

Cities of Lake Forest, Laguna Woods, and Laguna Hills
Orange County, California

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Chapter 1 Introduction

A Community Impact Assessment (CIA) was previously prepared for the Interstate 5 (I-5)/El Toro Road Interchange Project (Project) in 2019. This Supplemental CIA has been prepared for the Project because new build alternatives have been developed since the public circulation of the 2019 Initial Study/Environmental Assessment (IS/EA). Following the 2019 public review period, a consensus on a preferred alternative could not be achieved and the Project was temporarily paused to determine the future course of action. Subsequently, the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA), the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), and the Cities of Lake Forest, Laguna Hills, and Laguna Woods conducted an Alternatives Assessment Report in order to take “one more look” at the I-5/El Toro Road interchange, and to assess if there were any other alternative interchange configurations that could be developed to meet the Purpose and Need of the Project. The I-5/El Toro Road Interchange Final Alternatives Assessment Report (FAAR) (2022) recommended two Build Alternatives (AA-1 and AA-5) for further evaluation.

In 2023, OCTA and Caltrans reinitiated development of the Project based on the recommendations included in the FAAR. Consistent with the FAAR, Build Alternative 1 (previously AA-1), Build Alternative 2 (previously AA-5), and the No-Build Alternative were advanced into technical studies and evaluated during the early stages of the PA/ED process. In January 2024, the Project Development Team (PDT) agreed to evaluate a third Build Alternative that would be limited to Transportation System Management (TSM)/Transportation Demand Management (TDM) improvements. In March 2026, Build Alternative 2 (previously AA 5 in the FAAR) was removed from further analysis. Through continued coordination with Caltrans and local jurisdictions, it was determined that Build Alternative 2 did not meet Caltrans policy under its Project Development Procedures Manual Chapter 27, Article 3 and the revised configuration was not supported by local jurisdictions. As a result, Build Alternative 2 was determined to be non-viable and was eliminated from further consideration.

Caltrans, assigned by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), is the Lead Agency under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Caltrans is also the Lead Agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). A supplemental Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is in preparation pursuant to CEQA, and a supplemental Environmental Assessment (EA) (hereafter referred to as the EIR/EA) with a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) is in preparation pursuant to NEPA.

Caltrans, in partnership with OCTA, proposes to modify and improve the existing I-5/El Toro Road interchange between post miles (PM) 17.8 and 19.7, located in the cities of Lake Forest, Laguna Hills, and Laguna Woods in Orange County, California. The proposed alternatives are: Build Alternative 1 (Southbound I-5 Hook Ramps) and its design variation (Build Alternative 1a), Build Alternative 3 (TSM/TDM), and the No-Build Alternative.

The Project limits on I-5 extend from approximately 0.2 mile south of the Los Alisos Boulevard Overcrossing (PM 17.8) to approximately 0.2 mile south of the Lake Forest Drive Overcrossing (PM 19.7), a distance of approximately 1.9 miles. Advanced signage for construction would extend from less than 0.2 mile south of Los Alisos Boulevard Overcrossing (PM 17.7) to 0.2 mile north of Bake Parkway (PM 21.0). Project improvements are also proposed along El Toro Road, Paseo De Valencia, Avenida De La Carlota, and Bridger Road.

This Supplemental CIA has been prepared in accordance with Caltrans policies, procedures, and guidance as defined in the Standard Environmental Reference. The information in this document has been prepared as a “blended” assessment to comply with both CEQA and NEPA and other substantive environmental laws applicable to the subjects addressed in this document.

Because of the absence of designated resources in the community impact study area, the Project would have no effect on the following resource categories; therefore, these topics will not be discussed further in this Supplemental CIA:

- **Coastal Zone:** The community impact study area is not within the Coastal Zone.
- **Wild and Scenic Rivers:** There are no designated wild and scenic rivers within the community impact study area.
- **Farmland and Timberlands:** There are no farmlands or timberlands within the community impact study area.

1.1 WHAT IS A COMMUNITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

The purpose of this report is to provide information regarding social, economic, and land use effects of the Project so that final transportation decisions will be made in the public interest. The report is intended to clearly describe the relevant existing conditions and the potential socioeconomic impacts of the Project.

Both CEQA and NEPA require consideration of social and economic impacts of projects in the preparation of environmental documents. Under CEQA, however, the economic or social effects of a project in and of themselves shall not be treated as significant effects on the environment. Rather, the economic or social effects of a project may be used to determine the significance or physical changes caused by a project. The focus of the analysis shall be on the physical change, although the economic or social effects may be used to determine the significance of the physical change. For example, if the construction of a new freeway divides a community, the construction would be the physical change, but the social effects on the community would be the basis for determining that the effect would be significant (State CEQA Guidelines Section 15131).

1.2 REGULATORY SETTING

The following list of existing laws, either directly or indirectly, requires investigation to determine potential impacts on communities from a proposed action:

- California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)
- National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)
- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964
- The Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended
- The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990
- The Farmland Protection Policy Act (FPPA)
- The California Land Conservation Act of 1965 (Williamson Act)
- California Public Park Preservation Act of 1971
- The California Timberland Productivity Act of 1982
- 23 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 652, Accommodation for Pedestrians and Bicyclists
- Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA) incorporates Sections 109(h)
- Department of Transportation Act of 1966, Section 4(f)

1.3 ASSESSMENT PROCESS AND METHODOLOGY USED

The methodology used for assessing Project-related impacts on the community follows the Caltrans Standard Environmental Reference and Community Impact Assessment Guidance Template (January 2026a) and includes establishing baseline existing conditions of the community impact study area, then focusing analyses where impacts are more likely to occur. Baseline data were compiled from a variety of sources, including online information sources, geographic information system files, technical studies that have been prepared for the Project, and information gathered from local governments and industry. The following data sources were used to identify the existing conditions:

- **Census Data:** Census data were used to identify population trends and demographics, economic indicators, and housing characteristics. U.S. Census Bureau 2019–2023 American Community Survey 5-year estimates demographic datasets were gathered for the Project limits and the community impact study area. The American Community Survey is an ongoing statistical survey that samples a small percentage of the population every year to provide estimates of various community characteristics. The 5-year estimates include data collected over a 5-year period to provide reliable estimates for a community.
- **Aerial Maps and Road Maps:** Aerial and road maps were used to identify community boundaries and physical characteristics, such as locations of activity centers, infrastructure, houses, and businesses.

- **Geographic Information System (GIS) Data:** GIS data from regional databases and environmental resource data were also used to identify potential resources of concern in the Project limits and the community impact study area.
- **Agency Documentation:** The Orange County General Plan; General Plans for the Cities of Lake Forest, Laguna Woods, Laguna Hills, Irvine, and Mission Viejo; and applicable specific plans or other planning and engineering documents were utilized to identify information related to existing land uses and site conditions, existing land use designations, and future land uses in the Project limits and the community impact study area.
- **Technical Studies:** The existing conditions and potential effects disclosed in this Supplemental CIA drew upon information from a variety of technical studies and documents that were prepared for the Project, including the following:
 - Traffic Operations Analysis Report (Caltrans 2026b);
 - Supplemental Section 4(f) (Caltrans 2026c);
 - Supplemental Draft Relocation Impact Report (Caltrans 2026d);
 - District 12 Current and Future Projects. <https://dot.ca.gov/caltrans-near-me/district-12/district-12-current-projects>. (Caltrans 2025a);
 - Utility Management Matrix for Alternative 1 (Caltrans 2025b); and
 - Utility Plans for Alternative 1 (Caltrans 2025c).

For the purposes of this analysis, the “Project limits” and the “community impact study area” are defined as:

- **Project Limits:** The area that would be physically affected by primary or direct impacts during the construction period. The Project limits is defined as the maximum disturbance limits for the Build Alternatives.
- **Community Impact Study Area:** The communities surrounding the Project limits in which secondary or indirect impacts could occur. Impacts typically decrease in magnitude as the distance from a project site increases. Therefore, the community impact study area (resource study area [RSA]) includes those areas within 0.5 mile of the Project limits.

Demographic datasets were gathered from the U.S. Census Bureau 2019–2023 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates for the following census tracts that are within the RSA: 524.10, 524.11, 320.14, 320.15, 423.07, 626.22, 626.25, 626.46, 626.47, and 626.53.

1.4 PROPOSED PROJECT

Caltrans, in partnership with OCTA, proposes to modify and improve the existing I-5/EI Toro Road interchange between post miles (PM) 17.8 and 19.7, located in the cities of Lake Forest, Laguna Hills, and Laguna Woods in Orange County, California (see Figure 1, *Project Vicinity Map*). Caltrans, as assigned by FHWA, is the Lead Agency under

NEPA and CEQA. The purpose of the I-5/El Toro Road Interchange Project (Project) is to improve traffic flow, optimize traffic signalization, improve traffic mobility at and through adjacent local street intersections, reduce freeway ramp queuing, and apply technology to help manage traffic demand.

The Project limits on I-5 extend from approximately 0.2 mile south of the Los Alisos Boulevard Overcrossing (PM 17.8) to approximately 0.2 mile south of the Lake Forest Drive Overcrossing (PM 19.7), a distance of approximately 1.9 miles. Project improvements are also proposed along El Toro Road, Paseo De Valencia, Avenida De La Carlota, and Bridger Road. Project limits are shown on Figure 2, *Project Location Map*. Advanced signage for construction would extend from less than 0.2 mile south of Los Alisos Boulevard Overcrossing (PM 17.7) to approximately 0.2 mile north of Bake Parkway (PM 21.0).

The proposed alternatives are: Build Alternative 1 (Southbound I-5 Hook Ramps) (and its design variation, Build Alternative 1a), Build Alternative 3 (TSM/TDM), and the No-Build Alternative, as described further below.

1.4.1 Build Alternative 1 – Southbound I-5 Hook Ramps

Build Alternative 1 proposes an additional I-5 southbound off-ramp to independently serve El Toro Road to the east and to the west. This would be accomplished with a new two-lane southbound I-5 off-ramp to El Toro Road and would be split, with one lane assigned to El Toro Road west and one lane assigned to El Toro Road east. El Toro Road west would utilize the existing hook off-ramp alignment. A new bridge would be constructed to accommodate the new El Toro Road east off-ramp. The new El Toro Road east off-ramp bridge would cross over the existing southbound I-5 hook on-ramp and El Toro Road and connect to Avenida De La Carlota south of El Toro Road. A new southbound I-5 hook on-ramp would be provided along the realigned Avenida De La Carlota, south of El Toro Road. The existing southbound direct on-ramp from El Toro Road would be eliminated, while the existing access provided by the southbound ramps, opposite Paseo De Valencia, would be maintained. The northbound I-5 on-ramp from westbound El Toro Road is a two-lane on-ramp. The I-5/El Toro Road Interchange Project would lengthen this ramp, merging with the northbound I-5 mainline approximately 0.15 mile north of the existing merge point. The northbound off-ramp would be in a similar configuration as today, with improvements made by the I-5 South County Improvement Project (Segment 3) (EA 12-0K0234). Transportation System Management (TSM)/Transportation Demand Management (TDM) elements would be included in Build Alternative 1. TSM/TDM improvements would include the deployment of technologies with focus on improving Transportation Systems Management and Operations (TSMO) at each of the intersections, along I-5 and the critical arterials, as well as the region as a whole.

1.4.1.1 Build Alternative 1a – Design Variation

A design option is proposed for Build Alternative 1 that includes all features described above in addition to a new public street entering the Village of Laguna Hills development at the new southbound I-5/Avenida De La Carlota ramp terminal

intersection south of El Toro Road. The addition of this public street would create a four-way intersection at the new southbound I-5 and Avenida De La Carlota ramp.

1.4.2 Build Alternative 3 – TSM/TDM

Build Alternative 3 proposes standalone TSM/TDM improvements. TSM strategies increase the efficiency of existing facilities; they are actions that increase the number of vehicle trips a facility can carry without increasing the number of through lanes. TDM focuses on regional means of reducing the number of vehicle trips and vehicle miles traveled, as well as increasing vehicle occupancy. Build Alternative 3 only includes technology improvements, and no physical or geometric improvements are proposed. No ground disturbance would be required under Alternative 3.

1.4.3 No-Build Alternative

The No-Build Alternative proposes no action, where no construction or improvements would be made to the I-5/El Toro Road interchange apart from proposed projects that are under development or currently under construction. The No-Build Alternative would not address the issues and deficiencies within the Project limits. This alternative, however, does not preclude the construction of future improvements.

1.5 STUDY AREA

The Project is located within the cities of Lake Forest, Laguna Hills, and Laguna Woods in Orange County, California. Project improvements would occur primarily within areas of right of way owned by Caltrans. The community impact study area (or RSA) is defined as a 0.5-mile radius from the Project's maximum limits of disturbance and includes the populations and communities within the portions of the cities of Lake Forest, Laguna Hills, and Laguna Woods, as well as Irvine and Mission Viejo, that fall within this radius. The 0.5-mile RSA is depicted on Figure 3. For the collection of demographics information, census tract boundaries are used. The following census tracts are within the 0.5-mile RSA: 320.14, 320.15, 423.07, 524.10, 524.11, 626.22, 626.25, 626.46, 626.47, and 626.53.

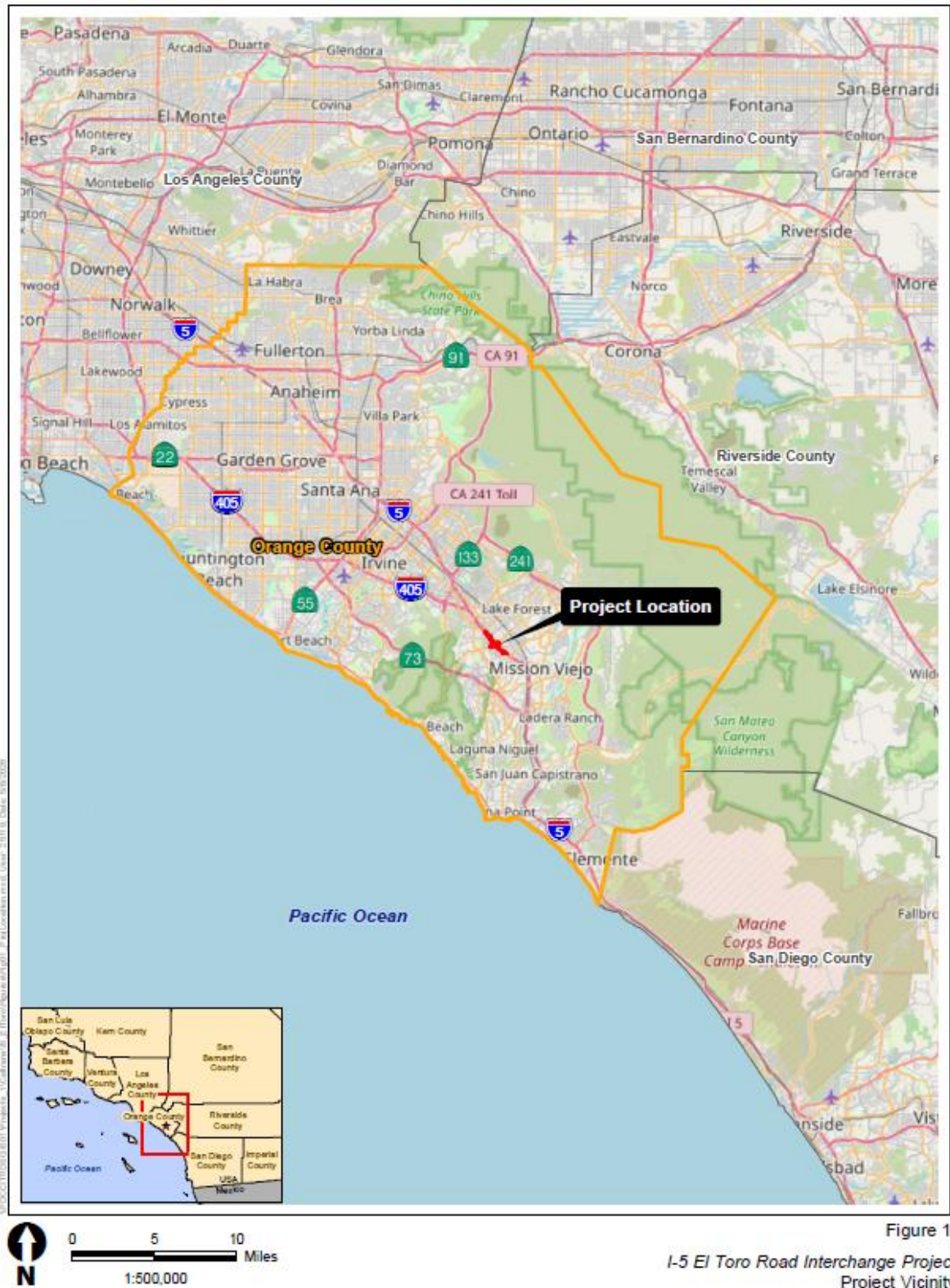


Figure 1. Project Vicinity Map

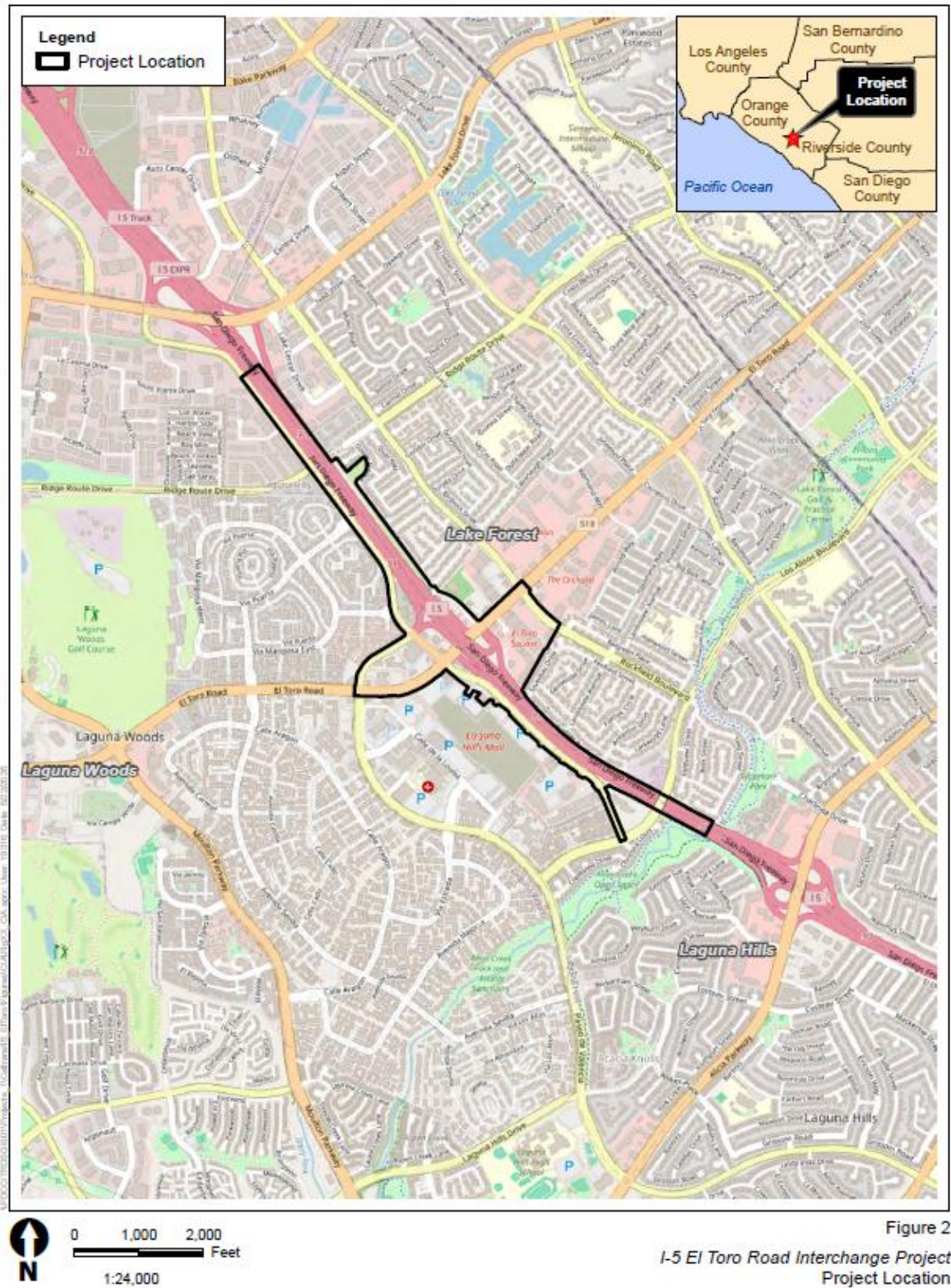


Figure 2. Project Location Map

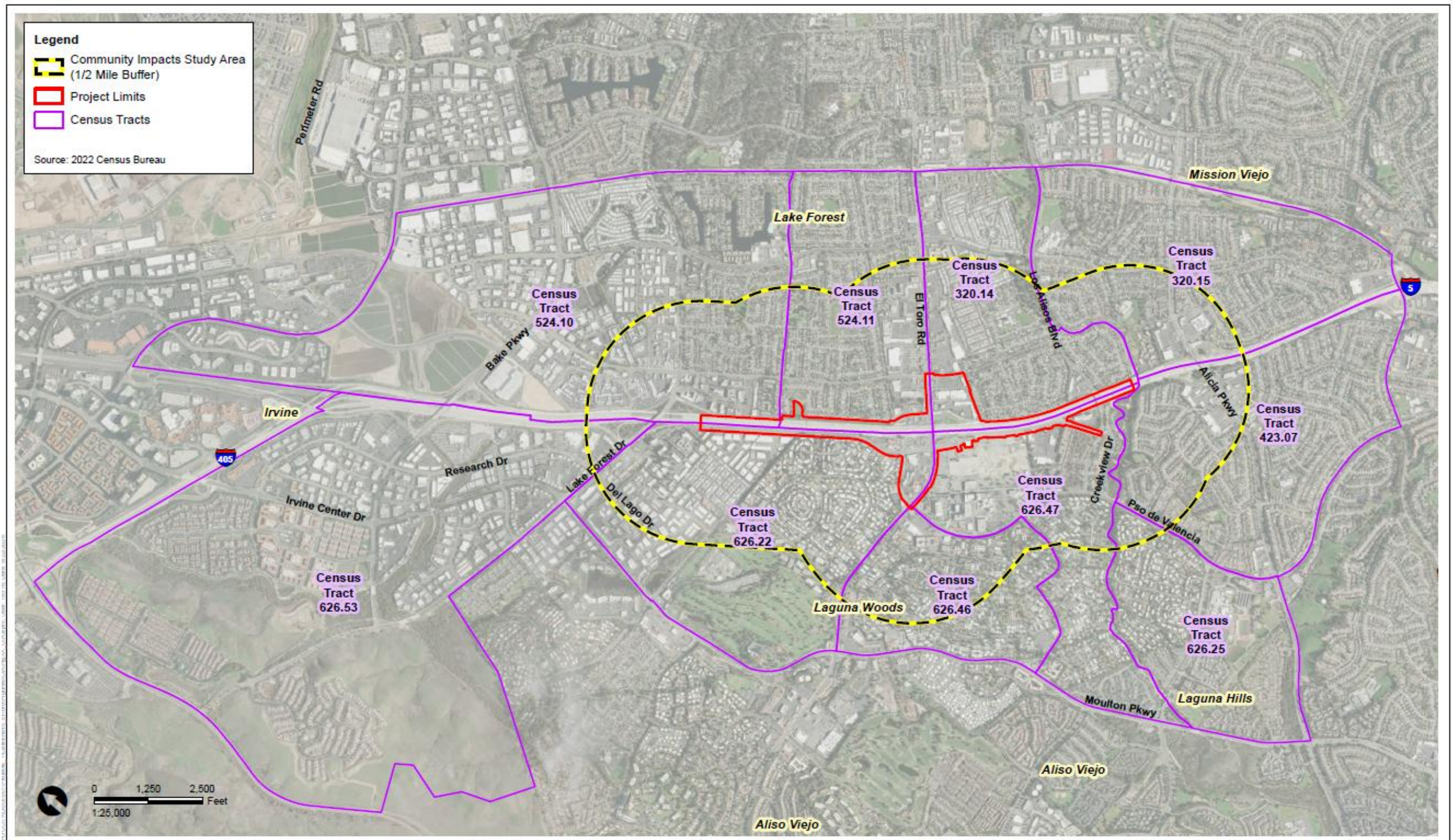


Figure 3
 I-5 El Toro Road Interchange Project
 Community Impact Assessment Study Area
 12-ORA-5 PM 17.8/19.7
 EA 0M880

Figure 3. Community Impact Assessment Study Area

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Chapter 2 Land Use

2.1 EXISTING AND FUTURE LAND USE

An examination of land use patterns within a given area can effectively convey the general form of its structure, including where its residents live, work, and recreate.

