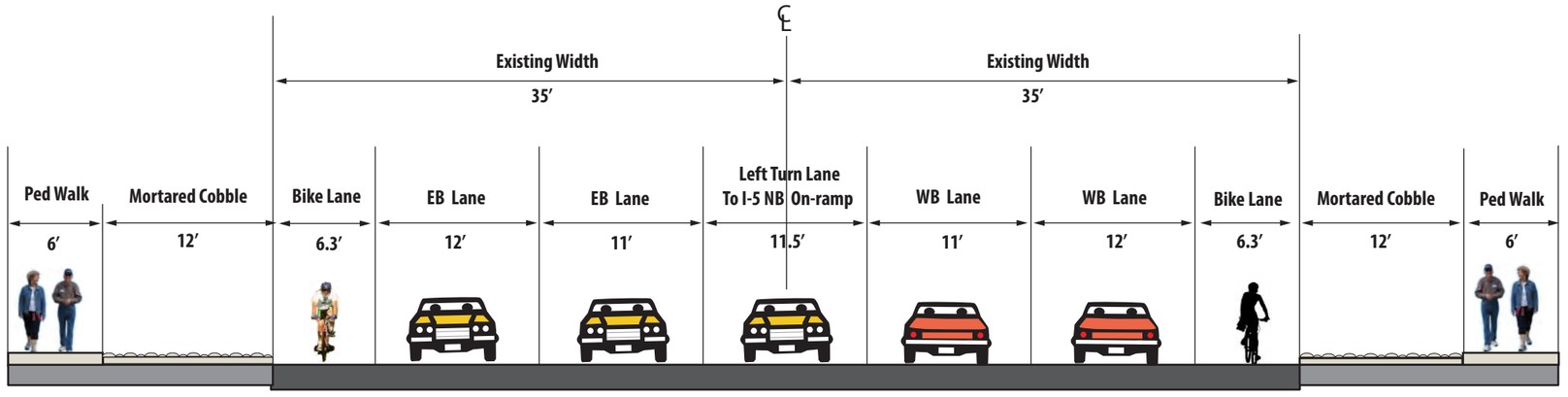


Figure 4
Encinitas Blvd Street Improvements





Encinitas Blvd. Undercrossing Facing West
Typical Cross Section



Encinitas Blvd. Facing West - Intersection of Northbound I-5 On/Off-ramps
Typical Cross Section

