



# Rincon Consultants, Inc.

*Environmental Scientists*

*Planners*

*Engineers*

## M E M O R A N D U M

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**Date:** August 31, 2017  
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**Re:** Peer Review for the City of Salinas Economic Development Element EIR Noise Section

The City of Salinas is currently preparing an Economic Development Element (EDE) and associated Environmental Impact Report (EIR). The EIR is near completion and intended for circulation in September 2017. However, the City recently updated the EDE to remove several planned expressways, which necessitates revision of the Traffic Impact Assessment (TIA) and related EIR sections. Rincon Consultants, Inc. (Rincon) reviewed the EDE EIR noise analysis in light of the project description changes and associated TIA revisions to identify any changes that would need to be made to the analysis as a result of removals of planned expressways. The review focused on the technical modeling, impact determinations, and mitigation measures associated with noise, and includes recommendations for revisions to the EDE EIR to account for the newly proposed removal of the planned expressways.

### Noise

The column titled "Existing ADEIR Significance With Expressways" in Table 1 includes a summary of the noise impacts and significance determinations in the current EDE EIR. The column titled "Recommended Impact Significance Without Expressways" in Table 1 summarizes the recommended significance determination of each project impact with the newly proposed removal of the planned expressways. Table 1 also identifies if and what revisions would be required in the EIR as a result of the proposed changes. As outlined in Table 1, the analysis, impact determination, and mitigation measures for the remaining impacts identified in the current EDE EIR would not require changes as a result of removing

the planned expressways from the EDE EIR. Changes to the significance determination for Impact N-5 are summarized in Table 1 and discussed in more detail following the table.

**Table 1 Summary of Changes to Noise Impact Analyses**

<b>Impact Number</b>	<b>Impact</b>	<b>Existing ADEIR Significance With Expressways</b>	<b>Recommended Impact Significance Without Expressways</b>	<b>Revisions to Significance Determination in EIR Required? (Yes/No)</b>	<b>Summary of Changes</b>
N-1	Exposure of future development within the target areas to traffic noise levels in excess of standards.	Less than significant with mitigation	Less than significant with mitigation	No	Removing planned expressways would relocate anticipated traffic to other local roadways, such that traffic noise contours for local roadways described in Tables 34, 35, and 36 of the EDE EIR would be larger than described. As described in the EDE EIR, traffic-related noise levels may exceed the maximum exterior noise exposure levels identified in Table 37-50.50 of the Zoning Ordinance. Therefore, Mitigation Measure N-1 would still apply to the revised project and the general impact analysis would primarily remain the same.
N-2	Development within the target areas could include stationary noise sources that generate noise which exceeds noise exposure standards at adjacent noise sensitive uses.	Less than significant	Less than significant	No	This impact relates to stationary noise sources only, which would not be affected by removal of the planned expressways from the proposed project. Impact analysis and the mitigation measure would remain unchanged.
N-3	Exposure of people and structures to excessive groundbourne vibration during construction activities within target areas.	Less than significant with mitigation	Less than significant with mitigation	No	Construction activities associated with development of the Target Areas may be located near existing structures and/or below ground infrastructure. Impact analysis and mitigation measure would remain unchanged.

N-4	The proposed project would generate traffic that contributes to a substantial permanent noise level increase on the city road network.	Potentially significant and unavoidable	Potentially significant and unavoidable	No	The impact determination would remain potentially significant and unavoidable. As described in the EDE EIR, a substantial permanent traffic noise impact would occur if the 2045 cumulative plus project traffic noise volume increase is 3 dBA or more along roads where the existing traffic noise volume is 60 dBA or more, or the traffic volume increase is 5 dBA or more on roads where the existing traffic noise volume is below 60 dBA, and the 2045 cumulative plus project traffic noise volume increase is 1 dBA or more above roadway noise volumes under the 2045 no project condition. Due to the changes in the proposed project, the specific roadways that are impacted may shift, and may be more severe than previously modeled, but the overall impact determination would not change. The EDE EIR also states that measures available to reduce the project noise level increases may not be reasonable or feasible in all locations where noise reduction is needed. Therefore, this impact would remain significant and unavoidable.
N-5	The proposed project would cause temporary noise increases from short-term construction activities.	Less than significant with mitigation	Less than significant with mitigation	Yes	As described in the EDE EIR, construction activities for the proposed project would occur intermittently at different sites within in the City. With removal of the planned expressways, fewer locations would be affected by construction noise. Nonetheless, the impact analysis would remain unchanged, and Mitigation Measure N-3 would still apply to the revised project.

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Summary of Change: No changes to modeling, analysis or mitigation measures are required; however, the impact may be less severe than previously analyzed in the EDE EIR with removal of the planned expressways.<sup>1</sup>

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Bolded text represents an impact statement that would require revisions

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The discussion below further elaborates on the anticipated changes required for **Impact AQ-5** as a result of the removal of planned expressways from the project description.

### *Impact N-5*

As described in the EDE EIR, noise impacts resulting from construction depend on the noise generated by various pieces of construction equipment, the timing and duration of noise generating activities, and the distance between construction noise sources and noise-sensitive areas. With removal of the planned expressways, fewer locations would be impacted by construction noise than originally analyzed because the planned expressways surrounded the City and were located adjacent to sensitive receptors. Nonetheless, the impact analysis would remain the same because the duration of construction for any individual future project proposed within the Target Areas cannot be known at this time. Mitigation Measure N-3, which requires the City to review applications for each future individual project within the Target Areas to determine whether the construction period would exceed one year and require all that do to prepare a construction noise assessment, would still apply to the revised project.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the removal of the planned expressways from the proposed project, Impact N-5 would require minor revisions to clarify that construction activity would not include construction of expressways, reducing the overall scale of the impact, but not altering the conclusions of the impact analysis, or Mitigation Measure N-3, which would still be required. The construction noise impact would remain less than significant with mitigation.

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<sup>1</sup> Note Impact N-5 of the EDE EIR does not explicitly discuss the impacts from the construction of the expressway; however, it was assumed that they were included because the Noise Section begins, "Construction activities for the proposed project would occur intermittently at different sites within in the City." As such, it was assumed that construction of the expressways was included in the analysis for the proposed project.

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