Existing land uses in the affected area and surrounding region can be used to analyze potential land use changes or conflicts associated with the proposed transportation project. Specific topics regarding land use include existing land use patterns, development trends, and adopted planning goals and policies.

The Project is located within an existing transportation corridor in an urban setting. The Project limits on I-5 extend from approximately 0.2 mile south of the Los Alisos Boulevard Overcrossing (PM 17.8) to approximately 0.2 mile south of the Lake Forest Drive Overcrossing (PM 19.7), a distance of approximately 1.9 miles. Land use is addressed in terms of existing and planned land uses. The community impact study area used for analyzing impacts on existing and future land uses is the RSA (defined as the area within 0.5 mile of the Project limits). Existing land uses are defined as those uses currently within the RSA; planned land uses are those that would occur as a result of land use designations and policies contained in various land use planning documents.

2.1.1 Affected Environment

2.1.1.1 Existing Land Use

Existing land uses within the RSA, as described in Table 2.1-1, are based on 2019 land use data from the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG). SCAG's land use data may not directly correlate with individual cities' land use designations, as identified in their respective land use maps and general plans. However, the analysis in this section will defer to SCAG's land use designations because it is the only comprehensive land use data expansive enough to cover the entire RSA.

Table 2.1-1. Existing Land Use Definitions

Land Use	Definition
Commercial and Services	This designation includes areas used predominantly for business or the sale of products and their associated services; as well as non-commercial uses such as government and public service offices. This class does not include industrial activities.
Education	This designation includes all levels of public and private schools, colleges, universities, seminaries, and training centers. Includes buildings, open space, dormitories, and parking areas. Also included are all athletic facilities such as ball fields, stadiums, soccer fields, swimming pools, and tennis courts.

Land Use	Definition
Facilities	This designation includes government offices and other public service facilities, major healthcare facilities, religious facilities, and public and private educational facilities. This category also includes associated facilities and parking areas.
General Office	This designation allows for office buildings usually used for financial, personnel, business, medical, and other professional services.
Industrial	This designation includes areas where manufacturing, assembly, processing, packaging, or storage of products takes place.
Mobile Homes and Trailer Parks	This designation includes residential units composed of mobile homes, trailers, and prefabricated housing that are either stationary with foundations or on wheels and capable of being moved. Included are vacant and occupied spaces and associated storage facilities for the complex. Mobile homes and trailer parks are usually served by all utilities, are on paved streets, and are provided with or have access to all urban facilities, such as schools, parks, police, and fire stations.
Multi-Family Residential	This designation includes attached residences, apartments, condominiums, and townhouses. Multifamily residences are usually served by all utilities, are on paved streets, and are provided with or have access to all urban facilities such as schools, parks, police and fire stations. This designation also includes senior citizen apartment buildings and off-campus university housing.
Open Space and Recreation	This designation includes developed open areas within urban settings and urban and non-urban open areas developed for recreational activities.
Single Family Residential	This designation is in an urban or suburban setting and is typically made up of detached dwellings where each structure houses a single family. These residences are usually served by all utilities, are on paved streets, and are provided with or have access to all urban facilities such as schools, parks, police, and fire stations.
Transportation, Communications, and Utilities	This designation includes major structures and facilities associated with forms of transportation, communication, and utilities.
Vacant	Vacant areas include land that has not been built-up with man-made structures, and contains no agriculture or waterbody. The area is open, containing natural or disturbed natural vegetation. Rangeland is included in this category. Areas containing abandoned structures are mapped as their previous use.
Water	This designation includes open water bodies that are greater than 2.5 acres in size.

Source: SCAG 2019.

Table 2.1-2 summarizes the existing land use distribution within the RSA.

Table 2.1-2. Existing Land Use within the Resource Study Area

Existing Land Use	Acres	Total Land Use (Percent) ^b
Commercial and Services	510.1	23.8
Education	31.1	1.5
Facilities	37.6	1.8
General Office	9.5	0.4
Industrial	64.8	3.0
Mobile Homes and Trailer Parks	177.7	8.3
Multi-Family Residential	335.4	15.7
None ^a	0.6	0.0
Open Space and Recreation	91.1	4.3
Single Family Residential	435.5	20.4
Transportation, Communications, and Utilities	4.9	0.2
Vacant	1.6	0.1
Water	2.5	0.1
Total	1,702.7	79.6 ^c

Source: SCAG 2019.

^a Areas designated in the Southern California Association of Government's 2019 land use data as having no land use information.

^b The total area of the resource study area (RSA) is 2,138.9 acres. The percentage of each land use type within the RSA was based on the total area of the RSA.

^c The SCAG land use data is based off of Assessor's parcel numbers (APNs) and thus, the total land use percentage does not add up to 100 percent because some areas within the RSA do not have parcel data.

2.1.1.2 Future Land Use

Data and plans from multiple agencies and jurisdictions were reviewed to develop a list of projects that are planned for development. The list of planned projects is summarized in Table 2.1-3 and provides the locations of projects within the RSA that are either environmentally approved and considered proposed, are pending approval, are currently under construction, or have been recently constructed. The timeframe includes any projects that may occur within 3 years of the opening year (2035) of the proposed Project. The projects listed were used to inform the cumulative impacts analysis conducted separately for the proposed Project.

Future land use in the RSA consists primarily of commercial and residential land uses. Business parks, mixed-use developments, high-density residential development, including an apartment complex, and commercial corridors are planned.

Table 2.1-3. Current and Future Development Projects

Project Name	Location	Project Description	Status	Approximate Distance from Project Limits
Lake Forest Redevelopment Project	Southwest corner of the El Toro Road and Rockfield Boulevard intersection in Lake Forest, CA	The project would modify the existing shopping center/strip mall on the southwest corner of El Toro Road and Rockfield Boulevard. The proposed land uses for the redevelopment of this property include residential and retail.	Proposed. The project is currently in the planning phase.	1,000 feet to the north
Site Development Permit 07-24-5724 Chase Mixed-Use	23861 El Toro Road Lake Forest, CA	Demolition of the existing Arby's/The Pub Restaurant building to construct a new 5-level residential building with 165 units, approximately 3,275 square-feet of retail, and a 5-level parking garage. Conversion of the existing Chase Bank building into a hotel with surface parking and construction of a four-story hotel connected via a passageway/patio to the existing Chase Bank building.	Proposed. A site development permit application has been submitted to the City.	300 feet to the north
Site Development Permit 07-25-5817	23221 Lake Center Drive Lake Forest, CA	Conversion of Sammy's Original into a medical office for Head and Neck Associates of Orange County. The project would involve the addition of approximately 1,150 square feet and an exterior facade remodel.	Proposed. A site development permit application has been submitted to the City.	0.5 mile to the west
Use Permit UP 07-25-5819	26336 Rockfield Boulevard and 22865, 22861, 22859 Lake Forest Drive Lake Forest, CA	Expansion of the existing Subaru vehicle dealership. The project includes, but is not limited to, a new six-level parking structure with a service center on the ground level, a new car wash, and an addition and facade remodel to the main sales building.	Proposed. A use permit application has been submitted to the City.	0.5 mile to the northeast

Project Name	Location	Project Description	Status	Approximate Distance from Project Limits
Village at Laguna Hills	24155 Laguna Hills Mall Laguna Hills, CA	The Village at Laguna Hills project would redevelop the former Laguna Hills Mall property, a 68-acre site. The project would include restaurants, parks, entertainment, shopping, and living spaces.	Proposed. The redevelopment plan was originally approved in 2022 but has been revised due to changing market conditions. The new redevelopment plans will need to be approved by the Laguna Hills City Council, followed by a 6 to 12 month process to obtain building permits to start construction.	Immediately adjacent to the southeast
Dutch Bros. Coffee	24791 Alicia Parkway Laguna Hills, CA	The project was a 950-square-foot coffee shop with a drive-thru.	Constructed. The project was approved in 2024 and construction has been completed.	1 mile to the east
The Tiller House (Laguna Hills Inn)	23061 Avenida De La Carlota Laguna Hills, CA	The project was a renovation project to an existing hotel that included façade renovation and adding a ground floor addition of 1,306 square feet to include a lobby waiting area and seating for food consumption and business.	Constructed. The project was approved in 2022 and renovation was completed in 2024.	1 mile to the west
Laguna Hills Plaza Remodel	24791–24881 Alicia Parkway Laguna Hills, CA	The project is a remodeling of an existing shopping plaza. The proposed building area is 101,413 square feet.	Under Construction. The project was approved in 2023 and is currently under construction.	1.2 miles to the southeast
Honali Plaza Remodel	24721–24781 Alicia Parkway Laguna Hills, CA	The project was a remodeling of an 85,000-square-foot neighborhood shopping center.	Completed. The project was approved in 2022 and construction has been completed.	1.2 miles to the southeast

Project Name	Location	Project Description	Status	Approximate Distance from Project Limits
Oakbrook Plaza	24422 Avenida de la Carlota Laguna Hills, CA	This is a new 240-unit multi-residential development project that would be located on a 4.16 gross acres site. The total size of the development, including parking, would be 572,421 square feet.	Proposed. The project was approved by the City of Laguna Hills on January 27, 2026.	0.6 mile to the east
I-5 South County Improvements Project	Interstate 5, between State Route 73 and El Toro Road	The project is 6.5 miles long and included adding a new regular lane in each direction of I-5 between Avery Parkway to Alicia Parkway. The project also included extending the second carpool lane from Alicia Parkway to El Toro Road in both directions, new overhead signage, new sound and retaining walls, improved sidewalks and bicycle lanes, and new auxiliary lanes at seven locations.	Completed. Construction of the project was completed in 2025.	1.1 miles to the east

Sources: Caltrans 2025a, 2026b; City of Lake Forest 2025a; City of Laguna Hills 2025a, 2025b, 2025c.

2.1.2 Environmental Consequences

2.1.2.1 Temporary Impacts

Build Alternative 1 and Design Variation: Build Alternative 1a

The Project, under Build Alternative 1 and its design variation (Build Alternative 1a), would result in direct temporary impacts on existing land uses consisting of 1.07 acres under Build Alternative 1 and 1.59 acres under Build Alternative 1a (see Table 2.1-4). The direct temporary impacts are from temporary construction easements (TCEs) that would be required to construct the Project. Activities within TCE areas would be temporary and may include the presence of construction workers, work trucks, material stockpiles, disturbed soil, scaffolding, and landscaping work.

Table 2.1-4. Build Alternative 1 and Design Variation: Build Alternative 1a Temporary Land Use Impacts

Existing Land Use	Temporary Impacts (Acres)	
	Alternative 1	Alternative 1a
Commercial and Services	0.52	1.03
Education	0.04	0.04
Facilities	0.12	0.12
Open Space and Recreation	0.39	0.39
Single Family Residential	<0.01	<0.01
Total	1.07	1.59

Construction activities are not anticipated to require closure, alteration, or other uses of the existing and planned developments listed in Table 2.1-3. The Project would include implementation of Avoidance and Minimization Measures **LU-1** and **LU-2** to avoid or minimize land use impacts that may occur during the construction phase. **LU-1** would minimize or avoid the loss of landscaping to the extent feasible. **LU-2** would require returning temporarily disturbed areas back to property owners in the same or better condition than prior to construction. Following construction, parcels would no longer be occupied and would return to their current uses. Because parcels would continue to be used for their current uses, there would be no substantial temporary adverse impacts or changes to the existing land use in the RSA. Therefore, these direct temporary impacts would not result in temporary adverse effects on existing or planned land use patterns and development within the RSA.

Build Alternative 3

The Project, under Build Alternative 3, would have no temporary impacts on existing land uses because no ground disturbance would be required. As a result, no acquisition or conversion of existing land uses would occur, and existing land use patterns would remain unchanged. Therefore, no temporary disruptions to land use would occur.

No-Build Alternative

Under the No-Build Alternative, I-5 would remain in its current condition, and no improvements would be implemented. Therefore, there would be no Project-related temporary land use impacts.

2.1.2.2 Permanent Impacts

Build Alternative 1 and Design Variation: Build Alternative 1a

The Project, under Build Alternatives 1 and 1a, would result in direct permanent impacts on existing land uses consisting of 4.74 acres under Build Alternative 1 and 4.18 acres under Build Alternative 1a (see Table 2.1-5). The direct permanent impacts would result from partial and full fee acquisitions along I-5 and include partial acquisition of the former Laguna Hills Mall property to realign Avenida de la Carlota as part of the Project. The former Laguna Hills Mall property is currently in the redevelopment design phase to convert the 68-acre site into a mixed-use property that would include restaurants, parks, entertainment, shopping, and living spaces. The redevelopment project is known as the Village at Laguna Hills. Caltrans, OCTA, and the City of Laguna Hills will work together to ensure there are no conflicts with the proposed Project's realignment of Avenida de la Carlota and the development plans for the Village at Laguna Hills (Avoidance and Minimization Measure **COM-1**). In addition, Caltrans will continue to coordinate with the Cities of Lake Forest, Laguna Hills, and Laguna Woods to reflect the modification of land use designations for properties that will be acquired for the Project that are not currently designated for transportation uses within the land use elements of their general plans (Avoidance and Minimization Measure **LU-3**).

Table 2.1-5. Build Alternative 1 and Design Variation: Build Alternative 1a Permanent Land Use Impacts

Existing Land Use	Permanent Impacts (Acres)	
	Alternative 1	Alternative 1A
Commercial and Services	4.23	3.68
Education	0.01	0.01
Facilities	0.04	0.04
Open Space and Recreation	0.45	0.45
Total	4.74	4.18

Build Alternative 3

The Project, under Build Alternative 3, would have no permanent impacts on existing land uses because no ground disturbance would be required. As a result, no acquisition or conversion of existing land uses would occur, and existing land use patterns would remain unchanged. Therefore, no permanent disruptions to land use would occur.

No-Build Alternative

Under the No-Build Alternative, I-5 would remain in its current condition, and no improvements would be implemented. Therefore, there would be no Project-related permanent land use impacts.

2.1.3 Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

Implementation of the following avoidance and minimization measures and Avoidance and Minimization Measure **REL-1** (see Section 4.4, *Relocations and Real Property Acquisitions*) would avoid and minimize adverse land use impacts:

- LU-1** During final design, in accordance with the Highway Design Manual, design modifications that will minimize or avoid the loss of landscaping and noncompliance with general development standards will be selected, if feasible. If such losses cannot be minimized or avoided and the Project still results in the loss of landscaping or other noncompliance with development standards, Caltrans will coordinate with the Cities of Laguna Hills, Laguna Woods, and Lake Forest, to obtain landscaping or setback variances for properties where the Project would reduce the required amount of landscaping below the applicable municipal landscaping and setback requirements.
- LU-2** Prior to construction, the construction contractor will generate time-stamped photo documentation of the pre-construction conditions of all temporary staging areas. Following completion of the Project, areas that are temporarily disturbed by construction activities would be returned to their property owners in the same or better condition than prior to construction. Owners of parcels where TCEs would be required would receive compensation for the temporary use of a portion of their property.
- LU-3** Caltrans will continue to coordinate with the Cities of Lake Forest, Laguna Hills, and Laguna Woods to reflect the modification of land use designations for properties that will be acquired for the Project that are not currently designated for transportation uses within the land use elements of their general plans.
- COM-1** The former Laguna Hills Mall property is currently in the redevelopment design phase to convert the 68-acre site into a mixed-use property that would include restaurants, parks, entertainment, shopping, and living spaces. The redevelopment project is known as the Village at Laguna Hills. Caltrans, OCTA, and the City of Laguna Hills will work together to ensure there are no conflicts with the proposed Project's realignment of Avenida de la Carlota and the development plans for the Village at Laguna Hills.

2.2 CONSISTENCY WITH STATE, REGIONAL, AND LOCAL PLANS

This section discusses the consistency of the Build Alternatives with SCAG's 2024–2050 Connect SoCal Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy (RTP/SCS) and 2025 Federal Transportation Improvement Program (2025 FTIP), the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) Measure M Renewal Ordinance, the OCTA Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and Natural Communities Conservation Plan (NCCP)/Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP), and the general plans of the affected cities.

2.2.1 Affected Environment

2.2.1.1 Federal

Federal Transportation Improvement Program

The Federal Transportation Improvement Program (FTIP) is a 4-year program that lists all transportation projects that will be receiving federal funding in the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) region (SCAG 2024a). The FTIP is part of the region's strategy to improve the safety and efficiency of the transportation system. Projects listed in the FTIP are consistent with SCAG's 2024–2050 RTP/SCS, including, but not limited to, highway improvement, high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lane, high-occupancy toll lane, and freeway ramp projects. The Project is included in the SCAG financially constrained 2025 FTIP (FTIP ID ORA131105).

2.2.1.2 State

California Transportation Plan 2050

California Transportation Plan 2050 provides a long-range policy framework for the state's transportation system, exploring trends that will influence travel behavior and transportation decisions in the next 25 years. California Transportation Plan 2050 outlines goals, policies, strategies, performance measures, and recommendations to meet future mobility needs and reduce greenhouse gas emissions¹ (Caltrans 2021). The California Transportation Plan is updated every 5 years.

2.2.1.3 Regional Plans

Southern California Association of Governments 2024–2050 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy

The 2024–2050 RTP/SCS is a long-range plan that provides a vision for meeting future transportation and housing needs while balancing economic, environmental, and public health goals (SCAG 2024b). The 2024–2050 RTP/SCS was prepared to address

¹ Please note: This is a California Transportation Plan 2050 goal and is not related to the National Environmental Policy Act in any way or form.

transportation needs in the SCAG region, which includes Ventura, Imperial, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, and San Bernardino Counties. The Project is listed in SCAG's 2024–2050 RTP/SCS under RTP ID 2M0717.

Master Plan of Arterial Highways/Long Range Transportation Plan

The Master Plan of Arterial Highways (MPAH) was established by the County of Orange (County) in 1956. The purpose of this plan is to ensure that a regional highway network would be planned, developed, and preserved to improve the County's existing freeway system. Cities within the County are expected to achieve consistency with the MPAH in individual general plan circulation elements. Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) is responsible for administering the MPAH.

The LRTP established by the OCTA outlines a vision for multimodal transportation improvements throughout the County. These projects, programs, and improvements are designed to address the transportation needs of County residents, commuters, and visitors for the next 25 years. OCTA prepares the LRTP every 4 years to account for new planning efforts, as well as changes in demographics, economic conditions, and available sources of transportation funding. The improvement of the I-5/EI Toro interchange is included in the 2022 LRTP.

Measure M Renewal Ordinance

In 1990, Orange County voters approved Measure M, a half-cent sales tax for transportation improvements that was scheduled to sunset in 2011. On November 7, 2006, the County's voters renewed Measure M for a 30-year extension through 2041 and approved a continuation of transportation improvements through the Measure M Transportation Investment Plan (M2). By the year 2041, the M2 program plans to deliver approximately \$15.5 billion worth of transportation improvements to Orange County. Major improvement plans target Orange County freeways, streets and roads, and transit and environmental programs. The improvement to the I-5/EI Toro interchange is identified as "Project D" in the M2 program and is subject to the provisions of OCTA's M2 Ordinance. Attachment B, Section II.A.4, of the M2 Ordinance contains the following language related to the design of freeway projects funded by M2:

"Freeway Projects will be built largely within existing rights of way using the latest highway design and safety requirements. However, to the greatest extent possible within the available budget, Freeway Projects shall be implemented using Context Sensitive Design, as described in the nationally recognized Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Principles of Context Sensitive Design Standards. Freeway Projects will be planned, designed and constructed using a flexible community responsive and collaborative approach to balance aesthetic, historic and environmental values with transportation safety, mobility, and maintenance and performance goals. Context Sensitive Design features include: parkway-style designs; environmentally friendly, locally native landscaping; sound reduction; improved wildlife passage and aesthetic treatments, designs and themes that are in harmony with the surrounding communities."

Orange County Transportation Authority Natural Communities Conservation Plan/Habitat Conservation Plan

OCTAs NCCP/HCP was approved with federal and state resource agencies as signatories. The purpose of the OCTA NCCP/HCP is to provide an effective framework to protect native biological diversity, habitat for native species, natural communities, and local ecosystems throughout Orange County (the Plan Area), while improving and streamlining the environmental permitting process for impacts of Covered Activities on sensitive, threatened, and endangered species and their habitats. Environmental impacts will be mitigated under OCTA's M2 Environmental Mitigation Program (EMP). The goals of the EMP are to engage in comprehensive mitigation to provide higher-value environmental benefits such as habitat protection, wildlife corridors/linkages, and resource preservation, in exchange for a streamlined project review and permitting process for the freeway program. The Project is considered a covered action and is in conformance with OCTA NCCP/HCP, Implementing Agreement (IA), and the NCCP/HCP Agreement.

2.2.1.4 Local

City of Lake Forest General Plan

The City of Lake Forest General Plan was adopted in June 2020.