Figure 5
Encinitas Boulevard Typical Cross Section

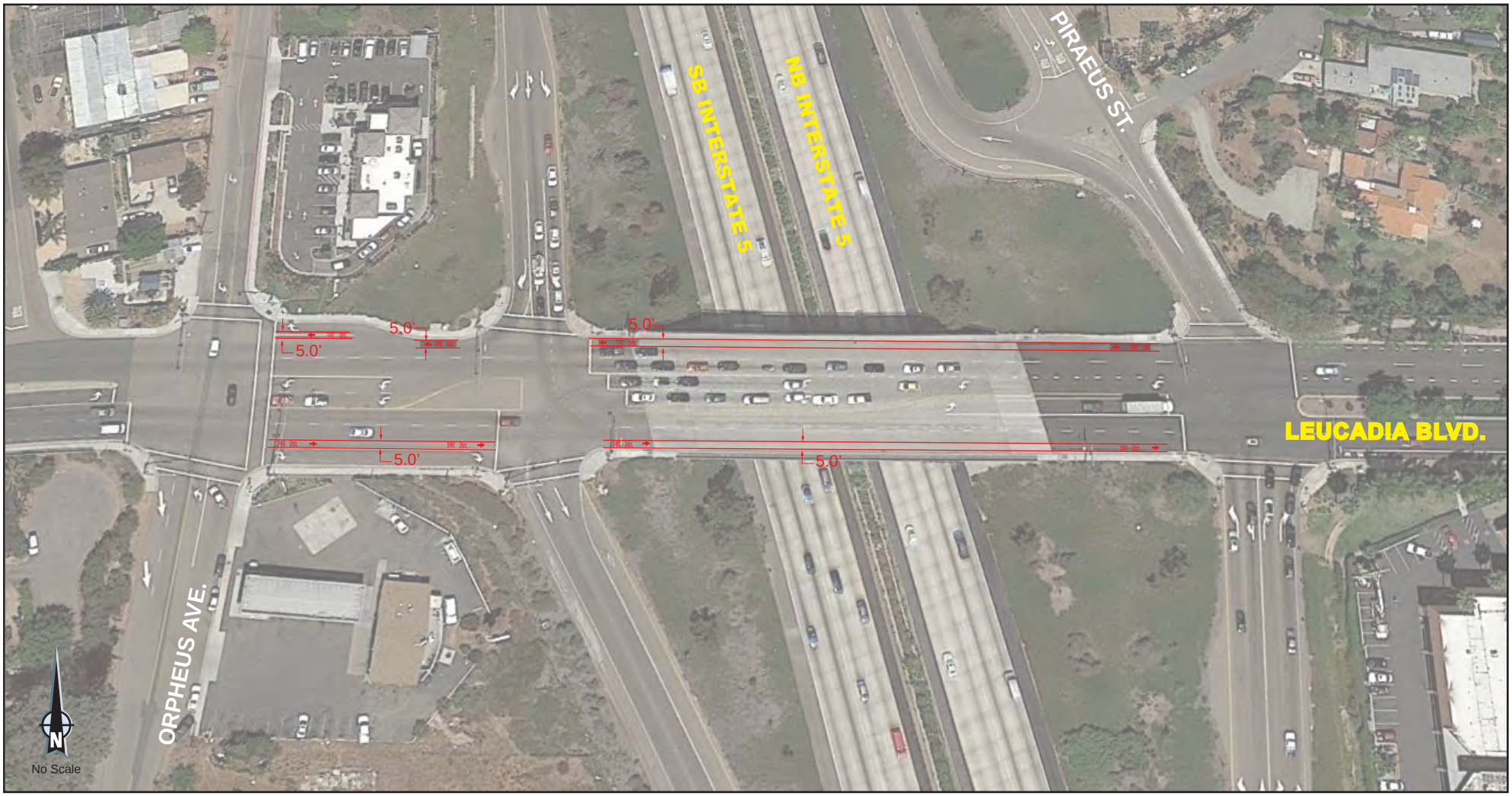


Figure 9
Leucadia Boulevard Bike Lanes

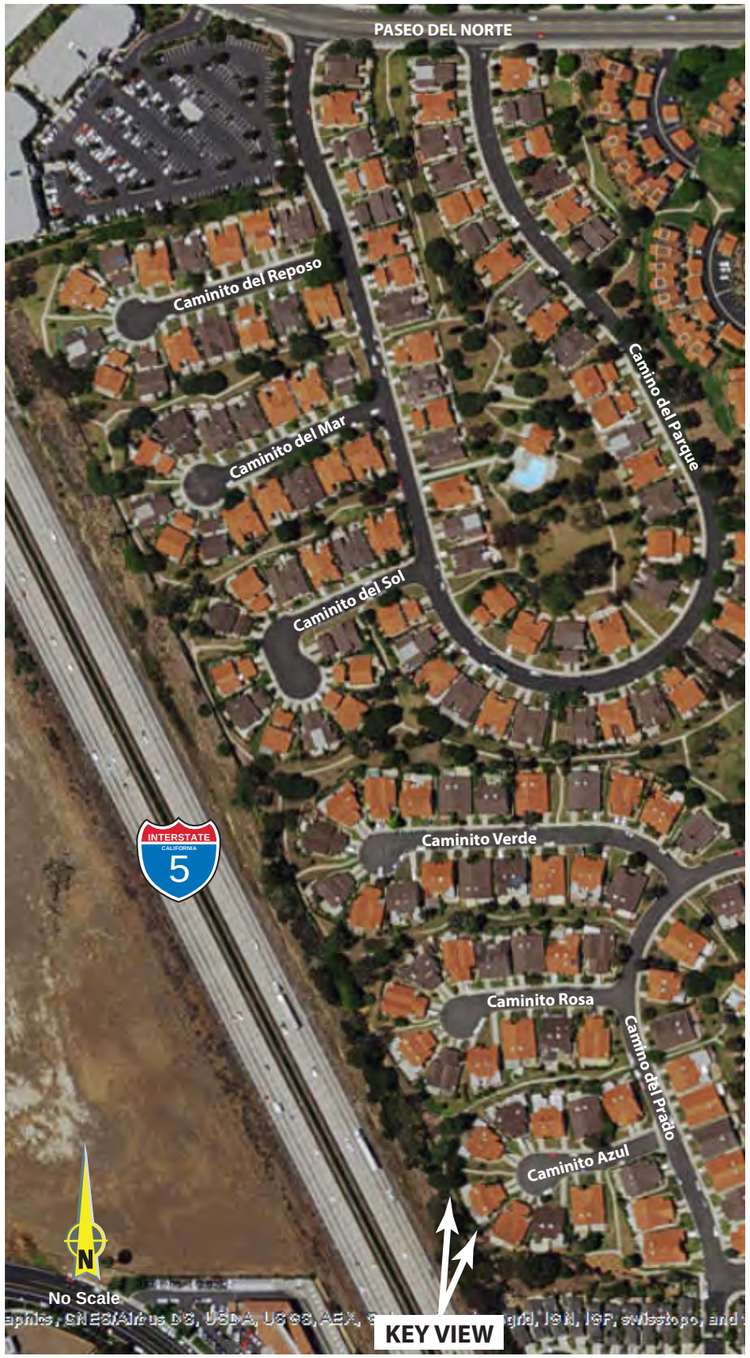
Photo Simulation #2
Alta Mira Soundwall

EXHIBIT NO. **5**

Soundwall Visual Sim (Pg 1 of 2)