Land Use and Design Element

The City of Lake Forest General Plan Land Use and Design Element (updated 2024) identifies how land will be used in the future. The purpose of the City's Land Use and Design Element is to prescribe existing and future land use activity and address the relationship between development and environmental quality, potential hazards, and social and economic objectives. The Land Use and Design Element also identifies the general distribution, location, mix, and extent of land uses in the City of Lake Forest. The total planning area of the City of Lake Forest is approximately 12.6 square miles and is made up predominantly of residential land uses. The Land Use and Design Element of the City of Lake Forest General Plan includes the following goal and policies that are applicable to the Project:

Goal LU-1 Land Use Mix: A community with a balanced land use pattern that meets the City's long-term housing, employment, and civic needs.

Policy LU-1.1 Land Use Pattern: Promote an appropriate land use plan that fosters and enhances community livability and public health; supports economic development; promotes efficient development and multiple transportation options; reduces pollution, greenhouse gas emissions, and the expenditure of energy and other resources; and ensures compatibility between uses.

Goal LU-2 Compatible Development: A community where new development blends harmoniously into the existing neighborhood fabric.

Policy LU-2 Physical Characteristic Compatibility: Ensure that new development fits within the existing community setting and is compatible with surrounding land uses and public infrastructure availability.

Mobility Element

The City of Lake Forest General Plan Mobility Element includes (updated 2025) provides the framework for decisions concerning the city's multimodal transportation system, which includes roadway, transit, bicycle, pedestrian, and rail modes of travel. The following goals and policies are applicable to the Project:

Goal M-1 Regional and Local Roads: A transportation system that meets and balances local and regional mobility needs.

Policy M-1.1 Master Plan of Arterial Highways (MPAH): Coordinate with OCTA with respect to regional vehicular access as documented in the OCTA MPAH.

Policy M-1.4 Adjacent Jurisdictions: Work with adjacent jurisdictions and agencies to ensure that there is cross-jurisdictional consistency in transportation facilities and coordinated implementation.

Goal M-2 Traffic Flow-System Efficiency: Provide a vehicular transportation system with adequate levels of traffic flow and operations while maximizing efficiency.

Policy M-2.1 Vehicle Level of Service (LOS): Strive to maintain or improve vehicular level of service along City facilities, defined as roadway segments and intersections. Given the unique land use and operational context near the freeways and the City's commercial areas, the City acknowledges that lower LOS standards may exist in these locations.

Policy M-2.4 Transportation System Efficiency: Continue to maximize transportation network efficiency and minimize delay and congestion by investing in Traffic System Management (TSM) and signal maintenance and coordination.

Goal M-3 Funding: Ensure the utilization of various financing methods to improve and provide a fiscally sound transportation system.

Policy M-10.1 Funding Sources: Leverage existing available funding methods and sources to fund the transportation system in Lake Forest while also researching innovative funding sources at the federal, state, regional, and county levels.

City of Laguna Hills General Plan

The City of Laguna Hills General Plan was adopted in June 1994.

Land Use Element

The City of Laguna Hills General Plan Land Use Element (2009) establishes land uses in an effort to promote a pattern of future development that advances the City's desire to improve the quality of life and ensure a more sustainable future. The Land Use Element is the foundation of the Laguna Hills General Plan and guides citizens, planners, and decision makers on the pattern of growth and future development in Laguna Hills.

The Land Use Element of the City of Laguna Hills General Plan includes the following policy that is applicable to the Project:

Policy LU-5.3: Allocate funds to infrastructure improvements in targeted areas.

No goals or policies within the City of Laguna Hills General Plan Mobility Element (2009) are applicable to the Project.

City of Laguna Woods General Plan

The City of Laguna Woods General Plan was adopted in October 2022.

Land Use Element

The City of Laguna Woods Land Use Element (2024) serves as a guide for future development in the city. The Land Use Element establishes the general locations and approximate land areas for all land uses in the city. The total planning area in the City of Laguna Woods is approximately 3.3 square miles. The city is characterized primarily by residential development.

No goals or policies within the City of Laguna Woods General Plan Land Use Element were applicable to the Project.

Mobility Element

The City's Mobility Element (2024) contains the following objectives applicable to the proposed project:

Policy Objective M-1.4: Maintain the public road system consistent with the requirements of the Orange County Master Plan of Arterial Highways.

Policy Objective M-2.1: Manage and operate public roadways using advanced information- and communications-based technologies as part of intelligent transportation systems (ITS).

Laguna Hills Urban Village Specific Plan

Some municipalities adopt specific plans to implement the policies established in the general plan in a specific geographical area. The Cities of Laguna Woods and Lake Forest do not have specific plans within the RSA. One specific plan, also known as Laguna Hills Urban Village Specific Plan, adopted by the City of Laguna Hills, is located in the RSA. Table 2.2-1 provides a summary of the Project's consistency with applicable plans.

Table 2.2-1. Consistency with Federal, State, Regional, and Local Plans and Programs

Plan	Element of Chapter	Goal	Policy	Consistency
Federal Transportation Improvement Program (FTIP) (2025)	The FTIP is a 4-year program that lists all transportation projects that will be receiving federal funding in the Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) region. Projects listed in the FTIP are consistent with SCAG's 2024–2050 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)/Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS).			Consistent – The Project is listed in the 2025 FTIP as FTIP ID ORA131105. Therefore, the Project (Build Alternative 1 and its design variation [Build Alternative 1a] and Build Alternative 3) is consistent with both the 2025 FTIP and 2024–2050 RTP/SCS. Inconsistent – The No-Build Alternative would not result in any changes to existing conditions and would not implement the Project as reflected in the RTP/SCS.
California Transportation Plan (CTP) 2050	The CTP 2050 Goals	Safety – Provide a safe and secure transportation system		Consistent –The Project (Build Alternative 1 and its design variation [Build Alternative 1a] and Build Alternative 3) would reduce congestion and improve traffic circulation at the interchange, thereby directly contributing to improved safety and security to the transportation system. Transportation System Management and Transportation Demand Management elements would also be implemented to help manage traffic demand. Inconsistent – Under the No-Build Alternative, travel safety and security would continue to worsen at the interchange.

Plan	Element of Chapter	Goal	Policy	Consistency
California Transportation Plan 2050	The CTP 2050 Goals	Climate – Achieve statewide greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions reduction targets and increase resilience to climate change* *Please note: This is a California Transportation Plan 2050 goal and is not related to NEPA in any way or form.		Consistent – The Project (Build Alternative 1 and its design variation [Build Alternative 1a] and Build Alternative 3) is included in the 2024-2050 RTP/SCS, which includes goals, strategies, programs, and projects that will help the SCAG region in reducing its GHG emissions. Implementation of the 2024-2050 RTP/SCS would result in a 19% reduction per capita from 2005 GHG emission levels by 2035. This would meet the State's mandated reductions for the SCAG region, which are 8% by 2020 and 19% by 2035. The Project would assist the region with its overall goals to reduce vehicle-related GHGs by relieving congestion and improving traffic flow, thereby reducing emissions. The Project would also implement TSM and TDM measures, which may also reduce GHG emissions. Inconsistent – The No-Build Alternative would not result in any changes to existing conditions. The I-5/EI Toro interchange would continue to deteriorate as traffic operations worsen. The No-Build Alternative would not help achieve statewide GHG emissions reductions targets.
California Transportation Plan 2050	The CTP 2050 Goals	Quality of Life and Public Health – Enable vibrant, healthy communities		Consistent – Build Alternative 1 and its design variation (Build Alternative 1a) and Build Alternative 3 would reduce congestion and improve traffic circulation that would contribute to improving the quality of life for travelers and residents, businesses, and recreational user within and adjacent to the Project limits. Inconsistent – Under the No-Build Alternative, congestion would worsen, negatively affecting all highway and non-highway users.

Plan	Element of Chapter	Goal	Policy	Consistency
California Transportation Plan 2050	The CTP 2050 Goals	Environment – Enhance environmental health and reduce negative transportation impacts		Consistent – Build Alternative 1 and its design variation (Build Alternative 1a) and Build Alternative 3 have been designed to reduce environmental impacts to the greatest extent practicable. The Project would reduce traffic congestion, improve traffic operations, and accommodate future traffic volumes forecasted in the Project area. Inconsistent – Under the No-Build Alternative, air quality and energy consumption will continue to worsen with increasing traffic.
SCAG 2024–2050 RTP/SCS	Plan Goals	Mobility: Build and maintain an integrated multimodal transportation network		Consistent – Build Alternative 1 and its design variation (Build Alternative 1a) and Build Alternative 3 would ease congestion and enhance freeway operations, thereby maximizing mobility. TSM and TDM elements would also be implemented including pedestrian, bicyclist, and other micromobility safety enhancements and transit signal priority and freight signal priority technology. Improvements to the I-5/EI Toro interchange and implementation of TSM and TDM technology improvements would contribute to building and maintaining an integrated multimodal transportation network at the local level and the region as a whole. Inconsistent – Under No-Build Alternative, mobility and accessibility would continue to deteriorate as traffic operations worsen.

Plan	Element of Chapter	Goal	Policy	Consistency
SCAG 2024–2050 RTP/SCS	Plan Goals	Communities: Develop, connect and sustain communities that are livable and thriving		Consistent – Build Alternative 1 and its design variation (Build Alternative 1a) and Build Alternative 3 would ease congestion and enhance freeway operations, thereby maximizing mobility. As such, this Project would support the goal to connect communities. Inconsistent – Under the No-Build Alternative, mobility, accessibility, travel safety, and reliability would continue to deteriorate as traffic operations worsen.
SCAG 2024–2050 RTP/SCS	Plan Goals	Environment: Create a healthy region for the people of today and tomorrow		Consistent – Build Alternative 1 and its design variation (Build Alternative 1a) and Build Alternative 3 would ease congestion and enhance freeway operations, thereby maximizing mobility and minimizing air quality impacts, and increasing energy efficiency. TSM and TDM elements would also be implemented to help manage traffic demand. Inconsistent – Under the No-Build Alternative, air quality and energy consumption would continue to worsen with traffic.

Plan	Element of Chapter	Goal	Policy	Consistency
SCAG 2024–2050 RTP/SCS	Regional Planning Policies	System Preservation and Resilience	01. Prioritize repair, maintenance and preservation of the SCAG region's existing transportation assets, following a "Fix-It-First" principle 02. Promote transportation investments that advance progress toward the achievement of asset management targets, including the condition of the National Highway System pavement and bridges and transit assets (rolling stock, equipment, facilities and infrastructure)	Consistent – Build Alternative 1 and its design variation (Build Alternative 1a) and Build Alternative 3 would result in a more efficient transportation system by providing roadway improvements and implementing TSM and TMD applications to manage traffic demand. The Project would ease congestion and improve overall traffic flow within the Project limits while enhancing freeway operations, thereby maximizing mobility. As such, this Project would support system preservation and resilience. Inconsistent – Under the No-Build Alternative, mobility, accessibility, travel safety, and reliability would continue to deteriorate as traffic operations worsen.
SCAG 2024–2050 RTP/SCS	Regional Planning Policies	Transportation System Management	12. Pursue efficient use of the transportation system using a set of operational improvement strategies that maintain the performance of the existing transportation system instead of adding roadway capacity, where possible	Consistent – Build Alternative 1 and its design variation (Build Alternative 1a) and Build Alternative 3 would result in a more efficient transportation system by providing roadway improvements and implementing TSM and TMD applications to manage traffic demand. The Project would ease congestion and improve overall traffic flow within the Project limits while enhancing freeway operations, thereby maximizing mobility. As such, this project would support the policies to pursue efficient use of the transportation system and increase travel time reliability. Inconsistent – Under the No-Build Alternative, mobility, accessibility, travel safety, and reliability would continue to deteriorate as traffic operations worsen.

Plan	Element of Chapter	Goal	Policy	Consistency
SCAG 2024–2050 RTP/SCS	Regional Planning Policies	Transportation Demand Management (TDM)	14. Encourage the development of transportation projects that provide convenient, cost-effective and safe alternatives to single-occupancy vehicle travel (e.g., trips made by foot, on bikes, via transit, etc.) 15. Encourage jurisdictions and TDM practitioners to develop and expand local plans and policies to promote alternatives to single occupancy vehicle travel for residents, workers and visitors 6. Encourage municipalities to update existing (legacy) TDM ordinances by incorporating new travel modes and new technology and by incorporating employment and residential sites of certain populations—for example, employers who have less than 250 employees (below the 250 or more employees threshold identified in AQMD’s [Air Quality Management District] Rule 2202)	Consistent – Build Alternative 1 and its design variation (Build Alternative 1a) and Build Alternative 3 would result in a more efficient transportation system by providing roadway improvements and implementing TSM and TMD applications to manage traffic demand. The Project would ease congestion and improve overall traffic flow within the Project limits while enhancing freeway operations, thereby maximizing mobility. Inconsistent – Under the No-Build Alternative, mobility, accessibility, travel safety, and reliability would continue to deteriorate as traffic operations worsen.

Plan	Element of Chapter	Goal	Policy	Consistency
Master Plan of Arterial Highways (MPAH)/Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)		The MPAH was established to ensure that a regional highway network would be planned, developed, and preserved to improve the County's existing freeway system. Cities within the County are expected to achieve consistency with the MPAH in individual general plan circulation elements. The LRTP outlines a vision for multimodal transportation improvements throughout Orange County (County).		Consistent: The Project (Build Alternative 1 and its design variation [Build Alternative 1a] and Build Alternative 3) are located within the cities of Lake Forest, Laguna Hills, and Laguna Woods. Each of these cities include policies in their respective General Plans to comply with the MPAH. In addition, the improvement of the I-5/EI Toro interchange is included in the 2022 LRTP. Inconsistent – Under the No-Build Alternative, mobility, accessibility, travel safety, and reliability would continue to deteriorate as traffic operations worsen.
Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) Natural Communities Conservation Plan (NCCP)/Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP)		The purpose of the OCTA NCCP/HCP is to provide an effective framework to protect native biological diversity, habitat for native species, natural communities, and local ecosystems throughout Orange County (the Plan Area), while improving and streamlining the environmental permitting process for impacts of Covered Activities on sensitive, threatened, and endangered species and their habitats.		Consistent – The Project (Build Alternative 1 and its design variation [Build Alternative 1a] and Build Alternative 3) is considered a covered action and is in conformance with OCTA NCCP/HCP, Implementing Agreement (IA), and the NCCP/HCP Agreement. Inconsistent – Under the No-Build Alternative, mobility, accessibility, travel safety, and reliability would continue to deteriorate as traffic operations worsen.

Plan	Element of Chapter	Goal	Policy	Consistency
City of Lake Forest General Plan	Land Use and Design Element	Goal LU-1 Land Use Mix: A community with a balanced land use pattern that meets the City's long-term housing, employment, and civic needs.	Policy LU-1.1 Land Use Pattern: Promote an appropriate land use plan that fosters and enhances community livability and public health; supports economic development; promotes efficient development and multiple transportation options; reduces pollution, greenhouse gas emissions, and the expenditure of energy and other resources; and ensures compatibility between uses.	Consistent: Build Alternative 1 and its design variation (Build Alternative 1a) and Build Alternative 3 would reduce congestion and improve traffic circulation that would contribute to improving the quality of life for travelers and residents, businesses, and recreational users within and adjacent to the Project limits. The Project would also reduce vehicle-related GHGs by relieving congestion and improving traffic flow, thereby reducing emissions and increasing energy efficiency. The Project would also implement TSM and TDM measures, which may also reduce GHG emissions. Inconsistent – Under the No-Build Alternative, congestion would worsen, negatively affecting all highway and non-highway users.
City of Lake Forest General Plan	Land Use and Design Element	Goal LU-2 Compatible Development: A community where new development blends harmoniously into the existing neighborhood fabric.	Policy LU-2 Physical Characteristic Compatibility: Ensure that new development fits within the existing community setting and is compatible with surrounding land uses and public infrastructure availability.	Consistent: The Project (Build Alternative 1 and its design variation [Build Alternative 1a] and Build Alternative 3) would improve the existing infrastructure, including local infrastructure. The Project does not introduce a new or incompatible use to the surrounding Consistent: The No-Build Alternative would not introduce new or incompatible uses.

Plan	Element of Chapter	Goal	Policy	Consistency
City of Lake Forest General Plan	Mobility Element	Goal M-1 Regional and Local Roads: A transportation system that meets and balances local and regional mobility needs.	Policy M-1.1 Master Plan of Arterial Highways (MPAH): Coordinate with OCTA with respect to regional vehicular access as documented in the OCTA MPAH. Policy M-1.4 Adjacent Jurisdictions: Work with adjacent jurisdictions and agencies to ensure that there is cross-jurisdictional consistency in transportation facilities and coordinated implementation.	Consistent: Implementation of the Project (Build Alternative 1 and its design variation [Build Alternative 1a] and Build Alternative 3) are dependent on cooperation between Caltrans, OCTA, the County of Orange, and affected cities. Transportation improvements associated with the Project (Build Alternatives 1, 1a, and 3) would ensure implementation of the Master Plan of Arterial Highways to meet the needs of all cities within the Project limits. Inconsistent: The No-Build Alternative would be inconsistent with the intended build out of I-5 as illustrated in the MPAH. Therefore, this alternative would not implement the goals of the MPAH and would not help meet the regional and local transportation needs of the City.

Plan	Element of Chapter	Goal	Policy	Consistency
City of Lake Forest General Plan	Mobility Element	Goal M-2 Traffic Flow-System Efficiency: Provide a vehicular transportation system with adequate levels of traffic flow and operations while maximizing efficiency.	Policy M-2.1 Vehicle Level of Service (LOS): Strive to maintain or improve vehicular level of service along City facilities, defined as roadway segments and intersections. Given the unique land use and operational context near the freeways and the City's commercial areas, the City acknowledges that lower LOS standards may exist in these locations. Policy M-2.4 Transportation System Efficiency: Continue to maximize transportation network efficiency and minimize delay and congestion by investing in Traffic System Management (TSM) and signal maintenance and coordination.	Consistent – Build Alternative 1 and its design variation (Build Alternative 1a) and Build Alternative 3 would result in a more efficient transportation system by providing roadway improvements and implementing TSM and TMD applications to manage traffic demand. The Project would ease congestion and improve overall traffic flow within the Project limits while enhancing freeway operations, thereby maximizing mobility. As such, this Project would support system preservation and resilience. Inconsistent – Under the No-Build Alternative, mobility, accessibility, travel safety, and reliability would continue to deteriorate as traffic operations worsen.
City of Lake Forest General Plan	Mobility Element	Goal M-3 Funding: Ensure the utilization of various financing methods to improve and provide a fiscally sound transportation system.	Policy M-10.1 Funding Sources: Leverage existing available funding methods and sources to fund the transportation system in Lake Forest while also researching innovative funding sources at the federal, state, regional, and county levels.	Consistent: The Project (Build Alternative 1 and its design variation [Build Alternative 1a] and Build Alternative 3) would be funded by OCTA with the Renewed Measure M (M2) Freeway Program. OCTA would also seek federal and other funding sources, potentially including State Transportation Improvement funding for the Project. Neutral: Under the No-Build Alternative, no improvements are proposed to the I-5/EI Toro Road Interchange and therefore, it would not be necessary to allocate funds to infrastructure improvements to I-5.

Plan	Element of Chapter	Goal	Policy	Consistency
City of Laguna Hills General Plan	Land Use Element		Policy LU-5.3: Allocate funds to infrastructure improvements in targeted areas.	Consistent: Implementation of the Project Build Alternative 1 and its design variation (Build Alternative 1a) and Build Alternative 3) would be consistent with Policy LU-5.3 because funds from the Renewed Measure M (M2) Freeway Program would be allocated to implement infrastructure improvements in this targeted area of this interchange. Neutral: Under the No-Build Alternative, no improvements are proposed to the I-5/EI Toro Road Interchange and therefore, it would not be necessary to allocate funds to infrastructure improvements to I-5.
City of Laguna Woods	Mobility Element		Policy Objective M-1.4: Maintain the public road system consistent with the requirements of the Orange County Master Plan of Arterial Highways.	Consistent: Implementation of the Project Build Alternative 1 and its design variation [Build Alternative 1a] and Build Alternative 3) are dependent on cooperation between Caltrans, OCTA, the County of Orange, and affected cities. Transportation improvements associated with the Project (Build Alternatives 1, 1a, and 3) would ensure implementation of the Master Plan of Arterial Highways to meet the needs of all cities within the Project limits. Inconsistent: The No-Build Alternative would be inconsistent with the intended build out of I-5 as illustrated in the MPAH. Therefore, this alternative would not implement the goals of the MPAH and would not help meet the regional and local transportation needs of the City.

Plan	Element of Chapter	Goal	Policy	Consistency
City of Laguna Woods	Mobility Element		Policy Objective M-2.1: Manage and operate public roadways using advanced information- and communications-based technologies as part of intelligent transportation systems (ITS).	Consistent – Build Alternative 1 and its design variation (Build Alternative 1a) and Build Alternative 3 would result in a more efficient transportation system by providing roadway improvements and implementing TSM and TMD applications to manage traffic demand. The Project would ease congestion and improve overall traffic flow within the Project limits while enhancing freeway operations, thereby maximizing mobility. travel time reliability. Inconsistent – Under the No-Build Alternative, mobility, accessibility, travel safety, and reliability would continue to deteriorate as traffic operations worsen.

2.2.2 Environmental Consequences

Table 2.2-1 describes the Project's consistency with applicable goals and policies included in the federal, state, regional, and local plans and programs discussed above in the Affected Environment section.

2.2.2.1 Build Alternative 1 and Its Design Variation (Build Alternative 1a) and Build Alternative 3

The Project supports the goals in the 2024–2050 RTP/SCS (RTP ID 2M0717) (SCAG 2024b) and is also included in the 2025 FTIP (FTIP ID #ORA131105) (SCAG 2024a). The Project is therefore consistent with these regional plans. Table 2.2-1 further describes the Project's consistency with applicable goals and policies included in the state, regional, and local plans discussed under the Affected Environment section. As the Build Alternatives are consistent with the plans and policies identified in Table 2.2-1, no impacts related to consistency with plans and programs would result from the Build Alternatives.

2.2.2.2 No-Build Alternative

Under the No-Build Alternative, the I-5/EI Toro interchange would remain in its current condition, and the Project would not be implemented. The No-Build Alternative would result in some inconsistencies with federal, state, regional, and local plans and programs. These include the 2040-2050 RTIP/SCS, 2025 FTIP, MPAH, and some of the goals and policies in the general plans for the Cities of Lake Forest, Laguna Hills, and Laguna Woods.

2.2.3 Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

No avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures are proposed as there would be no impacts as it relates to the Project's consistency with federal, state, regional, and local plans and programs under the Build Alternatives.

2.3 PARKS AND RECREATION

2.3.1 Affected Environment

This section is based on the findings of the Supplemental Section 4(f) Evaluation (Caltrans 2026c). The study area for analyzing impacts on park and recreation resources consists of the Section 4(f) study area, which is defined as 0.5 mile of the Project limits.

The Project would affect facilities that are protected by the Park Preservation Act (California Public Resources Code [PRC] Sections 5400–5409). The Park Preservation Act prohibits local and state agencies from acquiring any property, which is in use as a public park at the time of acquisition unless the acquiring agency pays sufficient compensation or land, or both, to enable the operator of the park to replace the parkland and any park facilities on that land.

A park or recreational facility qualifies for protection under Section 4(f) if: (1) the property is publicly owned, (2) the park is open to the general public, (3) it is being used for outdoor recreation, and (4) it is considered significant by the official with jurisdiction (OWJ). The park must be publicly owned at the point at which “use” occurs.

As shown in Table 2.3-1 and on Figure 4, *Public Parks and Recreational Facilities*, there are 14 existing public parks and recreational resources within the Section 4(f) study area, including two public elementary schools with recreational areas, nine public parks/recreational areas/open space resources, and two trails. All 14 properties qualify as Section 4(f) resources and are protected under the Park Preservation Act.

Table 2.3-1. Park and Recreational Facilities

No.	Property (Official with Jurisdiction)	Address	Facilities
1	Cavanaugh Park (City of Lake Forest)	23782 Cavanaugh Road Lake Forest, CA 92630	A City of Lake Forest-owned, 6.27-acre park with a half basketball court with lighting, small playground structure, picnic table, and large open grass area with scattered trees. The proposed project intersects with a portion of the park boundaries (see Figure 5, <i>Section 4(f) Use of Cavanaugh Park</i>).
2	Olivewood Elementary School (Saddleback Valley Unified School District)	23391 Dune Mear Road Lake Forest, CA 92630	A 10.36-acre public school in the Saddleback Valley Unified School District with roughly 479 students in grades Transitional Kindergarten (TK)–6. Has a playground, library and two computer labs. Within 0.32 mile of the Project limits.
3	Ralph A. Gates Elementary School (Saddleback Valley Unified School District)	23882 Landisview Avenue, Lake Forest, CA 92630	A 10.20-acre public school in the Saddleback Valley Unified School District with roughly 1,039 students in grades K–6. Within 0.41 mile of the Project limits.
4	La Tierra Early Childhood Center (adjacent to part of Sycamore Park) (Saddleback Valley Unified School District)	24150 Lindley Street, Mission Viejo, CA 92691	An 8.98-acre public school serving students in preschool and TK in the Saddleback Valley Unified School District. Has a playground. Within 0.43 mile from the Project limits and adjacent to Sycamore Park.
5	Veterans Park (formerly known as Village Pond Park) (City of Lake Forest)	23102 Ridge Route Drive, Lake Forest, CA 92630	A City of Lake Forest-owned, 4.70-acre park, formerly known as Village Pond Park, and later rededicated as Veterans Park. It has a new 1-acre pond, meandering sidewalks, a butterfly garden and honors five branches of military service with a new monument and art designs. Within 0.44 mile from Project limits.

No.	Property (Official with Jurisdiction)	Address	Facilities
6	Mountain View Park (City of Lake Forest)	24061 Dylan Street, Lake Forest, CA 92630	A City of Lake Forest-owned 5.3- acre park with a baseball field, full- and half-court basketball, outdoor exercise equipment, playground, tennis courts, picnic tables, barbecues, and restrooms.
7	El Toro Park (City of Lake Forest)	23701 Los Alisos Boulevard, Lake Forest, CA 92360	A City of Lake Forest-owned, 10-acre park with a paved bicycle path and shade trees, a playground and tennis courts. Within 0.39 mile from Project limits
8	Sycamore Park (City of Mission Viejo)	25101 Charlinda Drive, Mission Viejo, CA 92691	A City of Mission Viejo-owned, 6.5-acre park with a sand volleyball court and playground equipment, picnic tables, and barbecues. Within 0.30 mile from the Project limits.
9	Clarrington Park (City of Laguna Hills)	24701 Jorie Drive, Laguna Hills, CA 92653	City of Laguna Hills-owned, 3.49-acre public park with swings, a grass area and access to a walking trail, picnic tables, benches, a sports field, and a tot lot. Within 0.16 mile of the Project limits.
10	Beckenham Park (City of Laguna Hills)	24901 Wilkes Place, Laguna Hills, CA 92653	City of Laguna Hills-owned, 2.75-acre public park with benches, drinking fountain, lighting, picnic tables, sports field, a tot lot and walkways. Within 0.41 mile of the Project limits
11	Laguna Woods Dog Park (City of Laguna Woods)	23190 Ridge Route Drive, Laguna Woods, CA 92637	City of Laguna Woods-owned, 0.33-acre dog park that has play space area. Within 0.36 mile of the Project limits.
12	Aliso Park (County of Orange – OC Parks)	189 Avenida Majorca, Laguna Woods, CA 92637	A 28.21-acre community park now under the jurisdiction of OC Parks. Within 0.27 mile of the Project limits.

No.	Property (Official with Jurisdiction)	Address	Facilities
13	Aliso Creek Regional Bikeway, Riding and Hiking Trail (County of Orange Flood Control District and County of Orange – OC Parks)	Lake Forest, Laguna Hills, and Mission Viejo, CA	On land owned by the Orange County Flood Control District and maintained by OC Parks; 15 miles of bikeway and recreational trail extending from the foothills of Orange County to the boundary of Laguna Beach. The continuous 15 miles of asphalt bikeway are designed for multi-use travel through five South County cities. Types include equestrian trail, fitness trail, mountain bike trail, nature trail and urban trail. The closest segment of the trail is 75 feet from the Project limits.
14	Avila Trail (County of Orange)	Laguna Hills, CA	Dirt trail between Paseo De Valencia and the City of Laguna Hills' Aliso Creek Access Trail. Maintained by the County of Orange. The closest segment of the trail is 45 feet from the Project limits.

Source: Caltrans 2026c.

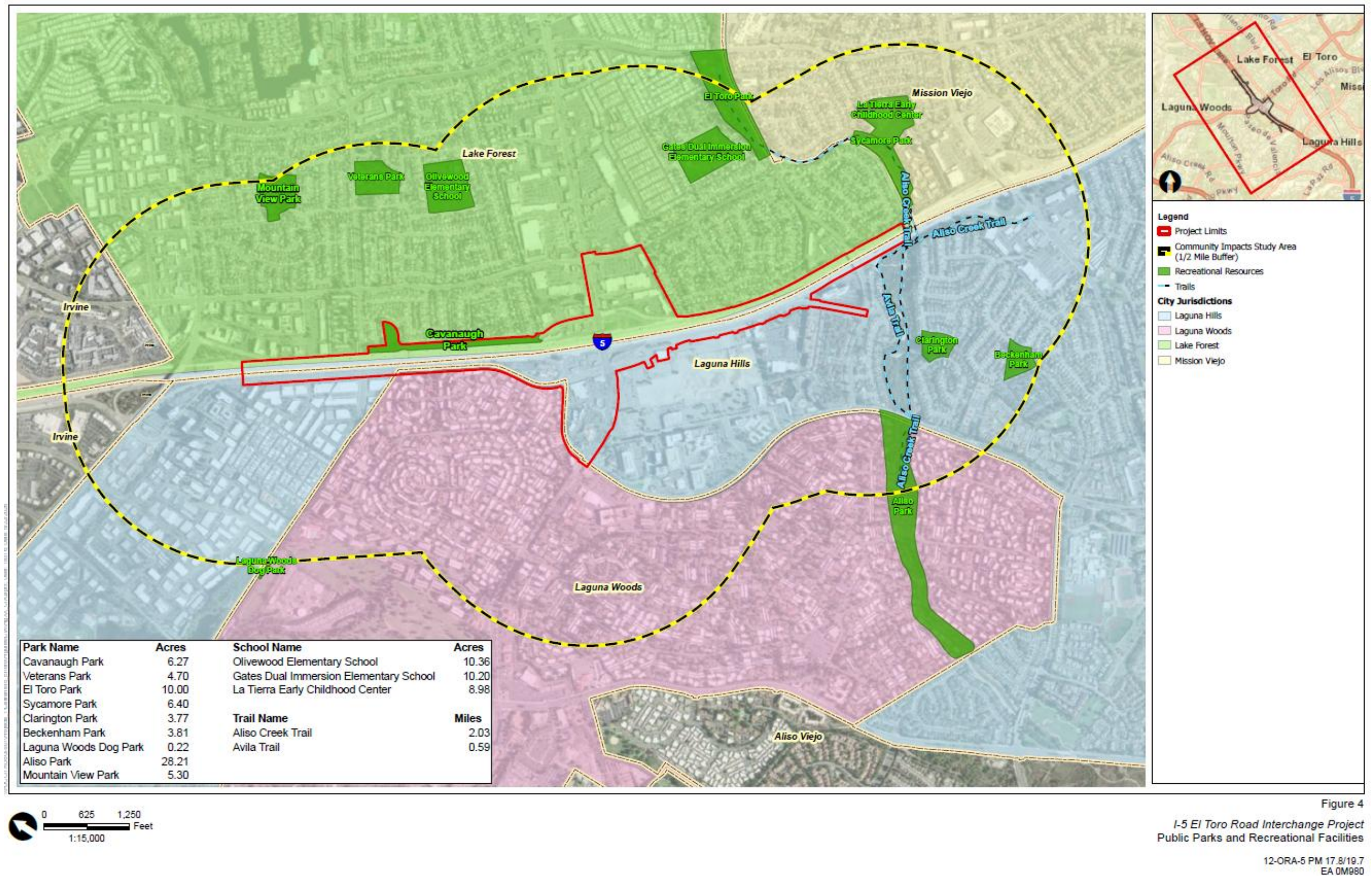


Figure 4. Public Parks and Recreational Facilities



Figure 5. Section 4(f) Use of Cavanaugh Park

2.3.2 Environmental Consequences

2.3.2.1 Temporary Impacts

Build Alternative 1 and Its Design Variation (Build Alternative 1a)

Build Alternative 1 and its design variation (Build Alternative 1a) would require temporary use of Cavanaugh Park during construction of the Project. Build Alternative 1 and its design variation (Build Alternative 1a) would temporarily use approximately 0.5 acre of the park, requiring temporary construction easements (TCEs) to support access and staging during construction activities (see Figure 5). The half basketball court, playground equipment, picnic table, and portions of the open grass area would be affected during construction. The following Project Features would be implemented to minimize temporary impacts to Cavanaugh Park during the construction phase: **PF-TRA-1**, **PF-CI-1**, **PF-CI-2**, and **PF-N-1**. These Project features would include implementation of a Transportation Management Plan (**PF-TRA-1**), maintaining a neat job site in areas visible to the public (**PF-CI-1**), restoring damaged work to the same state of completion as before the damage (**PF-CI-2**), and controlling and monitoring noise resulting from work activities (**PF-N-1**). With the implementation of these Project features, temporary impacts on Cavanaugh Park would be minimal, and Caltrans has made a preliminary *de minimis* determination. Prior to finalizing the EIR/EA and Supplemental Section 4(f) documentation, a request will be sent to the City of Lake Forest for concurrence on the *de minimis* determination.

Build Alternative 3

The Project, under Build Alternative 3, would have no temporary impacts on parks and recreational facilities because no ground disturbance would be required.

No-Build Alternative

The No-Build Alternative would maintain the current configuration of the I-5/EI Toro interchange within the Project limits. Under the No-Build Alternative, the Project would not be constructed, and no temporary impacts on parks and recreational facilities would occur.

2.3.2.2 Permanent Impacts

Build Alternative 1 and Its Design Variation (Build Alternative 1a)

Build Alternatives 1 and 1a would require permanent use of approximately 0.59 acre from Cavanaugh Park. The park is located adjacent to I-5. The existing 16-foot noise barrier separating I-5 from Cavanaugh Park would be demolished to accommodate the proposed northbound I-5 on-ramp improvements. As a result, a new noise barrier to reduce traffic noise would be constructed along I-5, adjacent to Cavanaugh Park.

The permanent use of approximately 0.59 acre of Cavanaugh Park is less than 10 percent of the park's total acreage. The use would require the removal of the half basketball court, playground, and picnic table as well as some of the park's open space

along I-5, as shown in Figure 5, *Section 4(f) Use of Cavanaugh Park*. Cavanaugh Park's existing facilities are modest and older compared to other parks in the city, which may contribute to lower usage by nearby residents. Observations suggest that the area occasionally attracts transient activity.

The City of Lake Forest is currently planning a separate park revitalization project that includes relocation and upgrading of park amenities. If the City's project is implemented prior to construction, impacts to park facilities would be limited to vegetated areas because the existing park features would have already been relocated. If the City's project does not proceed, Avoidance and Minimization Measures **LU-4** and **LU-5** would be implemented to address impacts to park features, consistent with the Section 4(f).

Avoidance and Minimization Measure **LU-4 (Section 4f-1)** would replace park facilities/features similar to those that are being removed in coordination with the City of Lake Forest, such as the half basketball court, playground, and picnic table within the remaining Cavanaugh Park limits. In addition, Avoidance and Minimization Measure **LU-5 (Section 4f-2)** would require public outreach during the design phase of Cavanaugh Park to seek the community's input on the type of park facilities/features that are preferred for replacement. Caltrans would coordinate with the City of Lake Forest to ensure that replacement recreational facilities are installed in a manner consistent with the City's ongoing revitalization of Cavanaugh Park. These improvements would upgrade existing park amenities and may increase park visitation once the work is completed.

Since the City of Lake Forest is in the process of revitalizing Cavanaugh Park, Caltrans would continue to coordinate with the City to ensure that these measures are implemented consistent with the timing of both projects' schedules. While Caltrans proposes to relocate and install new park facilities, Caltrans would compensate the City for the replaced and relocated park facilities and park acreage acquired for the Project in accordance with the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended (Avoidance and Minimization Measure **REL-1**).

For any visual impacts that may occur due to the partial acquisition, an Architectural Design Review Team consisting of local representatives and Caltrans District 12 Landscape Architecture would ensure that proposed architectural treatments comply with aesthetic requirements of the City of Lake Forest and that any replacement of park facilities would provide the same—if not improved visual quality—to the community compared to the existing park facilities. In addition, the Project would include preservation of existing landscaping (Avoidance and Minimization Measure **VIS-1**) and replacement landscaping (Avoidance and Minimization Measure **VIS-2**).

With the implementation of these measures, permanent impacts to Cavanaugh Park would be minimal and Caltrans has made a preliminary *de minimis* determination. Prior to finalizing the EIR/EA and Supplemental Section 4(f) documentation, a request will be sent to the City of Lake Forest for concurrence on the *de minimis* determination.

Build Alternative 3

The Project, under Build Alternative 3, would have no permanent impacts on parks and recreational facilities because no ground disturbance would be required.

No-Build Alternative

The No-Build Alternative would maintain the current configuration of the I-5/EI Toro interchange within the Project limits. Under the No-Build Alternative, the Project would not be constructed, and no permanent impacts on parks and recreational facilities would occur.

2.3.3 Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

Implementation of the following Project features and avoidance and minimization measures, including Avoidance and Minimization Measure **REL-1** (see Section 4.4, *Relocations and Real Property Acquisition*), would avoid and minimize adverse impacts on Cavanaugh Park; the Project features and avoidance and minimization measures are identical to those in the Supplemental Section 4(f):

PF-TRA-1

A Transportation Management Plan (TMP) shall be included in the design plans for implementation by the contractor prior to and during construction of any improvements. The TMP shall consist of prior notices, adequate sign posting, detours, phased construction, and temporary driveways where necessary. The TMP shall specify implementation timing of each plan element (e.g., prior notices, sign posting, detours) as determined appropriate by Caltrans. Adequate local emergency access shall be provided at all times to adjacent uses. Proper detours and warning signs shall be established to ensure public safety. The TMP shall be devised so that construction shall not interfere with any emergency response or evacuation plans. Construction activities shall proceed in a timely manner to reduce impacts.

LU-4 (Section 4f-1)

Caltrans, in coordination with the City of Lake Forest, shall install new park facilities, similar to those would be removed, such as the half basketball court, playground, and picnic table within the remaining Cavanaugh Park limits. This measure shall be implemented in conjunction with measure LU-5, providing an opportunity to enhance and upgrade the park based on the community's input.

LU-5 (Section 4f-2)

Caltrans and the City of Lake Forest shall perform outreach activities during the design phase to seek the community's input on the choice of park facilities/features.

- VIS-1** *Preservation of Existing Landscaping.* Damage to existing vegetation, especially mature, established trees, within the Project limits or in proximity to the Project limits shall be minimized to the extent practicable, consistent with safety, design standards, and construction requirements. Vegetation designated for preservation shall be protected during construction through the installation of temporary high-visibility fencing prior to the start of ground-disturbing activities. Tree trimming or pruning, where required, shall be conducted under the direction of a qualified arborist.
- VIS-2** *Replacement Landscape and Irrigation in Areas Impacted by Construction.* To maintain the context of the Project area (color, form, and texture) landscaping shall be installed that is compatible with the existing landscape along I-5 in the Project vicinity and surrounding area. Where feasible, landscaping shall include specimen sized trees and/or shrub/groundcover mass planting, and landscape treatment along walls to soften the hardscape features and reduce glare and radiant heat from the walls. In areas where soundwalls are visible from adjacent residential land uses, vines and landscaping shall be utilized to screen views to the wall where feasible. The landscape concept, plan, and plant palette shall be determined in consultation with, and approved by, the District Landscape Architect in consultation with the cities of Lake Forest, Laguna Hills, and Laguna Woods during the Plans, Specifications, and Estimate (PS&E) phase. All vine and landscape proposed shall conform with the planting policy requirements of Caltrans and the applicable goals and policies of the City of Lake Forest General Plan, Laguna Hills General Plan, and Laguna Woods General Plan, as well as the tree preservation policies identified in the Lake Forest Municipal Code, Laguna Hills Municipal Code, and Laguna Woods Municipal Code. The planting plan shall be reviewed and approved by the Caltrans Biologist to be in accordance with Executive Orders 13751, Safeguarding the Nation from the Impacts of Invasive Species (2016), and 13112, Invasive Species (1999).
- PF-CI-1** During construction, implement Caltrans Standard Specifications Section 5-1.31, which requires that the job site be neatly maintained in areas visible to the public.
- PF-CI-2** During construction and before Contract Acceptance, implement Caltrans Standard Specifications Section 5-1.39 which requires restoration of damaged work to the same state of completion as before the damage.

PF-N-1

Caltrans Standard Specifications Section 14.8-02: Control and monitor noise resulting from work activities. Do not exceed 86 A- weighted decibels maximum instantaneous noise level (dBA Lmax) at 50 feet from the job site from 9:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m.

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Chapter 3 Growth

3.1 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

Many factors influence land use and development in an area, including planning and zoning, economic conditions, population and economic growth, infrastructure, availability of developed land, and physical and environmental barriers. The study area for analyzing growth-induced impacts consists of the RSA.

This section also considers data and growth trends in the regional study area, defined as the SCAG region. Potential indirect growth has been captured at the local and regional level through the inclusion of the Project in SCAG's 2024–2050 RTP/SCS list of projects. The SCAG region is anticipated to add 2 million residents, 1.6 million households, and 1.3 million jobs between 2024 through 2050 (SCAG 2024b).

Population, household, and employment growth forecasts for the cities within the RSA, Orange County, and the SCAG region are provided for comparison in Table 3.1-1, Table 3.1-2, and Table 3.1-3.

Table 3.1-1. Population Growth Forecast

County/Region	Year		Percent Growth (%)
	2019	2050	
City of Lake Forest ^a	85,860	85,174	-0.8
City of Laguna Hills ^a	31,549	32,673	3.6
City of Laguna Woods ^a	17,740	16,391	-7.6
City of Irvine ^a	307,096	334,107	8.8
City of Mission Viejo ^a	94,201	87,935	-6.7
Orange County ^b	3,191,000	3,439,000	7.8
SCAG Region ^b	18,827,000	20,909,000	11.1

Sources:

^a Center for Demographics Research 2025.

^b SCAG 2024a.

Table 3.1-2. Households Growth Forecast

County/Region	Year		Percent Growth (%)
	2019	2050	
City of Lake Forest	29,200	31,800	8.9
City of Laguna Hills	11,000	13,000	18.2
City of Laguna Woods	12,000	12,100	0.8
City of Irvine	108,600	135,000	24.3
City of Mission Viejo	34,000	35,100	3.2
Orange County	1,069,000	1,253,000	17.2
SCAG Region	6,193,000	7,814,000	26.2

Source: SCAG 2024a.

Table 3.1-3. Employment Growth Forecast

County/Region	Year		Percent Growth (%)
	2019	2050	
City of Lake Forest	44,700	45,900	2.7
City of Laguna Hills	19,200	22,100	15.1
City of Laguna Woods	4,800	5,700	18.8
City of Irvine	282,600	338,700	19.9
City of Mission Viejo	37,700	39,300	4.2
Orange County	1,805,000	2,019,000	11.9
SCAG Region	8,976,000	10,276,000	14.5

Source: SCAG 2024a.

As shown in Table 3.1-1, Table 3.1-2, and Table 3.1-3, the City of Irvine is expected to experience the highest percentage of population (8.8 percent), household (24.3 percent), and employment (19.9 percent) growth between 2019 to 2050 within the RSA, surpassing the growth forecast for Orange County as a whole. The population, household and employment in the SCAG region is also expected to grow at a much faster pace than in Orange County.

3.2 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

3.2.1 Build Alternatives

Because growth-related effects represent permanent impacts of a project, there is no discussion of temporary impacts in this section. Direct growth-inducing impacts are generally associated with the provision of urban services and the extension of infrastructure to an undeveloped area. The extension of services and facilities to an individual site can reduce development constraints for other nearby areas and can serve to induce further development in the vicinity. Indirect or secondary growth-inducing impacts consist of growth in the area caused by additional demand for housing, employment, and goods and services associated with population increases caused by, or attached to, new development.

The analysis of growth-related, indirect impacts was based on the *Guidance for Preparers of Growth-Related, Indirect Impact Analyses* (Caltrans 2006), which was developed by an interagency work group that included representatives from Caltrans, FHWA, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. The guidance presents a first-cut screening analysis to examine a variety of interrelated factors and address the following issues:

- How, if at all, does the project potentially change accessibility?
- How, if at all, do the project type, project location, and growth-pressure potentially influence growth?
- Is project-related growth reasonably foreseeable?
- If there is project-related growth, how, if at all, could it affect resources of concern?

A discussion regarding each of the above questions/considerations is provided below.

How, if at all, does the project potentially change accessibility?