NOID #NCC-NOID-0002-16

California Coastal Commission

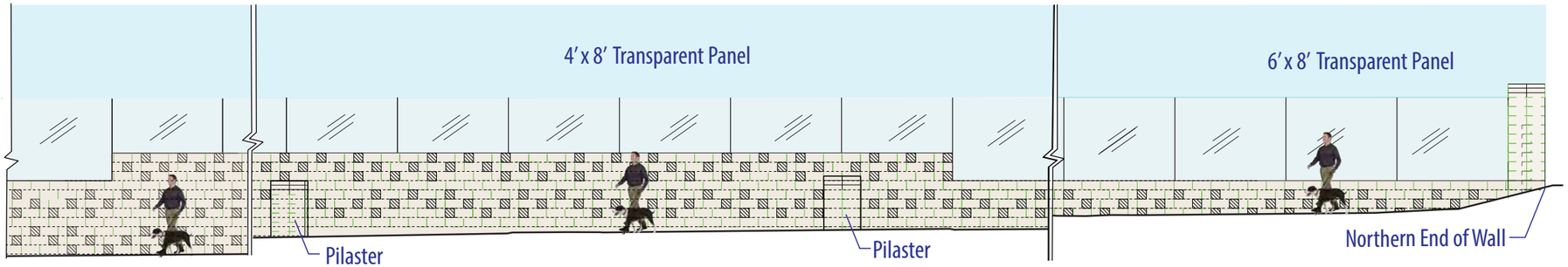


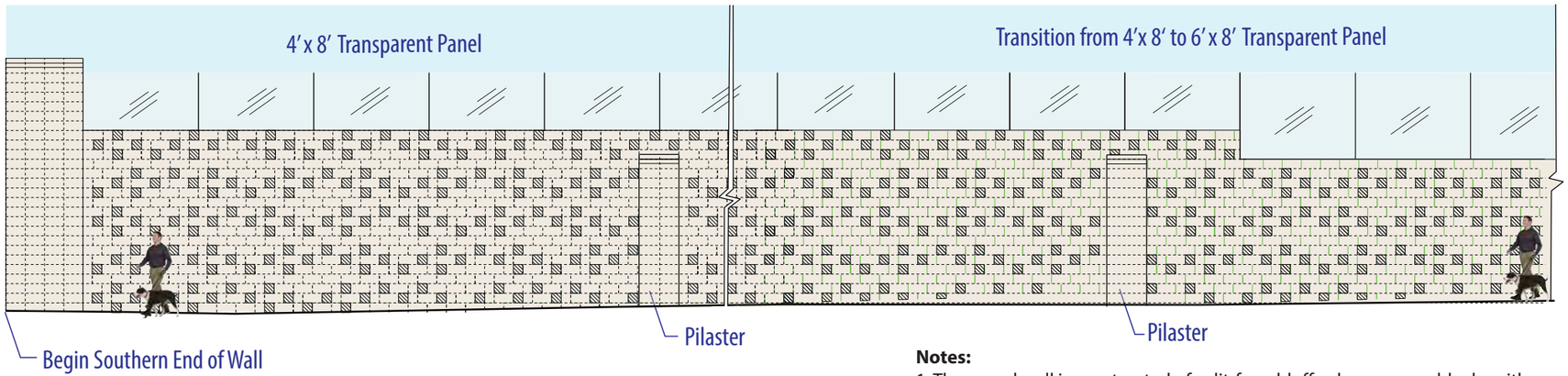
Existing Condition

Proposed Soundwall

Photo Simulation #2
Alta Mira Soundwall

Location Map

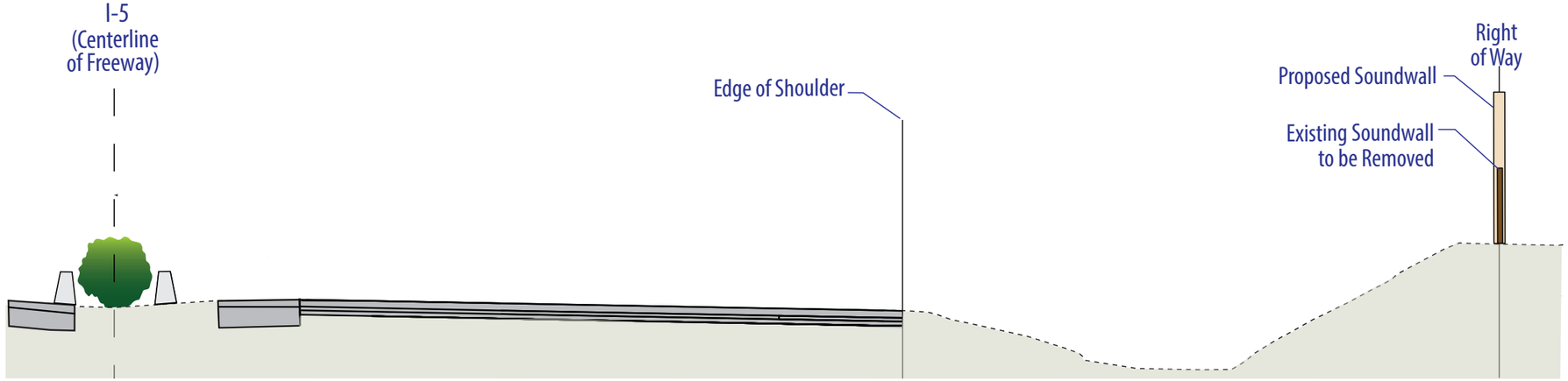




Partial Wall Elevation (Looking West from Homes)

Notes:

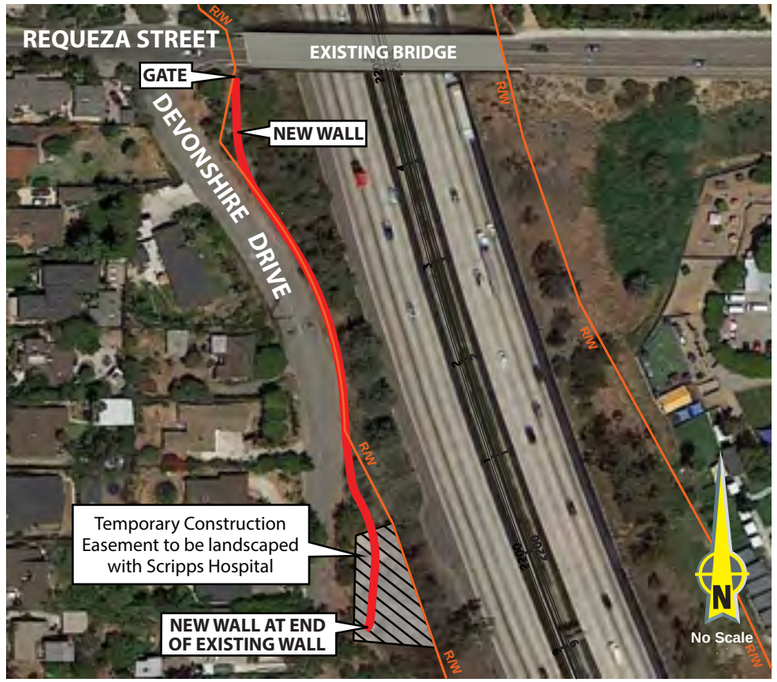
1. The sound wall is constructed of split-face, bluff color masonry blocks with smooth accent blocks and transparent acrylic panels.
2. The 6'x8' transparent panels are used to maintain access to light and desirable views. The panel locations are determined by the Alta Mira Homeowners Association.



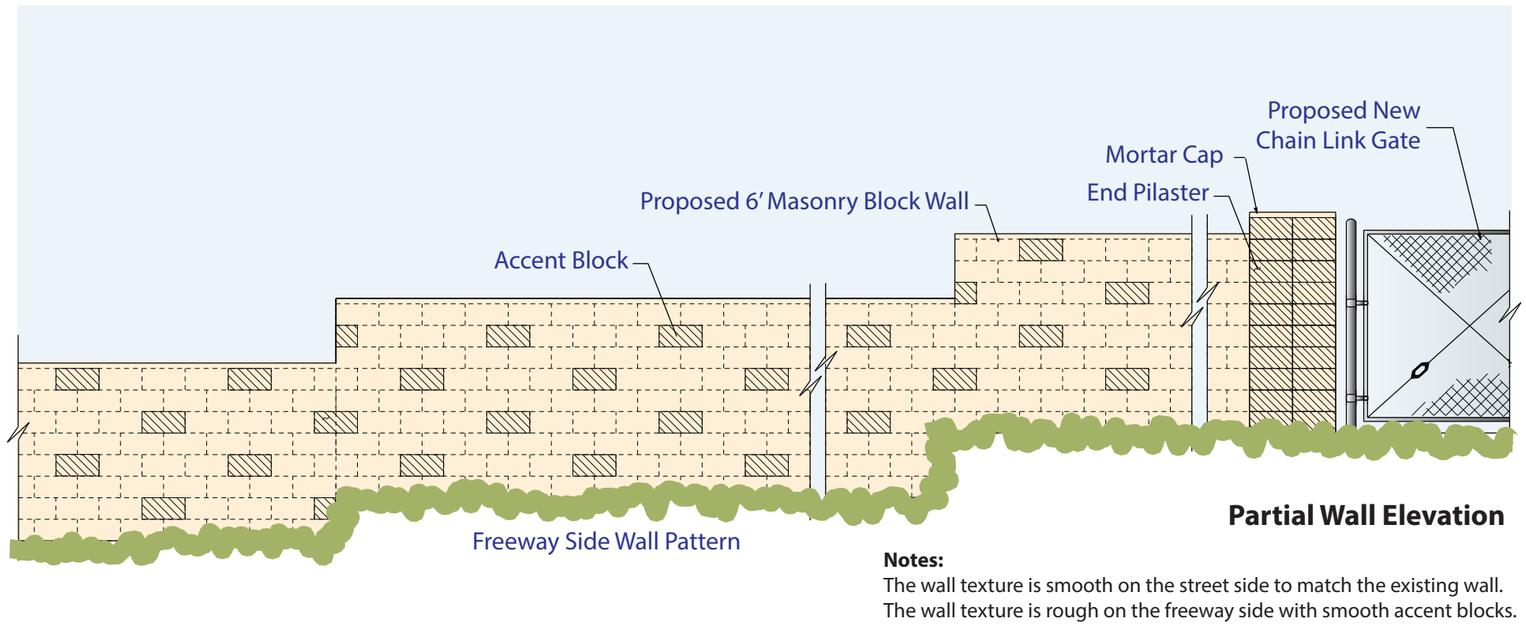
Cross-section of Existing Northbound I-5 Looking North