The Project proposes improvements to existing roads and I-5; it would not create or eliminate any new freeways or roadways. The Project improvements proposed are limited to modification/addition to the on and off ramp connections to I-5 and widening and realignment of local roads. The Project would improve traffic flow, optimize traffic signalization, improve traffic mobility through adjacent local street intersections, reduce freeway ramp queuing, and apply technology to help manage expected traffic demand. Future growth, as approved in the context of adopted regional and local plans, requires these types of system management approaches to maintain acceptable levels of service on the transportation system. As such, the improvements do not remove an impediment to growth because they do not provide an entirely new public facility nor do they induce growth, as the system improvements would only accommodate future growth as planned for in local land use plans. Current and future development projects, as listed in Table 2.1-3 in Section 2.1, *Existing and Future Land Use*, which represents recent development trends in the RSA, reflects a longstanding trend in the county of accommodating growth primarily in the cities. Access to the I-5/El Toro Road interchange would remain unchanged because the Build Alternatives would not remove or limit access.

How, if at all, do the project type, project location, and growth-pressure potentially influence growth?

The Project would address existing traffic delays due to the high traffic volumes, geometric deficiencies related to inadequate signal operations and intersection spacing, and major delays due to traffic queueing at the intersections of the on- and off-ramps. The Build Alternatives would not influence the amount, location, and/or distribution of growth in the cities within the RSA because no new facilities are proposed. Future growth is also limited by the lack of available undeveloped privately held land within the RSA. As discussed in Section 2.1, *Existing and Future Land Use*, there is approximately 1.63 acres of available vacant land within the RSA, which makes up 0.08 percent of the total land use area within the RSA. The Build Alternatives would not create new housing or opportunities for capital investment by the public or private sectors.

Furthermore, the location, timing, and amount of future growth in the RSA would depend on the availability of infrastructure/services (e.g., water, sewers, schools). Issues related to accommodating critical future infrastructure are addressed by the individual jurisdictions and agencies that provide infrastructure/services that may affect the location, level, and timing of future development, regardless of the Project. This type of infrastructure is not proposed as a part of the Project. Because the proposed transportation improvements would only accommodate existing and planned development, the Project would have no influence with respect to stimulating the location, rate, timing, or amount of local or regional growth.

Is project-related growth reasonably foreseeable?

The Project would create short-term jobs in the surrounding area and may help decrease the current rates of unemployment during the construction phase. However, because these jobs are temporary it is not expected that workers would permanently relocate for work during the construction phase. As such, substantial population growth associated with project construction is not anticipated.

The I-5/EI Toro Road Interchange project responds to existing and forecasted traffic congestion attributable to growth, both locally and regionally, that has already occurred or is planned to occur. As shown in Table 3.1-1, Table 3.1-2, and Table 3.1-3, the region and surrounding area are projected to continue to experience growth in population, households, and jobs. The Build Alternatives are not expected to influence the amount, timing, or location of growth in the Project area because they propose improvements to an existing transportation corridor that would accommodate existing and planned development. As such, there is no reasonably foreseeable project-related growth expected to result from the build alternatives.

If there is project-related growth, how, if at all, could it affect resources of concern?

As described above, there are no reasonably foreseeable project-related growth impacts that are expected to occur from implementing the Project. As such, there would be no impacts on resources of concern, and the Build Alternatives do not require further analysis of growth-related impacts.

This “first-cut screening” analysis demonstrates that the Build Alternatives would not change access but would instead facilitate improved traffic flow, traffic, mobility at and through adjacent local street intersections, and reduce freeway ramp queuing. Utilities, land uses, and community facilities would not be affected because the Build Alternatives are not growth-inducing and would not result in reasonably foreseeable growth. Based on the analysis above, the Build Alternatives do not require further analysis of growth-related impacts.

3.2.2 No-Build Alternative

The No-Build Alternative, would not result in improvements within the RSA; therefore, no growth-related impacts would occur. However, the No-Build Alternative would not be consistent with the regional and local mobility goals of SCAG, or the affected cities and communities, and would not provide the transportation infrastructure needed or meet the goals and objectives of SCAG’s 2024–2050 RTP/SCS.

Regional planning documents, such as the 2024–2050 RTP/SCS, as well as the land use elements of local general plans, anticipate the growth planned within the local jurisdictions of Orange County and the SCAG region, including the RSA, and respond to this projected growth. The No-Build Alternative would not influence the level of growth in the cities of the RSA because these jurisdictions are largely built out and there are limited areas available for development or redevelopment. Therefore, the No-Build

Alternative is not anticipated to influence the amount, location, and/or distribution of growth or housing and jobs in the cities in the RSA. Existing congestion would remain within the RSA and continue in the future under the No-Build Alternative.

3.3 AVOIDANCE, MINIMIZATION, AND/OR MITIGATION MEASURES

For all alternatives considered, none would induce growth, and no further analysis of growth-related impacts is required. The potential for unplanned development is limited, given the built-out nature of the RSA and entitlement status of existing vacant land. Therefore, no avoidance, minimization, and/or mitigation measures are required.

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Chapter 4 Community Character and Cohesion

A community's characteristics can be described by demographic information, including population size, age composition, ethnicity, and household characteristics. This section describes the existing community characteristics of the RSA and its associated census tracts.

Community character is all of the attributes, including social and economic characteristics, and assets that make a community unique and establish a sense of place for its residents. *Community cohesion* is the degree to which residents have a sense of belonging to their neighborhood; a level of commitment of the residents to the community; or a strong attachment to neighbors, groups, and institutions, usually as a result of continued association over time (Caltrans 2011).

The demographics of the RSA's population, housing characteristics, and economic conditions and trends have been evaluated because they influence the character and cohesion of a community. The longer residents have lived within their community and the more homogenous the population, it can be assumed that the level of cohesion and character would be stronger in these communities than those that have a transient population with largely different social and economic backgrounds (i.e., age, ethnicity, and income).

4.1 POPULATION, COMMUNITY CHARACTER, AND HOUSING

As mentioned in Chapter 1, *Introduction*, 10 census tracts overlap the proposed Project footprint, as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau. Population and housing data were gathered from the 2019–2023 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates for the RSA (U.S. Census Bureau 2023a). The U.S. Census Bureau recommends using 5-year estimates when precision is necessary and when analyzing small populations on the tract level.

4.1.1 Affected Environment

4.1.1.1 Regional Population Characteristics

Population

Table 4.1-1 summarizes the population in the RSA, the cities within the RSA, and Orange County. The total population within the RSA is 54,010, which accounts for 1.7 percent of Orange County's overall population.

Table 4.1-1. Population

Geographic Area	Total Population
City of Lake Forest	85,846
City of Laguna Hills	30,921
City of Laguna Woods	17,342
City of Irvine	308,160
City of Mission Viejo	92,415
Orange County	3,164,063
Census Tracts	
320.14	5,887
320.15	6,434
423.07	7,013
524.10	5,093
524.11	4,930
626.22	4,324
626.25	4,688
626.46	3,328
626.47	4,671
626.53	7,642
Resource Study Area	54,010

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2023a (Table DP05).

Race and Ethnicity

Table 4.1-2 provides the racial and ethnic composition of the RSA, the cities within the RSA, and Orange County. As shown in Table 4.1-2, the RSA has a greater percentage of the population that identifies as White (51.2 percent) compared to Orange County (37.7 percent). Orange County has a greater percentage of the population that identifies as Asian (21.7 percent) and Hispanic or Latino (57.8 percent) compared to the RSA (44 percent Hispanic or Latino population and 19 percent Asian population).

Table 4.1-2. Racial and Ethnic Characteristics

Geographic Area	Total Population	White (alone)	Black (alone) ^a	American Indian/Native Alaskan (alone) ^a	Asian (alone) ^a	Hawaiian/ Pacific Islanders (alone) ^a	Some Other Race (alone) ^b	Two or More Races (alone)	Hispanic or Latino (alone) ^a	Total Minority Population
City of Lake Forest	85,846	39,757	1,438	133	17,459	350	471	4,228	22,010	41,390
City of Laguna Hills	30,921	16,830	339	20	4,850	47	21	1,962	6,852	12,108
City of Laguna Woods	17,342	11,806	122	63	4,110	40	98	271	832	5,167
City of Irvine	308,160	108,987	5,967	290	135,237	1,254	1,873	19,619	34,933	177,681
City of Mission Viejo	92,415	54,928	904	32	12,945	26	256	4,989	18,335	32,242
Orange County	3,164,063	1,191,304	48,224	3,634	687,982	8,779	13,810	129,850	1,080,480	1,829,099
		37.7%	1.5%	0.1%	21.7%	0.3%	0.4%	4.1%	34.1%	57.8%
Census Tracts										
320.14	5,887	2,144	81	0	701	0	0	186	2,775	3,557
320.15	6,434	3,843	3	0	951	0	20	628	989	1,943
423.07	7,013	3,288	244	0	1,512	0	0	420	1,549	3,305
524.10	5,093	2,750	94	0	829	0	0	78	1,342	2,265
524.11	4,930	1,707	60	0	675	0	17	211	2,260	2,995
626.22	4,324	2,417	79	20	1,236	0	33	80	459	1,794
626.25	4,688	2,480	8	10	512	0	0	71	1,607	2,137
626.46	3,328	2,406	39	0	559	0	44	64	216	814
626.47	4,671	2,903	10	50	661	0	21	318	708	1,429
626.53	7,642	3,718	139	0	2,640	0	15	390	740	3,519
Resource Study Area	54,010	27,656	757	80	10,276	0	150	2,446	12,645	23,758
		51.2%	1.4%	0.1%	19.0%	0.0%	0.3%	4.5%	23.4%	44.0%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2023b (Table B03002).

^a These populations have been incorporated into the “Total Minority Population” calculations.

^b “Some Other Race” is defined as all other responses not included in the “White,” “Black or African American,” “American Indian and Alaska Native,” “Asian,” or “Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander” race categories.

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Age Distribution

Table 4.1-3 provides the age distribution of the RSA, the cities within the RSA, and Orange County. As shown in Table 4.1-3, 21.3 percent of Orange County's population is under 18 years of age, while 15.8 percent of the population is 65 years of age and over. In comparison, 15.3 percent of the RSA's population is under 18 years of age, while 31.5 percent of the population is 65 years of age and over. As shown in Table 4.1-3, the median age in Orange County is 39.1 years old, but the median age for the RSA is older, at 51.4 years old.

Table 4.1-3. Population and Age Distribution

Geographic Area	Total Population	Median Age	Age			
			Under 18	%	65 and Over	%
City of Lake Forest	85,846	40.4	18,320	21.3	12,886	15.0
City of Laguna Hills	30,921	43.1	6,067	19.6	6,278	20.3
City of Laguna Woods	17,342	75	72	0.4	14,393	83.0
City of Irvine	308,160	33.9	66,883	21.7	32,414	10.5
City of Mission Viejo	92,415	46.1	18,613	20.1	20,682	22.4
Orange County	3,164,063	39.1	674,833	21.3	498,997	15.8
Census Tracts						
320.14	5,887	46.9	1,154	19.6	1,182	20.1
320.15	6,434	45.2	970	15.1	2,069	32.2
423.07	7,013	41.4	1,540	22.0	1,370	19.5
524.10	5,093	45.6	819	16.1	1,209	23.7
524.11	4,930	39.6	1,041	21.1	818	16.6
626.22	4,324	70.8	78	1.8	3,213	74.3
626.25	4,688	53.1	881	18.8	1,727	36.8
626.46	3,328	73.9	54	1.6	2,719	81.7
626.47	4,671	63.8	242	5.2	2,236	47.9
626.53	7,642	33.2	1,462	19.1	452	5.9
Resource Study Area	54,010	51.4	8,241	15.3	16,995	31.5

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2023a (Table DP05).

Income and Poverty Status

The U.S. Census Bureau determines the number of persons living below poverty based on poverty thresholds, which differ slightly from the poverty guidelines defined by the Department of Health and Human Services. As shown in Table 4.1-4, Orange County reported a median household income of \$113,702, which is notably higher than that of the RSA (\$104,730). It is important to note that the RSA has a higher percentage of persons living in poverty (10.2 percent) compared to Orange County (9.5 percent); however, overall, the state of California has a higher percentage of persons living in poverty (12 percent).

Table 4.1-4. Income and Poverty Level

Geographic Area	Median Household Income	Population Below Poverty Level (%)
City of Lake Forest	\$131,378	8.3
City of Laguna Hills	\$122,778	7.8
City of Laguna Woods	\$60,235	11.3
City of Irvine	\$129,647	11.7
City of Mission Viejo	\$136,071	5.0
Orange County	\$113,702	9.5
Census Tracts		
320.14	\$77,891	22.7
320.15	\$169,543	5.6
423.07	\$141,430	7.9
524.10	\$109,113	4.8
524.11	\$145,445	9.6
626.22	\$60,931	14.7
626.25	\$73,036	12.0
626.46	\$60,465	8.8
626.47	\$75,559	6.2
626.53	\$133,889	9.9
Resource Study Area	\$104,730	10.2

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2023c (Table DP03).

Disabled Population

As shown in Table 4.1-5, the estimated disabled population within the RSA is much higher at 16.3 percent when compared with Orange County (9.3 percent).

Table 4.1-5. Disabled Population

Geographic Area	Disabled Population (%)
City of Lake Forest	8.7
City of Laguna Hills	10.9
City of Laguna Woods	29.6
City of Irvine	6.1
City of Mission Viejo	9.9
Orange County	9.3
Census Tracts	
320.14	18.5
320.15	18.0
423.07	12.0
524.10	10.4
524.11	10.7
626.22	32.1
626.25	17.0
626.46	22.9
626.47	17.7

Geographic Area	Disabled Population (%)
626.53	3.6
Resource Study Area	16.3

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2023d (Table S1810).

4.1.1.2 Neighborhoods/Communities/Community Character

The Project occurs in several cities. This section describes these communities and the community facilities within the RSA, as listed in Table 4.1-6 and shown in Figure 6, *Community Facilities*.

Table 4.1-6. Community Facilities

Map ID	Facility Name	Address	City	Description
1	Cavanaugh Park	23782 Cavanaugh Road	Lake Forest	Park
2	St. George's Episcopal Parish/Church	23802 Avenida De La Carlota	Laguna Hills	Place of Worship
3	Laguna Hills City Hall	24035 El Toro Road	Laguna Hills	City Hall
4	Orange County Fire Station #22	24001 Paseo de Valencia	Laguna Hills	Fire Station
5	US Post Office	24001 Calle de la Magdalena	Lake Forest	USPS Office
6	Clarrington Park	24701 Jorie Drive	Laguna Hills	Park
7	Sycamore Park	25101 Charlinda Drive	Mission Viejo	Park
8	Mountain View Park	24061 Dylan Avenue	Lake Forest	Park
9	Veterans Park	23102 Ridge Route Drive	Lake Forest	Park
10	US Post Office	24552 Raymond Way	Laguna Hills	USPS Office
11	Ralph A. Gates Elementary School	23882 Landisview Avenue	Lake Forest	School
12	El Toro Park	23701 Los Alisos Blvd	Lake Forest	Park
13	Aegean Hills Park	25366 Maximus Street	Mission Viejo	Park
14	Laguna Woods Golf Course	24351 El Toro Road	Laguna Woods	Golf Course
15	Lutheran Church of the Cross	24231 El Toro Road	Laguna Woods	Place of Worship
16	St. Nicholas Catholic Church	24252 El Toro Road	Laguna Woods	Place of Worship
17	Beckenham Park	24901 Wilkes Place	Laguna Hills	Park
18	El Toro Branch – Orange County Library	24672 Raymond Way	Lake Forest	Library
19	Saddleback Medical Center	24451 Heath Center Drive	Laguna Hills	Hospital
20	Laguna Hills Transportation Center & Park-n-Ride Lot	24282 Calle de los Caballeros	Laguna Hills	Government Agency
21	Olivewood Elementary School	23391 Dune Mear Road	Lake Forest	School
22	La Tierra Early Childhood Center	24150 Lindley Street	Mission Viejo	School
23	Laguna Woods Dog Park	23190 Ridge Route Drive	Laguna Woods	Park

Map ID	Facility Name	Address	City	Description
24	Aliso Park	189 Avenida Majorca	Laguna Woods	Park
25	Aliso Creek Regional Bikeway, Riding and Hiking Trail	Lake Forest, Laguna Hills, and Mission Viejo	Lake Forest, Laguna Hills and Mission Viejo	Trail
26	Avila Trail	Laguna Hills	Laguna Hills	Trail

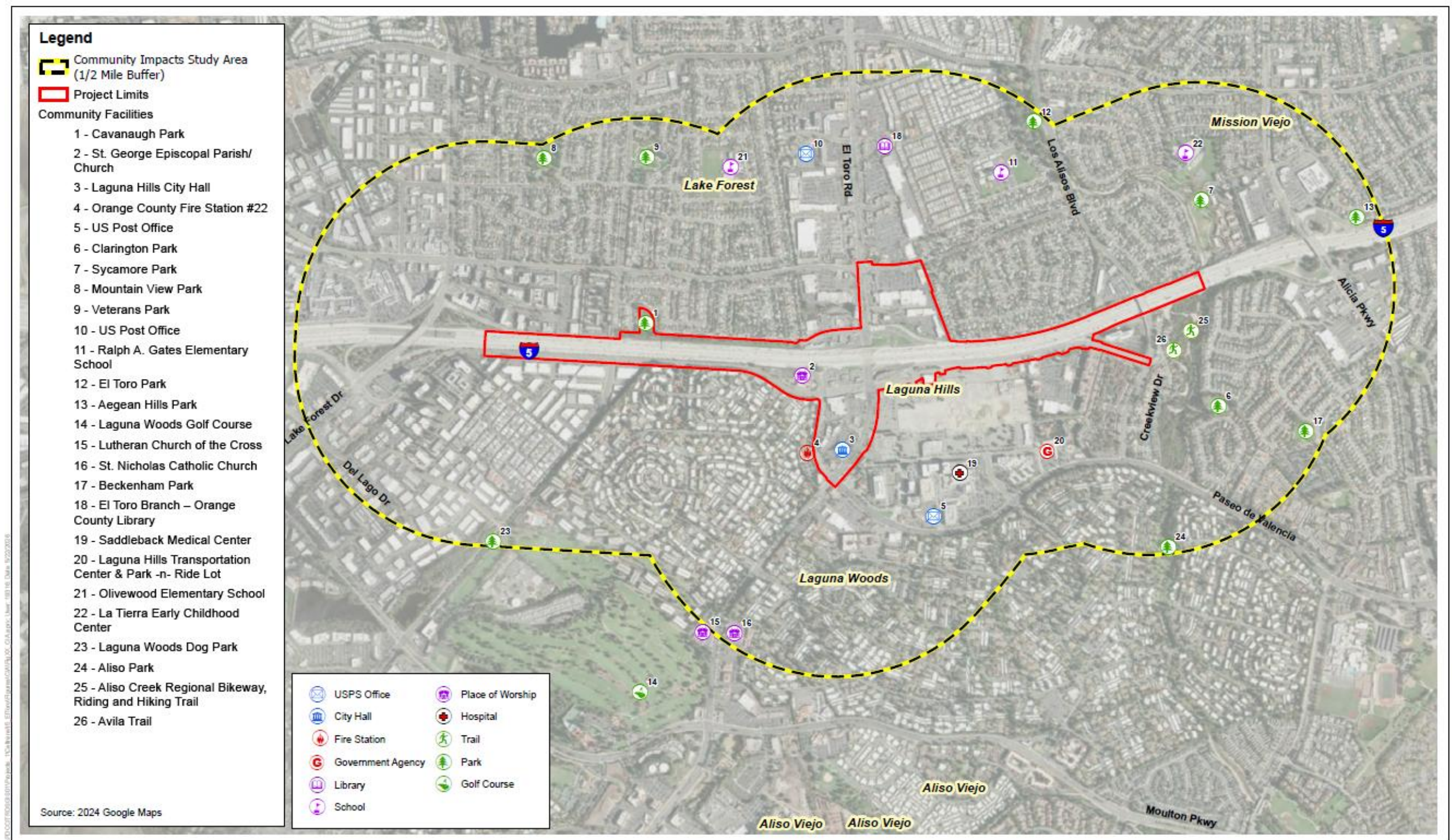


Figure 6
I-5 El Toro Road Interchange Project
Community Facilities
12-ORA-5 PM 17.8/19.7
EA 0M880

Figure 6. Community Facilities

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City of Lake Forest

The City of Lake Forest in the 2019–2023 American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates reported a city population of 85,846 persons. In 2000, Lake Forest expanded by annexing master planned developments of Foothill Ranch and Portola Hills, bringing new homes and commercial centers to the northeastern portion of city. There are two neighborhood associations that manage the associated lakes and custom homes and condominiums. According to the city's 2025 Annual Comprehensive Financial Report, the top three employers are Oakley (1,400 employees), Bal Seal Engineering (500 employees), and Cox Communications (488 employees). The city is served by the Saddleback Valley Unified School System. After many years of planning, the City developed the Arbor at Lake Forest commercial district, a successful shopping and retail area. Lake Forest is also home to two county parks, Whiting Ranch and Heritage Hills Historical Park and Museum. Saddleback Church, Lake Forest Sports Park and Recreation Center, Whiting Ranch, Heritage Hills Historical Park and Museum, are major traffic generators inside the city, however, these venues are 6 miles from the Project site.

Closer to the Project area, land use in Lake Forest is urban in nature with a mix of retail, single and multi-family residential units, as well as mobile home parks (for the 55+ population), and a library. Prothero Mobile Estates (24701 Raymond Way), accommodates up to 257 manufactured (mobile) homes, Kimberly Gardens (24922 Muirlands Blvd.) is smaller with 159 spaces, and El Toro Mobile Estates (24921 Muirlands Blvd.) offers 328 spaces.

Community facilities within the RSA include multiple parks and a trail, a U.S. post office, schools, and the El Toro Branch of Orange County Public Library (24672 Raymond Way) (refer to Figure 6).

City of Laguna Hills

The City of Laguna Hills in the 2019–2023 ACS 5-year estimates reported a city population of 30,921 persons. The city is served by the Saddleback Valley Unified School District. Saddleback Medical Center in Laguna Hills (24451 Health Center Drive) is the local hospital and includes a fully equipped emergency room. The Laguna Hills Transportation Center at 24282 Calle de los Caballeros, operates as OCTA's main transfer hub for south Orange County and has as a park-n-ride lot. Fire protection is provided by the Orange County Fire Authority (OCFA) with ambulance service by Care Ambulance Service. Law Enforcement is provided by the Orange County Sheriff's Department.

In 2013, the Laguna Hills-based mall site (formerly known as Laguna Hills Mall, 24155 Laguna Hills Road), was purchased by a private real estate investment company, Merlone Geier Partners (MGP) for redevelopment. The 68-acre site was originally renamed "Five Lagunas" and was renamed again to *Village at Laguna Hills*. The proposed redevelopment project would include restaurants, parks, entertainment, shopping, and living spaces. Additionally, in Laguna Hills adjacent to Mandeville Park is the Moulton Niguel Water District (MNWD) at 26161 Gordon Road (Parcel Number 625-311-01). MNWD's service area is primarily south of the El Toro Project area.