EXHIBIT NO. 6
Soundwall Plan
NOID #NCC-NOID-0002-16
California Coastal Commission

Figure 8
Alta Mira Sound Wall

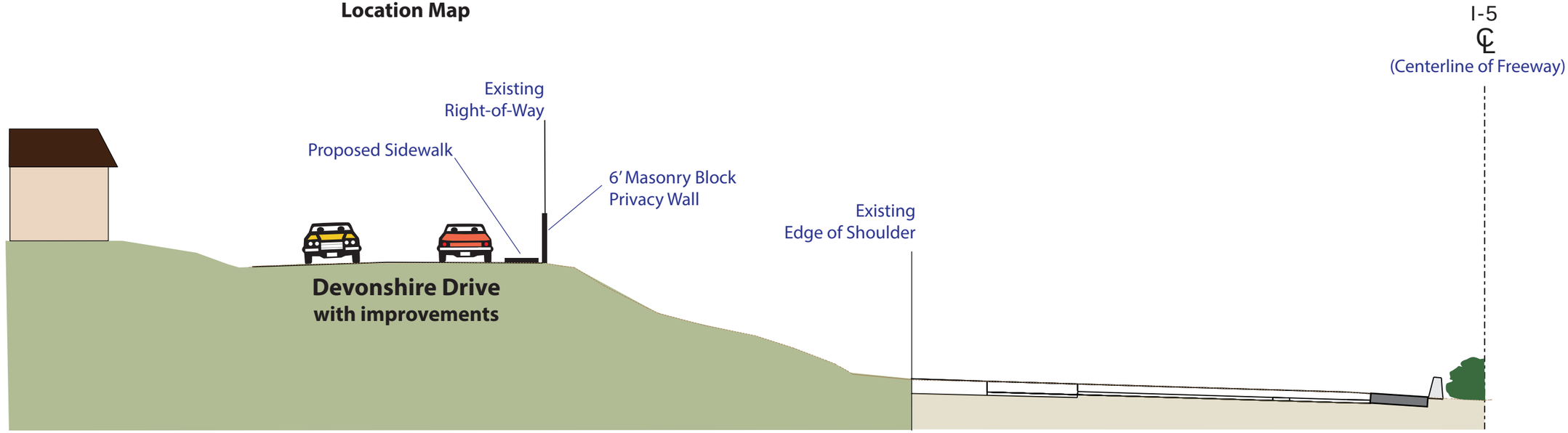


Location Map



Partial Wall Elevation

Notes:
The wall texture is smooth on the street side to match the existing wall.
The wall texture is rough on the freeway side with smooth accent blocks.



Cross-section of Existing Southbound I-5 Looking North

EXHIBIT NO. 7
Privacy Wall Plan
NOID #NCC-NOID-0002-16
California Coastal Commission

Figure 7
Devonshire Drive Street Improvements