Community facilities within the RSA include St. George's Episcopal Parish/Church, city hall, a fire station, parks and trails, a U.S. post office, the Saddleback Medical Center, and the Laguna Hills Transportation Center (refer to Figure 6). St. George's Episcopal Parish/Church provides social service and educational programming at reduced costs (if not free), to congregants, local residents and the general public in the surrounding cities.

City of Laguna Woods

The City of Laguna Woods in the 2019–2023 ACS 5-year estimates reported a city population of 17,342 persons. The City of Laguna Woods, includes Laguna Woods Village (LWV), formerly known as Leisure World. LWV is a private gated community, developed for active older adults, and is managed by LWV Home Owners Association (HOA). Laguna Woods Village represents 90 percent overall of the City of Laguna Woods footprint. The city offers a full range of cultural and recreational experiences for active adults in a safe, garden-like setting, including a private golf course.

A key component of the City's circulation plan is the provision of facilities for alternative transportation modes to the automobile, such as motorized scooters, electric wheelchairs, bicycles, and walking. Many of the sidewalks in Laguna Woods are extra wide and in some areas golf carts (alternative vehicles) are permitted to operate on sidewalks. Laguna Woods also maintains an extensive multi-purpose trail system used by pedestrians, cyclists, scooters, golf carts and equestrians. The intent of the multi-purpose trail system is to provide a backbone network of (off-street) alternative vehicle paths, in the meantime, alternative vehicles are allowed to use the private roads within the gated community. The City of Laguna Woods also includes shopping, such as the Willow Tree Shopping Center (24290 Moulton Parkway), where businesses include Aldi (a grocery store), a UPS store, a fitness center, and other small retail stores.

Community facilities within the RSA include the Laguna Woods Golf Course (24351 El Toro Road), churches, and parks (refer to Figure 6).

City of Irvine

The City of Irvine in the 2019–2023 ACS 5-year estimates reported a city population of 308,160 persons. Irvine is home to several technology and semiconductor corporations and higher education institutions. Residential areas are currently bordered by two commercial areas, the Irvine Business Complex to the west and the Irvine Spectrum to the east. Major employment generators for the City are from businesses located in the Irvine Business Complex and Spectrum areas of the city, along with the University of California, Irvine (City of Irvine 2024a). The Project occurs approximately 1,000 feet south of Irvine's jurisdictional boundary. No community facilities were identified within the RSA.

City of Mission Viejo

The City of Mission Viejo in the 2019–2023 ACS 5-year estimates reported a city population of 92,415 persons. The city is primarily residential with offices, businesses and major shopping centers within the city limits. The Project is located adjacent to the

City of Mission Viejo. Community facilities within the RSA consists of parks and a trail and the La Tierra Early Childhood Center (located at 24150 Lindley Street and part of the Saddleback Valley Unified School District) (refer to Figure 6).

4.1.1.3 Housing

Household Size, Occupancy, and Composition

Table 4.1-7 and Table 4.1-8 provide information on average household size, housing units, and occupancy for the RSA, the cities within the RSA, and Orange County. The average household size in Orange County (2.90 persons) is higher than in the RSA (2.35 persons). The average number of owner-occupied housing units in the RSA (68.6 percent) is much higher than in Orange County (56.4 percent).

The majority of the residential population within the RSA has moved into their current residence within the last 30 years. The largest number of residents moved into the RSA between 2000 and 2009 (16 percent), 2010 and 2017 (33.9 percent), and 2018 and 2020 (22.3 percent), which is similar to the trends of the County and the majority of the cities within the RSA.

Table 4.1-7. Household Size, Composition, and Tenure

Geographic Area	Total Households	Average Household Size	% Owner-Occupied Units	% Renter-Occupied Units	Year Householder Moved into Unit					
					% 2021 or Later	% 2018–2020	% 2010–2017	% 2000–2009	% 1990–1999	% 1989 and Earlier
City of Lake Forest	30,246	2.82	70.7	29.3	10.4	19.3	30.1	18.3	13.8	8.2
City of Laguna Hills	11,490	2.64	71.4	28.6	7.1	21.3	28.7	17.5	14.0	11.3
City of Laguna Woods	11,797	1.46	71.4	28.6	8.4	23.6	40.7	15.4	9.1	2.8
City of Irvine	111,979	2.65	43.8	56.2	16.8	33.4	28.3	11.2	5.5	4.7
City of Mission Viejo	32,917	2.75	77.5	22.5	7.9	16.1	28.3	18.1	18.4	11.2
Orange County	1,074,654	2.90	56.4	43.6	9.7	22.4	30.1	17.4	11.2	9.2
Census Tracts										
320.14	1,971	2.85	68.7	31.3	10.8	17.8	37.8	18.9	7.8	6.9
320.15	1,949	2.82	87.6	12.4	10.9	18.1	21.4	15.7	16.5	17.4
423.07	2,203	3.06	77.3	22.7	3.9	14.9	37.1	18.5	10.5	15.2
524.10	1,992	2.52	82.6	17.4	2.7	10.4	43.1	22.3	14.9	6.5
524.11	1,379	3.42	78.0	22.0	6.7	17.1	21.6	20.7	21.2	12.7
626.22	2,923	1.48	70.4	29.6	9.0	26.8	38.3	14.3	6.4	5.3
626.25	2,163	2.17	68.1	31.9	4.6	21.9	40.6	20.8	7.5	4.7
626.46	2,413	1.38	78.5	21.5	9.7	19.2	42.2	17.3	9.3	2.2
626.47	2,550	1.73	53.8	46.2	10.0	30.9	38.0	11.0	8.6	1.5
626.53	3,644	2.10	20.7	79.3	35.5	45.9	18.6	0.0	0.0	0.0
Resource Study Area	23,187	2.35	68.6	31.4	10.4	22.3	33.9	16.0	10.3	7.2

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2023e (Table S1101).

Table 4.1-8 summarizes the total number of housing units, occupied units, and vacant units within the RSA, the cities within the RSA, and Orange County. Orange County has a higher percentage of occupied housing units (94.4 percent) compared to the RSA (91.4 percent).

Table 4.1-8. Housing Characteristics—Occupancy

Geographic Area	Total Housing Units	Occupied Units	% Occupied Units	Vacant Units	% Vacant Units
City of Lake Forest	31,739	30,246	95.3	1,493	4.7
City of Laguna Hills	12,261	11,490	93.7	771	6.3
City of Laguna Woods	13,494	11,797	87.4	1,697	12.6
City of Irvine	120,368	111,979	93.0	8,389	7.0
City of Mission Viejo	34,360	32,917	95.8	1,443	4.2
Orange County	1,138,473	1,074,654	94.4	63,819	5.6
Census Tracts					
320.14	2,036	1,971	96.8	65	3.2
320.15	1,986	1,949	98.1	37	1.9
423.07	2,347	2,203	93.9	144	6.1
524.10	2,112	1,992	94.3	120	5.7
524.11	1,410	1,379	97.8	31	2.2
626.22	3,174	2,923	92.1	251	7.9
626.25	2,310	2,163	93.6	147	6.4
626.46	3,048	2,413	79.2	635	20.8
626.47	2,934	2,550	86.9	384	13.1
626.53	4,005	3,644	91.0	361	9.0
Resource Study Area	25,362	23,187	91.4	2,175	8.6

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2023f (Table DP04).

As discussed above, *community cohesion* is the degree to which residents each have a sense of belonging to their neighborhood, a high level of commitment to the community, or a strong attachment to neighbors, groups, and institutions, usually as a result of continued association over time. Impacts on community cohesion generally depend on whether a project is likely to create a barrier or disrupt connectivity of a community. Either of these can be a result of disruptions in access or residential and business acquisitions. Community cohesion is often subtle and hard to identify; however, some indicators that a community has a high degree of cohesion are:

- **Long-term residents:** Long-term residents are likely to feel more connected to their community. Approximately 33.5 percent of the residents within the RSA have a residential tenure of over 20 years (moved in prior to 2009), which is comparable with the county's average (37.8 percent). Therefore, a moderate level of community cohesion is observed within the RSA based on this indicator because the average long-term residents living within the RSA is not significantly greater or less than the county average.

- **Households of two or more people:** A high percentage of single-person households tend to correlate with a low sense of community cohesion. Communities with a higher average household size tend to be more focused on family rearing, which increases community cohesion. The average household size within the RSA is 2.35 persons per household. Because this average household size does not indicate a high level of single-person households and is not significantly greater or less than the county's average (2.90 person per household), the community cohesion based on this indicator is considered moderate within the RSA.
- **Home ownership over rentals:** A high percentage of home ownership tends to correlate with a high level of community cohesion, whereas a high percentage of rentals tends to imply high mobility within the community. The average number of owner-occupied housing units in the RSA is 68.6 percent, which is much higher than the county average (56.4 percent). The average number of rent-occupied housing units in the RSA is 31.4 percent, which is much lower than the county average (43.6 percent). This data indicates there may be a high level of community cohesion within the RSA because the average rate of owner-occupied housing units is significantly greater than county averages.
- **Ethnic homogeny:** Clusters of populations with similar ethnic roots add to a sense of community cohesion. The RSA has a higher percentage of White population (51.2 percent) and Hispanic or Latino population (23.4 percent). The county also has a higher percentage of White population (37.7 percent) and Hispanic or Latino population (34.1 percent). Given that there are two groups that represent a significant majority within the RSA, this may also indicate a moderate level of community cohesion.
- **Seniors:** Seniors are active in their community and have the time to become involved. Such groups can have a high degree of community cohesion. The percentage of the population of persons 65 years old and older within the RSA is 31.5 percent, which is twice as high when compared to the county (15.8 percent). Because the percentage of the population of persons 65 years old and older is significantly greater than the county, the community cohesion based on this indicator is considered likely high within the RSA.

In considering these factors, the RSA shows moderate to high potential for community cohesion. Based on indicators of community cohesion discussed above, the population characteristics within the RSA do exhibit a substantial difference than these same characteristics for the county. The RSA exhibits the following in comparison to the county:

- A median age of 51.4 compared to 39.1 (county),
- A median household income of \$104,730 compared to \$113,702 (county),
- A disabled population of 16.3 percent compared to 9.3 percent (county),
- A population that identifies as primarily White (51.2 percent) compared to the county's White population (37.7 percent),
- A minority population of 44 percent compared to 57.8 percent (county),

- An older population (65 years old and older) of 31.5 percent compared to 15.8 percent (county),
- An average household size of 2.35 persons compared to 2.90 persons county), and
- A rate of owner-occupied housing units of 68.6 percent compared to 56.4 percent (county).

Given the information above and the amount of existing community facilities and parks and recreational facilities and limited vacant land within the RSA (see Section 2.2.1, *Existing and Future Land Use* and Section 2.2.4, *Parks and Recreational Facilities*), a moderate level of community cohesion has been assessed for the existing conditions within the RSA.

4.1.2 Environmental Consequences

4.1.2.1 Regional Population Characteristics

Build Alternative 1 and Design Variation: Build Alternative 1a, and Build Alternative 3

The improvements to the I-5/EI Toro interchange under the Build Alternatives would not be a catalyst for population growth or change in demographics. As stated above in Chapter 3, *Growth*, growth in the cities within the RSA is expected to occur with or without the Project because, the Project under the Build Alternatives, on its own, would not substantially affect factors that contribute to growth. The purpose of the Project is to improve traffic flow, optimize traffic signalization, improve traffic mobility at and through adjacent local street intersections, reduce freeway ramp queuing and apply technology to help manage traffic demand. Therefore, no temporary or permanent impacts on regional population characteristics would occur under the Build Alternatives.

No-Build Alternative

The No-Build Alternative would maintain the current configuration of the I-5/EI Toro interchange within the Project limits. Under the No-Build Alternative, the Project would not be constructed, and no temporary or permanent impacts on regional population characteristics would occur.

4.1.2.2 Neighborhoods/Communities/Community Character

Community cohesion is the degree to which residents have a sense of belonging to their neighborhood; a level of commitment of the residents to the community; or a strong attachment to neighbors, groups, and institutions, usually as a result of continued association over time (Caltrans 2011).

According to several indicators of community cohesion for the affected census tracts and neighborhoods described previously in this chapter, including a high median age and high median household income, a high percentage of the population in the RSA being disabled, long tenure of many of the residents in the RSA, a high degree of ethnic

homogeneity, and a high percentage of persons age 65 and over, it can be concluded that there is a high degree of community cohesion within the RSA and its associated census tracts.

Temporary Impacts

Build Alternative 1 and Design Variation: Build Alternative 1a

Construction activities associated with Build Alternative 1 and its design variation (Build Alternative 1a) would result in temporary indirect impacts on community character and cohesion. Build Alternative 1 and its design variation (Build Alternative 1a) could result in road detours and access restrictions due to construction activities causing some traffic delays for local residents, businesses, and commuters. Short-term noise and air quality impacts on some local neighborhoods may occur during construction activities. However, substantial disruptions to the majority of local neighborhoods in the RSA are not anticipated. Implementation of a Transportation Management Plan (TMP) (Project Feature **PF-TRA-1**) would avoid or minimize temporary traffic impacts during construction, including temporary maintenance of access to affected businesses during construction, especially in the Avery Parkway and La Paz Road interchange areas. Temporary noise and air quality impacts related to construction activities would be reduced by compliance with Caltrans Standard Specifications Section 14-8.02 (Project Feature **PF-N-1**), which require controlling and monitoring construction noise, and complying with Section 14-9.02 (Project Feature **PF-AQ-1**) and Section 14-9.03 (Project Feature **PF-AQ-2**), which require compliance with all applicable laws and regulations related to air quality and the use of dust control procedures during construction. Substantial disruptions to the local neighborhoods and businesses within the RSA are not anticipated.

Build Alternative 3

The Project, under Build Alternative 3, would have no temporary impacts on neighborhoods, communities, or community character because no ground disturbance would be required.

No-Build Alternative

The No-Build Alternative would maintain the current configuration of the I-5/EI Toro interchange within the Project limits. There would be no temporary impacts on community character and cohesion.

Permanent Impacts

Build Alternative 1 and Design Variation: Build Alternative 1a

Operation of Build Alternative 1 and its design variation (Build Alternative 1a) would have minimal effects on community cohesion. The Project would not introduce a barrier that would divide any existing communities, separate residences from community facilities, result in substantial growth, or impede connectivity between neighborhoods.

Although transportation improvements are generally capable of having urbanizing effects in an area, the Project improvements would improve the existing roadways rather than result in increased development pressure in the RSA.

Build Alternative 1 and its design variation (Build Alternative 1a) are not anticipated to affect or impact population or housing in the RSA because no residential acquisitions are required, therefore no households (residents) would be displaced or relocated. No permanent impacts on population or housing would occur with the Project. Thus, neighborhoods and communities would remain intact and there would be no effect on community character or cohesion in this regard.

The following discussion relates to Cavanaugh Park in Lake Forest and St. George's Episcopal Parish/Church in Laguna Hills, both identified as community facilities and shown in Figure 6.

Build Alternative 1 and its design variation (Build Alternative 1a) would require permanent use of approximately 0.59 acre from Cavanaugh Park. To maintain a sense of place and ensure community character is maintained, Avoidance and Minimization Measures **LU-4 (Section 4f-1)**, **LU-5 (Section 4f-2)**, **VIS- 1**, and **VIS-2** are proposed, as discussed in Section 0, *Parks and Recreation*. Collectively, these measures will lessen the impacts on the neighborhood surrounding Cavanaugh Park and also for park visitors.

Build Alternative 1 and its design variation (Build Alternative 1a) would also require partial acquisition of 0.04 acre of APN 616-022-03, where St. George's Episcopal Parish/Church is located. Relocation of the church would not be required by the Project.

All impacts related to the partial acquisition of Cavanaugh Park and St. George's Episcopal Parish/Church properties will be done in accordance with the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended (Avoidance and Minimization Measure **REL-1**).

Consequently, with the implementation of the measures above identified, it is not anticipated that the Project would result in any permanent changes to the community character or cohesion of the RSA.

Build Alternative 3

The Project, under Build Alternative 3, would have no permanent impacts on neighborhoods, communities, or community character because no ground disturbance would be required.

No-Build Alternative

The No-Build Alternative would maintain the current configuration of the I-5/EI Toro interchange within the Project limits. There would be no permanent impacts on community character and cohesion.

4.1.2.3 Housing

Build Alternative 1 and Design Variation: Build Alternative 1a, and Build Alternative 3

The Project, under Build Alternative 1 and its design variation (Build Alternative 1a) and Build Alternative 3, would not result in the construction or operation of residential development. In addition, the Project would not require acquisition or relocation of residential properties. Therefore, the Project would have no temporary or permanent impacts related to housing.

No-Build Alternative

The No-Build Alternative would maintain the current configuration of the I-5/EI Toro interchange within the Project limits. There would be no temporary or permanent impacts related to housing.

4.1.3 Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

The following Project features will be implemented during construction, along with Project Features **PF-TRA-1** and **PF-N-1** as well as Avoidance and Minimization Measures **LU-4 (Section 4f-1)**, **LU-5 (Section 4f-2)**, **VIS-1**, **VIS-2**, and **REL-1** (see Section 4.4, *Relocations and Real Property Acquisition*):

- PF-AQ-1** Section 14-9.02 specifically requires compliance by the contractor with all applicable laws and regulations related to air quality, including air pollution control district and air quality management district regulations and local ordinances.
- PF-AQ-2** Section 14-9.03 is directed at controlling dust. If dust palliative materials other than water are to be used, material specifications are described in Section 18.

4.2 ECONOMIC CONDITIONS

4.2.1 Affected Environment

Regional Economy

As shown in Table 3.1-3, between 2019 and 2050, employment is projected to increase by 2.7 percent within the city of Lake Forest, 15.1 percent within the city of Laguna Hills, 18.8 percent within the city of Laguna Woods, 19.9 percent within the city of Irvine, 4.2 percent within the city of Mission Viejo, 11.9 percent within the county, and 14.5 percent within the SCAG region. The employment growth projections between 2019 and 2050 for the county and SCAG region correspond with the projected population growth, which is at 7.8 percent for the county and 11.1 percent for the SCAG region. Therefore, it can be concluded that, in the future, there would be a change in the size of the labor force.

Table 4.2-1 shows current industry trends within the cities, county, and RSA. The largest industries within the RSA are educational services, health care, and social assistance at 19 percent, followed by professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services at 17.9 percent, and manufacturing and retail trade both at 11.5 percent.

Table 4.2-1. Industry Trends

Geographic Area (City or Census Tract)	Civilian Employed Population (16 Years and Over)	Industry												
		Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting, and Mining (%)	Construction (%)	Manufacturing (%)	Wholesale Trade (%)	Retail Trade (%)	Transportation and Warehousing, and Utilities (%)	Information (%)	Finance and Insurance, and Real Estate and Rental and Leasing (%)	Professional, Scientific, and Management, and Administrative and Waste Management Services (%)	Educational Services, and Health Care and Social Assistance (%)	Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation, and Accommodation and Food Services (%)	Other Services, Except Public Administration (%)	Public Administration (%)
City of Lake Forest	45,730	0.4	4.9	12.0	3.3	11.5	5.3	2.9	8.1	15.6	19.1	8.6	5.0	3.4
City of Laguna Hills	15,891	0.4	6.3	9.4	3.0	10.8	4.4	1.9	12.2	17.5	18.0	9.0	4.8	2.2
City of Laguna Woods	3,689	0.2	2.2	9.5	1.6	11.4	3.7	2.4	13.4	20.1	20.3	5.7	7.8	1.7
City of Irvine	156,021	0.4	2.7	12.5	3.3	8.1	3.0	2.8	11.1	19.6	22.8	7.8	3.4	2.3
City of Mission Viejo	45,592	0.7	5.2	11.4	3.3	9.6	3.6	2.2	9.3	16.0	22.0	9.0	4.2	3.5
Orange County	1,595,034	0.7	6.0	11.8	3.1	10.1	4.2	1.9	8.4	14.9	21.0	10.1	4.8	3.2
320.14	2,734	0.2	11.1	8.4	1.0	13.8	6.8	3.1	5.4	11.9	15.9	15.9	5.4	0.9
320.15	3,076	0.2	2.1	14.9	2.9	10.1	4.2	1.9	8.9	20.1	24.7	7.2	0.7	2.1
423.07	3,403	0.6	6.9	10.0	1.3	7.7	6.3	1.5	10.2	17.8	19.7	11.1	4.4	2.5
524.10	2,723	0.4	3.9	15.1	2.1	14.2	6.4	5.0	7.5	17.3	18.3	7.6	1.4	0.8
524.11	2,789	1.8	3.8	14.1	0.8	12.5	4.6	1.6	7.0	14.1	18.0	9.3	8.7	3.8
626.22	1,344	0.0	1.5	11.5	0.0	12.1	0.0	0.0	12.9	28.1	20.8	4.6	7.1	1.3
626.25	1,935	0.0	13.1	1.6	5.7	18.5	1.2	0.0	4.1	21.7	21.0	7.4	4.8	1.0
626.46	612	0.0	4.9	0.0	0.0	6.9	5.9	2.9	9.6	12.4	19.3	18.1	19.9	0.0
626.47	2,109	0.0	7.2	9.9	4.2	13.6	9.8	0.0	11.3	19.0	11.4	8.5	4.3	0.9
626.53	4,570	0.0	3.0	15.0	4.0	8.4	1.8	4.2	15.9	18.2	19.8	5.8	2.8	1.1
Total % in Resource Study Area	100	0.4	5.6	11.5	2.4	11.5	4.7	2.3	9.7	17.9	19.0	8.9	4.5	1.6
Total Number Employed	25,295	92	1,410	2,915	619	2,918	1,177	587	2,446	4,521	4,816	2,261	1,127	406

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2023c (Table DP03).

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Employment and Income

As shown in Table 4.2-2, the population of 16 years and older that is in the labor force within the RSA is approximately 57.5 percent, and 42.5 percent are not in the labor force. In comparison, the county has a higher percentage of people in the labor force at approximately 65.6 percent, and a lower percentage of people that are not in the labor force at approximately 34.4 percent. The civilian labor force unemployment rate within the RSA is approximately 6.1 percent, which is higher than at the county level (approximately 5.3 percent). As shown in Table 4.1-4, the median household income within the RSA is \$104,730, which is notably lower than the median household income reported in Orange County (\$113,702).

Table 4.2-2. Employment Status

Geographic Area (City or Census Tract)	Population (Age 16 and Over)	In Labor Force (%)	Not in Labor Force (%)	Civilian Labor Force Unemployment Rate (%)
City of Lake Forest	69,452	69.1	30.9	4.6
City of Laguna Hills	25,597	66.5	33.5	6.2
City of Laguna Woods	17,270	23.0	77.0	7.0
City of Irvine	248,534	66.6	33.4	5.5
City of Mission Viejo	76,003	63.1	36.9	4.5
Orange County	2,572,232	65.6	34.4	5.3
320.14	4,957	56.6	43.4	2.5
320.15	5,500	59.1	40.9	4.9
423.07	5,627	65.4	34.6	7.5
524.10	4,447	68.2	31.8	10.2
524.11	3,951	74.5	25.5	5.2
626.22	4,265	33.2	66.8	5.0
626.25	3,919	50.3	49.7	1.9
626.46	3,274	21.5	78.5	13.2
626.47	4,442	51.6	48.4	8.0
626.53	6,250	75.3	24.7	2.8
Resource Study Area	46,632	57.5	42.5	6.1

Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2023c (Table DP03).

Business Activity

The RSA is highly developed and therefore contains many businesses and places that conduct commercial business. As shown in Table 2.1-2, 23.8 percent of the existing land use within the RSA is comprised of commercial and services. Businesses within the RSA vary greatly and include retail, restaurants, grocery stores, recreational businesses, and medical services. Multiple development projects are proposed within the RSA that will include retail, hotels, and other commercial services, as shown in

Table 2.1-3. These proposed redevelopment projects include The Lake Forest Redevelopment Project (redevelopment of an existing shopping center/strip mall into a residential and retail property in the southwest corner of the El Toro Road and Rockfield Boulevard intersection in Lake Forest) and the Village at Laguna Hills (redevelopment of the former Laguna Hills Mall property, a 68-acre site, into a new property that will include restaurants, parks, entertainment, shopping, and living spaces, located in the southwest corner of the El Toro Road and Avenida De LA Carlota intersection in Laguna Hills).

The Project, under Build Alternative 1 and its design variation (Build Alternative 1a), will require acquisition of new right of way. While no residential relocations or displacements are anticipated, Build Alternative 1 and its design variation (Build Alternative 1a) would require acquisition of commercial property located in the cities of Laguna Hills and Lake Forest and parkland from the Cavanaugh Park in Lake Forest. More information on the property acquisitions is further discussed below.

Build Alternative 1. Under Build Alternative 1, it is anticipated that the full acquisition of two parcels would require businesses to be relocated (see Table 4.2-3). Potential relocation of 18 commercial businesses on APN 621-052-04 and APN 616-033-05 is anticipated, consisting of seven retail and 11 service businesses (see below and Table 4.2-3). The displacement of businesses may also displace between 1 and 20 employees per business.

- APN 621-052-04 (Saddleback Dentistry, Freeway Insurance, Adolfo's Mexican Food, Best Floor Covering, FRESH Fitness, Doctor's Weight Clinic, Alka Yuna Water, Clean Smoke Electronic Cigarettes, Thai Body Works Laguna Hills, Aspired Ink); and
- APN 616-033-05 (PC Trade, Split Enz, Mission Valley Spas, Comic Quest, MJLH Kung Fu and Tai Chi, Shaggy To Chic All Breed Pet Grooming, Hypnotiq Wellness, and iStaffing).

Design Variation: Build Alternative 1a. Under Build Alternative 1a, no additional acquisitions and no additional displacements are expected to result. The acquisitions and potential displacements described for Build Alternative 1 are also applicable to Build Alternative 1a.

Table 4.2-3. Anticipated Property Acquisitions and Related Relocations for Build Alternative 1 and Design Variation: Build Alternative 1a – Southbound I-5 Hook Ramps

APN	Property Type	Address	Present Use	Business Name	City	Relocation
Full Acquisitions						
621-052-04	Commercial	24012 Avenida de la Carlota Ste 200	Medical	Saddleback Dentistry	Laguna Hills	YES
	Commercial	24012 Avenida de la Carlota Unit F	Retail	Freeway Insurance	Laguna Hills	YES
	Commercial	24012 Avenida de la Carlota Unit C	Restaurant	Adolfo's Mexican Food	Laguna Hills	YES
	Commercial	24012 Avenida de la Carlota Unit A	Retail	Best Floor Covering	Laguna Hills	YES
	Commercial	24012 Avenida de la Carlota Unit H	Gym	FRESH Fitness	Laguna Hills	YES
	Commercial	24012 Avenida de la Carlota Unit D	Health & Wellness	Doctor's Weight Clinic	Laguna Hills	YES
	Commercial	24012 Avenida de la Carlota Unit B	Retail	Alka Yuna Water	Laguna Hills	YES
	Commercial	24012 Avenida de la Carlota Unit E	Retail	Clean Smoke Electronic Cigarettes	Laguna Hills	YES
	Commercial	24012 Avenida de la Carlota Unit I	Health & Wellness	Thai Body Works Laguna Hills	Laguna Hills	YES
	Commercial	24012 Avenida de la Carlota Unit G	Tattoo Shop	Aspired Ink	Laguna Hills	YES
616-033-05	Commercial	23811 Bridger Rd	Retail	PC Trade	Lake Forest	YES
	Commercial	23811 Bridger Rd	Hair Salon	Split Enz	Lake Forest	YES
	Commercial	23811 Bridger Rd	Retail	Mission Valley Spas	Lake Forest	YES
	Commercial	23811 Bridger Rd	Retail	Comic Quest	Lake Forest	YES
	Commercial	23811 Bridger Rd Ste 106	Fitness	MJLH Kung Fu and Tai Chi	Lake Forest	YES
	Commercial	23811 Bridger Rd	Pet Grooming Service	Shaggy To Chic All Breed Pet Grooming	Lake Forest	YES
	Commercial	23811 Bridger Rd. Unit 100	Health & Wellness	Hypnotiq Wellness	Lake Forest	YES

APN	Property Type	Address	Present Use	Business Name	City	Relocation
	Commercial	23811 Bridger Rd. Ste 102	Employment Agency	iStaffing	Lake Forest	YES
Partial Acquisitions						
616-032-04	Commercial	23971 El Toro Rd	Fast Food	Raising Cane's	Laguna Hills	NO
616-032-08	Commercial	23972 Avenida De La Carlota	Restaurant	Rodrigo's Mexican Grill	Laguna Hills	NO
	Commercial	23952 Avenida De La Carlota	Fast Food	Farmer Boys	Laguna Hills	NO
616-022-03	Quasi-Public Facility	23802 Avenida De La Carlota	Church	St George's Episcopal Church	Laguna Hills	NO
	Quasi-Public Facility	23802 Avenida De La Carlota	Church	Tacos De Birria Estilo Guadalajara	Laguna Hills	NO
	Quasi-Public Facility	23802 Avenida De La Carlota	Church	Pathway School	Laguna Hills	NO
617-185-07	Open Space	N/A	Open Space	N/A	Lake Forest	NO
617-185-08	Public Facility	23782 Cavanaugh Rd.	City Park	Cavanaugh Mini-Park	Lake Forest	NO
616-033-02	Commercial	23811 Bridger Rd	Gas Station	Chevron	Lake Forest	NO
	Commercial	23811 Bridger Rd	Fast Food	Subway	Lake Forest	NO
621-221-02	Commercial	24001 Avenida de la Carlota	Fast Food	In-N-Out Burger	Laguna Hills	NO
	Commercial	24001 Avenida de la Carlota	Restaurant	King's Fish House	Laguna Hills	NO
	Commercial	24001 Avenida de la Carlota	Farmer's Market	Laguna Hills Farmers Market	Laguna Hills	NO
621-051-55	Commercial	24126 Laguna Hills Mall	Vacant	Vacant	Laguna Hills	NO
621-221-04	Commercial	24126 Laguna Hills Mall	Vacant	Vacant	Laguna Hills	NO
616-022-04	Open Space	N/A	Open Space	N/A	Laguna Hills	NO
Temporary Acquisitions ^a						
616-033-04	Commercial	23851 Bridger Rd.	Restaurant	Honeybaked Ham	Lake Forest	NO

Source: Caltrans 2026d.

APN = Assessor's Parcel Number; N/A = not available.

^a A Temporary Acquisition as referred to in the Supplemental Draft (Caltrans 2026d) is a temporary right (such as a temporary easement) that would be acquired for construction purposes including work areas, material storage, and laydown areas. These temporary rights would terminate upon completion of construction and there would be no permanent ownership interest retained by Caltrans after the Project.

Fiscal Conditions

As shown in Table 4.2-4, the City of Irvine generated the greatest amount of property tax and sales tax revenue compared to the other cities within the RSA. The City of Laguna Woods generated the least amount of property tax and sales tax revenue compared to the other cities within the RSA.

Table 4.2-4. Local Government Revenues

Geographic Area	Property Tax Revenue	Sales Tax Revenue
City of Lake Forest	\$27,887,558	\$17,712,071
City of Laguna Hills	\$14,094,582	\$6,363,490
City of Laguna Woods	\$3,739,872	\$1,266,887
City of Irvine	\$101,068,433	\$101,326,079
City of Mission Viejo	\$47,455,034	\$20,529,953
Orange County	\$1,310,012,000	\$169,875,000

Sources: City of Irvine 2024b; City of Laguna Hills 2025d; City of Laguna Woods 2025; City of Lake Forest 2025b; City of Mission Viejo 2025; County of Orange 2025.

Toll Projects

The Project does not involve a tolling facility.

4.2.2 Environmental Consequences

Temporary Impacts

Regional Economy

Build Alternative 1 and Design Variation: Build Alternative 1a

Construction of the Project may directly create new jobs in the local community and larger region. Additionally, spending in the local economy by construction teams may generate additional sales revenue in the community that could lead to new jobs. Therefore, the Project would likely temporarily benefit the regional economy.

Build Alternative 3

Build Alternative 3 would have no temporary impacts on the regional economy because no ground disturbance would be required.

No-Build Alternative

The No-Build Alternative would maintain the current configuration of the I-5/EI Toro interchange within the Project limits. There would be no temporary impacts on the regional economy.

Employment and Income/Business Activity/Fiscal Conditions

Build Alternative 1 and Design Variation: Build Alternative 1a

Businesses not displaced by the Project in the RSA would be able to continue operation throughout Project construction and would continue to support existing employment and income conditions. Construction of the Project is anticipated to take approximately 2.5 to 3 years to complete. The construction work would primarily occur along the I-5 ramps, El Toro Road, and Avenida De La Carlota. During construction, the traveling public may experience temporary delays or even detours on the I-5 mainline or on- and off-ramps within the Project limits. There is also potential for temporary delays or detours on local arterial roads. The temporary delays and detours are not anticipated to cause major disruptions to business patterns, as most of the temporary closures of the freeway mainline, ramps, or local arterials are anticipated to occur primarily during overnight hours to minimize traffic disruptions. Although existing businesses may face temporary inconveniences, including possible temporary loss of customers due to construction-related traffic delays, access to businesses would be maintained at all times throughout Project construction and detour routes would be available.

With implementation of Project Feature **PF-TRA-1**, a TMP would be prepared and executed to minimize potential access effects on local businesses. Strategies that would be discussed and executed as part of the TMP include lane closures, dissemination of public information, maintaining business access, and lane-closure restrictions during holidays and special local events. Although entrances to some commercial areas may be temporarily affected, at least one entrance to each commercial plaza would be maintained during construction, therefore ensuring that access to individual businesses is maintained throughout the construction period. Once construction is completed, access would resume to normal conditions.

As such, the Project would neither severely disrupt business activity in the RSA nor result in substantial loss of sales taxes affecting cities and communities.

Build Alternative 3

Build Alternative 3 would have no temporary impacts on employment and income, business activity, and fiscal conditions.

No-Build Alternative

The No-Build Alternative would maintain the current configuration of the I-5/El Toro interchange within the Project limits. There would be no temporary impacts on employment and income, business activity, and fiscal conditions.

Toll Projects

Build Alternative 1 and Design Variation: Build Alternative 1a and Build Alternative 3

Build Alternative 1 and its design variation (Build Alternative 1a) and Build Alternative 3 would not involve a tolling facility. There would be no temporary impacts related to tolling facilities.

No-Build Alternative

The No-Build Alternative would maintain the current configuration of the I-5/EI Toro interchange within the Project limits. There would be no temporary impacts on tolling facilities.

Permanent Impacts

Regional Economy

Build Alternative 1 and Design Variation: Build Alternative 1a The Project, under Build Alternative 1 and its design variation (Build Alternative 1a), will improve existing and future regional mobility and traffic flow to and from the local street network. In addition, congestion relief on the mainline ramps and local streets will also improve. For Build Alternative 1 and its design variation (Build Alternative 1a), almost all of the study intersections are anticipated to operate at LOS D or better (Caltrans 2026b). In addition, Build Alternative 1 and its design variation (Build Alternative 1a) are anticipated to operate at LOS D or better at three locations during the AM and/or PM peak hour, in comparison to the No-Build (Caltrans 2026b). According to the Supplemental Draft Relocation Impact Report (DRIR) (Caltrans 2026d), businesses to be acquired can be relocated in existing or nearby cities. As a result, it can be seen no changes in the regional (county) economy are anticipated as a result of the I-5/EI Toro Road Interchange Project.

Build Alternative 3

The Project, under Build Alternative 3, would improve existing and future regional mobility and traffic flow to and from the local street network. The majority of the study intersections are anticipated to operate at LOS D or better; however, the number of locations that are anticipated to operate at LOS E or F stays the same as the No-Build Alternative (Caltrans 2026b). Build Alternative 3 would not require acquisition or relocation of any businesses. Therefore, Build Alternative 3 would have no permanent impacts on the regional economy.

No-Build Alternative

The No-Build Alternative would maintain the current configuration of the I-5/EI Toro interchange within the Project limits. There would be no permanent impacts on the regional economy.

Employment and Income/Business Activity/Fiscal Conditions

Build Alternative 1 and Design Variation: Build Alternative 1a

The Project, under Build Alternative 1 and its design variation (Build Alternative 1a), would require permanent full acquisition of 18 commercial properties in the cities of Laguna Hills and Lake Forest and permanent partial acquisition of Cavanaugh Park in Lake Forest. According to the Supplemental DRIR (Caltrans 2026d), displaced businesses can be relocated in the same or a neighboring city. All potential displacements and relocations are expected to result from full acquisitions.

No large businesses or major employers would be displaced or relocated. Relocation of the 18 commercial properties is not anticipated to cause changes to employment or cause employees to travel substantially farther to reach their place of work as displaced businesses can be relocated within their originating city or in a nearby city.

Relocated properties generate both property and sales tax revenue for Orange County. Removal of residences and businesses for a project can result in an initial loss of property and sales tax revenue for local jurisdictions. In most cases, the amount of tax revenue lost would be an insignificant percentage of total revenue unless the proposed project causes the displacement of a major source of sales tax revenue or causes widespread negative property value effects in a community. Also, the loss is often only temporary because displaced homeowners and businesses would resume generation of sales tax revenues and payment of property-related taxes on relocation. However, the original tax revenue-generating property may be permanently taken off the tax rolls and not necessarily replaced by new construction if the stock of available business properties is sufficient. There may be a more important impact if most of the displacees relocate outside the original taxing jurisdiction, or if businesses cease operations altogether. If a project facilitates a substantial amount of growth, property and other tax revenues may increase. In many cases, this could more than offset any revenue losses associated with relocation.

Table 4.2-5 shows the 2025–2026 property taxes for parcels on which the displaced properties are located.

**Table 4.2-5. Affected Property Tax Amounts by Build Alternative 1 and Design Variation:
Built Alternative 1a**

APN	Land Use	Address	2025-2026 Assessed Total Value (\$)	2025-2026 Property Tax (\$)
621-052-04	Commercial	24012 Avenida de la Carlota, Laguna Hills	\$7,774,733	\$79,887.42
616-033-05	Commercial	23811 Bridger Rd, Lake Forest	\$972,547	\$10,015.82

Source: County of Orange 2026.

Displacements as a result of the Project, under Build Alternative 1 and its design variation (Build Alternative 1a), would result in approximately \$89,900 in annual property taxes, based on 2025–2026 property tax information, which would amount to less than 0.1 percent of total property taxes paid to Orange County in fiscal year 2024/2025. As such, the impacts of these relocations are likely to have little effect on the fiscal conditions of Orange County, and their displacement would not result in widespread negative effects on property value or cause a substantial decrease in either County or City annual sales tax totals.

Build Alternative 3

Build Alternative 3 would have no permanent impacts on employment and income, business activity, and fiscal conditions.

No-Build Alternatives

The No-Build Alternative would maintain the current configuration of the I-5/EI Toro interchange within the Project limits. There would be no permanent impacts on employment and income, business activity, and fiscal conditions.

Toll Projects

Build Alternative 1 and Design Variation: Build Alternative 1a and Build Alternative 3
Build Alternative 1 and its design variation (Build Alternative 1a) and Build Alternative 3 would not involve a tolling facility. There would be no permanent impacts related to tolling facilities.

No-Build Alternative

The No-Build Alternative would maintain the current configuration of the I-5/EI Toro interchange within the Project limits. There would be no permanent impacts on tolling facilities.

4.2.3 Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

Project Feature **PF-TRA-1** will be implemented to minimize traffic impacts, delays, and property access during the construction phase.

4.3 COMMUNITY FACILITIES AND SERVICES

Community facilities and services, such as community centers, senior centers, schools, religious centers, and hospitals, are important aspects of neighborhood identity and can be essential resources for the community. This section discusses the existing community facilities and emergency services within the RSA (refer to Figure 6) and evaluates the potential for the Project to create temporary or permanent impacts on these facilities and services.

4.3.1 Affected Environment

Community Facilities

There are 27 community facilities within the RSA, including 10 parks, two trails, one golf course, three places of worship, three schools (including two elementary schools and an early childhood learning center), two post offices, one city hall, one fire station, one hospital, one library, and the Laguna Hills Transportation Center & Park-n-Ride lot. These community facilities are shown in Figure 6 and listed in Table 4.1-6.

Emergency Services

Police Protection

The Orange County Sheriff's Department (OCSD) is responsible for providing law enforcement protection within unincorporated areas of Orange County as well as incorporated cities, including Lake Forest, Laguna Hills, and Laguna Woods, that

contract with OCSD for protection (OCSD n.d.). Law enforcement services include patrol, traffic enforcement, accident analysis and investigation, parking enforcement, special investigations, and a Community Support Unit.

Police services on interstates in California, including I-5, are provided by the California Highway Patrol (CHP). The nearest CHP offices are in the cities of Irvine (6681 Marine Way, Irvine 92618) and San Juan Capistrano (32951 Camino Capistrano, San Juan Capistrano 92675) (CHP 2025).

Fire Protection/Emergency Services

The Project limits are within the cities of Lake Forest, Laguna Woods, and Laguna Hills. Fire services in those cities are provided by the OCFA, a regional fire service agency that serves 23 cities in Orange County and all unincorporated areas. OCFA protects more than 1,984,758 residents with seven divisions and 78 fire stations throughout Orange County (OCFA 2025a). Specifically, OCFA is responsible for fire protection and suppression, inspection services, paramedic emergency medical services, aircraft rescue and firefighting, and hazardous material response (OCFA 2025b). Stations within the vicinity of the Project limits fall within Division 5 and include Station 57 (57 Journey, Aliso Viejo), Station 11 (259 Emerald Bay, Laguna Beach), Station 19 (23022 El Toro Road, Lake Forest), Station 42 (19150 Ridgeline Road, Lake Forest), Station 54 (19811 Pauling Avenue, Lake Forest), Station 22 (24001 Paseo De Valencia, Laguna Hills), Fire Station 5 (23600 Pacific Island Drive, Laguna Niguel), Fire Station 39 (24241 Avila Road, North Laguna Niguel), and Fire Station 49 (31461 Golden Lantern, Laguna Niguel) (OCFA 2025b).

Twenty-one licensed ambulance providers operate within Orange County as part of the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) system (OC Health Care Agency n.d.). Ambulance transport services are handled by privately contracted ambulance providers operating under county EMS system oversight. Emergency services within the RSA are provided primarily through OCFA, which is responsible for paramedic emergency response throughout the jurisdictions.

Overall, EMS and ambulance transport services in the RSA are delivered through a coordinated system involving OCFA paramedic response and contracted private ambulance providers. This structure ensures that the cities of Lake Forest, Laguna Hills, and Laguna Woods maintain access to emergency medical care and ambulance transport services that is consistent with countywide EMS protocols.

Utilities

Existing utility infrastructure within the Project limits is owned and operated by several public and private utility providers. These facilities include water, sewer, natural gas, electrical, telephone, and communication systems that run within roadway rights of way and across adjacent developed parcels. The primary utility owners with facilities in the Project limits are:

- **El Toro Water District (ETWD):** Operates water transmission lines and sewer pipelines throughout the Project area.

- **Southern California Gas (SCG) Company:** Provides natural gas service through underground gas pipelines.
- **Southern California Edison (SCE):** Maintains overhead electrical distribution lines on joint-use poles and underground electrical conduits.
- **American Telephone & Telegraph (AT&T):** Operates underground telephone lines and conduits.
- **Cox Communications:** Provides broadband and fiber-optic service through underground conduits and overhead communication lines on joint-use poles.
- **Irvine Ranch Water District (IRWD):** Owns a regional sewer transmission line that crosses the southern portion of the Project area.

These underground and overhead utility systems are typical of a developed urban interchange area and located within public rights of way or along the edges of adjacent commercial parcels. Several utilities intersect or run parallel to the Project improvements and may require protection, relocation, or adjustment under the Build Alternatives.

4.3.2 Environmental Consequences

4.3.2.1 Temporary Impacts

Community Facilities

Build Alternative 1 and Design Variation: Build Alternative 1a

Build Alternative 1 and its design variation (Build Alternative 1a) would have direct temporary impacts to two community facilities, Cavanaugh Park (23782 Cavanaugh Road, Lake Forest) and St. George's Episcopal Parish/Church (23802 Avenida De La Carlota, Laguna Hills).

Cavanaugh Park

Build Alternative 1 and its design variation (Build Alternative 1a) would require temporary use of Cavanaugh Park during construction of the Project. Build Alternatives 1 and 1a would temporarily use approximately 0.5 acre of the park, requiring TCEs to support access and staging during construction activities (see Figure 5). The half basketball court, playground equipment, picnic table, and portions of the open grass area would be temporarily unavailable for public use during construction. Field visits were conducted between June and October 2025 to observe the types of activities and number of people frequenting the park. The following Project features would be implemented to minimize temporary impacts to Cavanaugh Park during the construction phase: Project Features **PF-TRA-1**, **PF-CI-1**, **PF-CI-2**, and **PF-N-1**. With the implementation of these Project features, temporary impacts on Cavanaugh Park would be minimal and Caltrans has made a preliminary *de minimis* determination. Prior to finalizing the EIR/EA and Supplemental Section 4(f) documentation, a request will be sent to the City of Lake Forest for concurrence on the *de minimis* determination.

St. George's Episcopal Parish/Church

Build Alternative 1 and its design variation (Build Alternative 1a) would require a TCE of approximately 6,459 square feet from St. George's Episcopal Parish/Church during construction of the Project. Approximately 10 parking spots would be temporarily affected during construction. Access to the church and its facilities would be maintained during construction; therefore, operation of the church is not anticipated to be affected. The property has abundant parking, and the few spaces affected during construction are not anticipated to substantially affect church operations. The few parking spaces affected by the TCE during construction would be restored once construction activities conclude at the property.

Other community facilities adjacent to the Project limits would also experience temporary construction impacts, such as an increase in noise, dust, and air pollution from the use of construction equipment. Standard construction measures would be implemented to minimize air quality impacts, such as Project Features **PF-AQ-1** and **PF-AQ-2**. Construction activities would adhere to local noise ordinances and Project Feature **PF-N-1** so that any noise nuisance to adjacent community facilities would be minimized.

Build Alternative 1 and its design variation (Build Alternative 1a) would involve construction activities that require temporary lane closures, rerouting of traffic, and other traffic-related activities. Traffic-related impacts would be minimized by providing alternative access points with implementation of Project Feature **PF-TRA-1**. All TCEs required for construction would be restored to the condition in which they were originally found, where feasible. Property access to businesses would be maintained at all times during construction so as to not impede patrons from visiting businesses.

Build Alternative 3

Build Alternative 3 would have no temporary impacts on community facilities because no ground disturbance would be required.

No-Build Alternative

The No-Build Alternative would maintain the current configuration of the I-5/EI Toro interchange within the Project limits. There would be no temporary impacts on community facilities.

Emergency Services

Build Alternative 1 and Design Variation: Build Alternative 1a

Construction of Build Alternative 1 and its design variation (Build Alternative 1a) would temporarily affect overall traffic circulation, as well as pedestrian and bicycle access, within and around the Project segment of I-5. These effects would result from short-term closures of mainline freeway lanes, on- and off-ramps, and local arterial roadways, which could cause short-term delays for emergency responders. Although detour routes would allow traffic flow, the temporary closures would result in increased travel times and delays. Such delays have the potential to temporarily affect emergency response times for fire, paramedic, and law-enforcement services that rely on I-5 and adjacent

arterials for regional and local access. However, closures and detours would be phased and coordinated with local jurisdictions and emergency service providers to maintain access and minimize disruption. This would be addressed by implementation of Project Features **PF-UES-1** and **PF-UES-2**. With implementation of these features, temporary construction-related impacts on emergency response would be minimized.

Additional details regarding the proposed closures and traffic management measures are provided in Chapter 5, *Traffic and Transportation/Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities*.

Build Alternative 3

Build Alternative 3 would have no temporary impacts on emergency services because no ground disturbance would be required.

No-Build Alternative

The No-Build Alternative would maintain the current configuration of the I-5/EI Toro interchange within the Project limits. There would be no temporary impacts on emergency services.

Utilities

Build Alternative 1 and Design Variation: Build Alternative 1a

Construction of Build Alternative 1 and its design variation (Build Alternative 1a) would affect existing overhead and underground utility facilities, which could require protection in place, removal, replacement, or relocation. As shown in Table 4.3-1, communication lines, water lines, telephone conduits, and electrical utilities would need to be relocated for Build Alternative 1.

Under Build Alternative 1 and its design variation (Build Alternative 1a), approximately 18 facilities would be relocated, four would be protected in place, and two would be removed or abandoned. The status of remaining utilities would be confirmed and resolved during the Plans, Specifications, & Estimates (PS&E) phase.

An updated utility search would be conducted during the final design phase of Build Alternative 1 and its design variation (Build Alternative 1a) to identify utilities requiring protection in place, removal, or relocation. Table 4.3-1 identifies which conflicts would be resolved during the PS&E phase, with final utility coordination occurring during the construction phase. Construction may result in temporary service disruptions for some utility users in the vicinity of the Project; however, such impacts would be minimized through implementation of Project Feature **PF-UES-3**.

Table 4.3-1. Existing Utilities: Potential Conflicts and Recommended Resolutions for Build Alternative 1 and Design Variation: Build Alternative 1a

Utility ID No.	Utility Owner	Utility Type	Location	Utility Conflict Description	Recommended Action or Resolution
1-03	SCE	UG electrical conduit (12 kV)	El Toro Road SB on-ramp	Potential conflict near proposed ROW line; exact horizontal/vertical location unknown	Conduct PS&E potholing to verify location and depth; determine final resolution during design
1-04	SCE	UG electrical conduit (12 kV)	Avenida De La Carlota	Inside new ROW; conflict with policy	Relocate or request encroachment/utility policy exception (EEP)
1-05	SCE	Electrical manhole (12 kV)	El Toro Road SB on-ramp	Inside new ROW; conflict with policy	Relocate or request encroachment/utility policy exception (EEP)
1-06	ETWD	Water (42 inches)	Avenida De La Carlota	Potential conflict near proposed ROW line; exact horizontal/vertical location unknown	Conduct PS&E potholing to verify location and depth; determine final resolution during design
1-07	ETWD	Water (42 inches)	Avenida De La Carlota	Inside new ROW; conflict with policy	Relocate or request encroachment/utility policy exception (EEP)
1-08	AT&T	UG telephone conduit	Avenida De La Carlota	Potential conflict near proposed ROW line; exact horizontal/vertical location unknown	Conduct PS&E potholing to verify location and depth; determine final resolution during design
1-09	AT&T	UG telephone conduit	El Toro Road SB on-ramp	Inside new ROW; conflict with policy	Relocate or request encroachment/utility policy exception (EEP)
2-01	SCE	UG electrical conduit (12 kV)	Avenida De La Carlota	Inside new ROW; conflict with policy	Relocate or request encroachment/utility policy exception (EEP)
2-02	SCE	Electrical manhole (12 kV)	Avenida De La Carlota	Inside new ROW; conflict with policy	Relocate or request encroachment/utility policy exception (EEP)

Utility ID No.	Utility Owner	Utility Type	Location	Utility Conflict Description	Recommended Action or Resolution
2-03	SCE	Electrical manhole (12 kV)	Avenida De La Carlota	Inside new ROW; conflict with policy	Relocate or request encroachment/utility policy exception (EEP)
2-04	SCE	UG electrical conduit (12 kV)	Avenida De La Carlota	Near proposed ROW line; exact location unknown	Conduct PS&E potholing to verify location and depth; determine final resolution during design
2-05	ETWD	Water (42 inches)	Avenida De La Carlota	Inside new ROW; conflict with policy	Relocate or request encroachment/utility policy exception (EEP)
2-06	ETWD	Water (42 inches)	Avenida De La Carlota	Near proposed ROW line; exact location unknown	Conduct PS&E potholing to verify location and depth; determine final resolution during design
2-07	AT&T	UG telephone conduit	Avenida De La Carlota	Inside new ROW; conflict with policy	Relocate or request encroachment/utility policy exception (EEP)
2-08	AT&T	UG telephone conduit	Avenida De La Carlota	Near proposed ROW line; exact location unknown	Conduct PS&E potholing to verify location and depth; determine final resolution during design
2-09	ETWD	Sewer (8 inches)	Avenida De La Carlota	Conflict with roadway widening; within Project footprint	Remove
2-11	AT&T	Telephone conduit (4 inches)	Avenida De La Carlota	Conflict with acquisition	Abandon and remove
2-12	AT&T	Telephone conduit (4 inches)	Avenida De La Carlota	Conflict with widening; portion within new ROW	Relocate
2-13	AT&T	Telephone conduit (4 inches)	Avenida De La Carlota	Conflict with widening; portion within new ROW	Relocate
2-14	AT&T	Telephone conduit (4 inches)	Avenida De La Carlota	Near proposed ROW line; exact location unknown	Conduct PS&E potholing to verify location and depth; determine final resolution during design

Utility ID No.	Utility Owner	Utility Type	Location	Utility Conflict Description	Recommended Action or Resolution
2-15	AT&T	Telephone conduit (4 inches)	Avenida De La Carlota	Near proposed ROW line; exact location unknown	Conduct PS&E potholing to verify location and depth; determine final resolution during design
4-03	SCG	Natural gas (3 inches)	Avenida De La Carlota	Exact location unknown; potential conflict near ADA ramp	Conduct PS&E potholing to verify location and depth; remain in place
4-11	SCE	Street lighting conduit	Bridger Road	Conflict with new cul de sac on Bridger Road	Relocate
4-12	SCE	Street lighting conduit	Bridger Road	Conflict with new cul de sac on Bridger Road	Relocate
4-13	ETWD	Water (8 inches)	Bridger Road	Potential conflict near cul de sac; exact location unknown	Conduct PS&E potholing to verify location and depth; remain in place
4-14	SCE	UG conduit (12kV)	Bridger Road	Potential conflict near cul de sac; exact location unknown	Conduct PS&E potholing to verify location and depth; remain in place
4-15	SCG	Natural gas (3 inches)	Bridger Road	Potential conflict near cul-de-sac; exact location unknown	Conduct PS&E potholing to verify location and depth; remain in place
4-16	SCE/Cox	OH electric (12 kV)/OH communications	NB I-5	Conflict with roadway widening	Relocate
4-17	SCE	Electrical pole	NB I-5	Conflict with roadway widening	Relocate
4-18	SCE	Electrical pole	NB I-5	Conflict with roadway widening	Relocate
4-19	SCE	Electrical pole	NB I-5	Conflict with roadway widening	Relocate
4-20	SCE	Electrical pole	NB I-5	Conflict with roadway widening	Relocate

Source: Caltrans 2025b, 2025c.

ADA = Americans with Disabilities Act; AT&T = American Telephone & Telegraph; Cox = Cox Communications; EEP = encroachment/utility policy exception; ETWD = El Toro Water District; kV = kilovolt; NB = northbound; OH = overhead; PS&E = Plans, Specifications, & Estimates; ROW = right of way; SB = southbound; SCE = Southern California Edison; SCG = Southern California Gas; UG = underground.

Build Alternative 3

Build Alternative 3 would have no temporary impacts on utilities because no ground disturbance would be required.

No-Build Alternative

The No-Build Alternative would maintain the current configuration of the I-5/EI Toro interchange within the Project limits. There would be no temporary impacts on utilities.

4.3.2.2 Permanent Impacts

Community Facilities

Build Alternative 1 and Design Variation: Build Alternative 1a

Cavanaugh Park

The Project, under Build Alternative 1 and its design variation (Build Alternative 1a), would require permanent use of approximately 0.59 acre from Cavanaugh Park to accommodate the proposed northbound I-5 on-ramp improvements and to construct a new noise barrier to reduce traffic noise along I-5, adjacent to Cavanaugh Park.

The permanent use of approximately 0.59 acre of Cavanaugh Park is less than 10 percent of the park's total acreage. The use would require the removal of the half basketball court, playground, and picnic table as well as some of the park's open space along I-5, as shown in Figure 5. The Project proposes to incorporate Avoidance and Minimization Measures **LU-4 (Section 4f-1)** and **LU-5 (Section 4f-2)**, which would require replacement of park facilities/features similar to those that are being removed in coordination with the City of Lake Forest. In addition, public outreach would be conducted during the design phase of Cavanaugh Park to seek the community's input on the type of park facilities/features that are preferred for replacement. While Caltrans proposes to relocate and install new park facilities, Caltrans would compensate the City for the replaced and relocated park facilities and park acreage acquired for the Project in accordance with the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended (Avoidance and Minimization Measure **REL-1**).

For any visual impacts that may occur due to the partial acquisition, an Architectural Design Review Team consisting of local representatives and Caltrans District 12 Landscape Architecture would ensure that proposed architectural treatments comply with aesthetic requirements of the City of Lake Forest and that any replacement of park facilities would provide the same—if not improved visual quality—to the community compared to the existing park facilities. In addition, the Project would include the preservation of existing landscaping (Avoidance and Minimization Measure **VIS-1**) and replacement landscaping (Avoidance and Minimization Measure **VIS-2**).

With the implementation of these measures, permanent impacts to Cavanaugh Park would be minimal and Caltrans has made a preliminary *de minimis* determination. Prior to finalizing the EIR/EA and Supplemental Section 4(f) documentation, a request will be sent to the City of Lake Forest for concurrence on the *de minimis* determination.

The City of Lake Forest is currently in the process of revitalizing Cavanaugh Park, with construction anticipated to begin in early 2027. If the City of Lake Forest project moves forward ahead of the Caltrans Project, the impacts outlined above would be reduced because relocation of the affected facilities would no longer be necessary. Caltrans will continue to coordinate with the City of Lake Forest regarding the timing for both projects.

St. George's Episcopal Parish/Church

The Project, under Build Alternative 1 and its design variation (Build Alternative 1a), would require permanent partial acquisition of 1,855 square feet from St. George's Episcopal Parish/Church, which would include the loss of approximately 10 permanent parking spaces. No acquisition of building facilities would be required. The permanent partial acquisition area of the property would not inhibit use of the remaining portion of the property or impact church operation activities. All acquisition activities would be conducted in accordance with the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended (Avoidance and Minimization Measure **REL-1**).

Build Alternative 3

Build Alternative 3 would have no permanent impacts on community facilities because no ground disturbance would be required.

No-Build Alternative

The No-Build Alternative would maintain the current configuration of the I-5/EI Toro interchange within the Project limits. There would be no permanent impacts on community facilities.

Emergency Services

Build Alternative 1 and Design Variation: Build Alternative 1a

After Project completion, operational improvements are expected to reduce congestion within the I-5/EI Toro Road interchange area, which could improve emergency response times. Because Build Alternative 1 and its design variation (Build Alternative 1a) would not induce growth or increase residential development, there would be no change in demand for emergency services.

Build Alternative 3

Build Alternative 3 would not alter roadway geometry or access and would not result in permanent impacts on emergency services. Improvements to intersection operations may reduce delay, which could benefit emergency responders because of reduced travel times within the Project area.

No-Build Alternative

No improvements to this interchange are proposed under the No-Build Alternative, leaving the interchange in its current configuration. The No-Build Alternative would not result in permanent impacts on emergency services. However, the response times of emergency service providers (e.g., police, fire, and emergency services) could be affected by projected freeway congestion associated with future No-Build conditions.

Utilities

Build Alternative 1 and Design Variation: Build Alternative 1a

As described under temporary impacts, existing surface or subsurface utility facilities would be protected in place, removed, or relocated during construction. All existing utility facilities are anticipated to be maintained during operation of Build Alternative 1 and its design variation (Build Alternative 1a). Therefore, Build Alternative 1 and its design variation (Build Alternative 1a) would not result in permanent adverse effects on utility providers or their facilities.

Build Alternative 3

Build Alternative 3 would not involve physical modifications to roadway facilities and would not require the relocation of utilities. Therefore, no permanent impacts on utility infrastructure or service providers are anticipated, and existing utility facilities and service conditions would be maintained.

No-Build Alternative

No improvements to this interchange are proposed under the No-Build Alternative, leaving the interchange in its current configuration. The No-Build Alternative would not result in permanent impacts on utilities.

4.3.3 Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

The Project will implement Project Features **PF-TRA-1**, **PF-CI-1**, **PF-CI-2**, **PF-N-1**, **PF-AQ-1** and **PF-AQ-2** and Avoidance and Minimization Measures **LU-4 (Section 4f-1)**, **LU-5 (Section 4f-2)**, and **REL-1** for impacts to community facilities associated with Cavanaugh Park and St. George's Episcopal Parish/Church. The following Project features will be implemented for the Project to address temporary construction impacts on utilities and emergency services.

- PF-UES-1:** All temporary closures and detour plans would be coordinated with law enforcement, fire protection, and emergency medical service providers to minimize temporary delays in emergency response. This includes the identification of alternate routes for emergency vehicles, with routes across the construction areas developed in coordination with the affected agencies.
- PF-UES-2:** To ensure that emergency response times are not disrupted, OCSD and OCFA will be informed of the Project construction schedule, lane closures (if any), and detour plans well in advance of any lane closure or detour plan being implemented throughout the construction period.
- PF-UES-3:** During final design, utility relocation plans for those utilities that will need to be relocated, removed, or protected in place will be prepared in consultation with the affected utility relocation providers/owners. If relocation is necessary, the final design will focus on relocating utilities within the state right of way or other existing public right of way and/or easement. If relocation outside of an existing right of way or additional public right of way and/or easement is required for the Project, the final design will focus on

relocating those facilities to minimize environmental impacts as a result of Project construction and ongoing maintenance and repair activities. The utility relocation plans will be included in the Project specifications.

Prior to and during construction, the construction contractor will implement components of the relocation plans provided in the Project specifications.

Prior to utility relocation activities, the Resident Engineer will coordinate with affected utility providers regarding potential utility relocations and inform affected utility users in advance of the date and timing of potential service disruptions.

4.4 RELOCATIONS AND REAL PROPERTY ACQUISITION

This section includes an evaluation of the Project's requirement for the relocation of businesses, the replacement areas that have been identified for displacees, and the indirect effects from relocations, such as changes in employment and clientele resulting from business relocations. In addition, this section includes a summary of other environmental impacts that could result from real property acquisitions, such as impacts on existing land use and psychological and economic effects on populations. Other sections of this document are referenced for further information about impacts.

Caltrans would ensure that proposed Project displacees do not suffer disproportionate impacts resulting from projects designed to benefit the public, in accordance with the Federal Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended, and the California Relocation Act.

The Supplemental DRIR (Caltrans 2026d) provides a detailed description of property acquisitions and relocations for the Project. The findings of the Supplemental DRIR (Caltrans 2026d) are summarized in this section. Residential relocations (households) are not anticipated, however commercial parcels will be acquired, and businesses will need to be relocated.

4.4.1 Affected Environment

A general characterization of the RSA as a whole has been discussed in detail in Section 4.1, *Population, Community Character and Housing*, through Section 4.3, *Community Facilities and Services*. Please refer to those sections for a detailed overview of the affected environment.

4.4.1.1 Potential Right of Way Acquisitions

The Project, under Build Alternative 1 and its design variation (Build Alternative 1a), would require two full property acquisitions, nine partial property acquisitions, and temporary construction easements from nine properties, as summarized in Table 4.4-1 and Table 4.4-2. Build Alternative 3 would not require any property acquisitions.

4.4.1.2 Displacement and Replacement Area

As discussed in Section 4.2, *Economic Conditions* and shown in Table 4.2-3, Table 4.4-1 and Table 4.4-2, Build Alternative 1 and its design variation (Build Alternative 1a) is anticipated to require two full parcel acquisitions (APNs 621-052-04 and 616-033-05) that could result in 18 non-residential displacements consisting of 7 retail and 11 service businesses. The potential displacements would occur in the cities of Laguna Hills and

Table 4.4-1. Potential Right of Way Acquisitions under Build Alternative 1

Parcel ^a	Property Owner	Assessor Parcel Number (APN)	Property Name	Full Acquisition (sq ft)	Partial Acquisition (sq ft)	Temporary Construction Easement (sq ft)
1	MGP Fund X Laguna Hills LLC	621-221-26	In-n-Out Burger	-	21,763	8,070
2	Laguna Hills Restaurants LLC	616-032-08	Farmer Boys Restaurant	-	1,540	960
		616-032-09	Rodrigo's Mexican Grill	-	2,707	1,495
3	City of Lake Forest	617-185-07	Community Park/Open Space	-	19,726	14,414
		617-185-08	Cavanaugh Park Playground	-	6,794	4,381
		617-451-03	Community Park/Open Space	-	-	2,697
4	Laguna Hills Restaurants LLC	621-051-55	Laguna Hills Mall – Parking	-	865	238
		621-221-30	Laguna Hills Mall – Parking	-	36,725	7,483
5	Laguna Hills Restaurants LLC	621-221-04	Firestone	-	18,009	22,210
6	CGT Group L.P.	616-033-04	Honey Baked Ham	-	-	190
7	Bridger Investment Co.	616-033-05	Miscellaneous Businesses	33,284 ^b	-	-
8	SWI Investors LLC	621-052-04	Miscellaneous Businesses	32,684 ^b	-	-
9	Lake 5 LLC	616-033-02	Chevron/Subway	-	467	-
10	K Ishii Paseo La Cresta LLC	616-032-04	Raising Cane's	-	4,271	2,018
11	City of Laguna Hills	616-022-04	City of Laguna Hills	-	667	1,691
12	Protestant Episcopal in the Diocese Church	616-022-03	St. George's Episcopal Church	-	1,855	6,459
Total square footage				65,968	115,389	72,306
Total acreage				1.51	2.65	1.66
Total parcels ^a				2	9	9

sq ft = square feet.

^a A *parcel* is defined as APNs having the same ownership and the same use. In addition, the APNs are contiguous to each other.

^b Parcel requiring full acquisition will require relocation of businesses.

Table 4.4-2. Potential Right of Way Acquisitions under Design Variation: Build Alternative 1a

Parcel ^a	Property Owner	Assessor Parcel Number (APN)	Property Name	Full Acquisition (sq ft)	Partial Acquisition (sq ft)	Temporary Construction Easement (sq ft)
1	MGP Fund X Laguna Hills LLC	621-221-26	In-n-Out Burger	-	22,660	8,666
2	Laguna Hills Restaurants LLC	616-032-08	Farmer Boys Restaurant	-	1,540	960
		616-032-09	Rodrigo's Mexican Grill	-	2,707	1,495
3	City of Lake Forest	617-185-07	Community Park/Open Space	-	19,726	14,414
		617-185-08	Cavanaugh Park Playground	-	6,794	4,381
		617-451-03	Community Park/Open Space	-	-	2,697
4	Laguna Hills Restaurants LLC	621-051-55	Laguna Hills Mall – Parking	-	865	238
		621-221-30	Laguna Hills Mall – Parking	-	45,643	9,133
5	Laguna Hills Restaurants LLC	621-221-04	Firestone	-	18,009	22,210
6	CGT Group L.P.	616-033-04	Honey Baked Ham	-	-	190
7	Bridger Investment Co.	616-033-05	Miscellaneous Businesses	33,284 ^b	-	-
8	SWI Investors LLC	621-052-04	Miscellaneous Businesses	32,684 ^b	-	-
9	Lake 5 LLC	616-033-02	Chevron/Subway	-	467	-
10	K Ishii Paseo La Cresta LLC	616-032-04	Raising Cane's	-	4,271	2,018
11	City of Laguna Hills	616-022-04	City of Laguna Hills	-	667	1,691
12	Protestant Episcopal in the Diocese Church	616-022-03	St. George's Episcopal Church	-	1,855	6,459
Total square footage				65,968	125,204	74,552
Total acreage				1.51	2.87	1.71
Total parcels ^a				2	9	9

sq ft = square feet.

^a A *parcel* is defined as APNs having the same ownership and the same use. In addition, the APNs are contiguous to each other.

^b Parcel requiring full acquisition will require relocation of businesses.

Lake Forest; therefore, those cities were identified as the displacement area. All available units for sale and for lease within three miles of the Project limits were included as potential replacement sites where displaced businesses would likely find replacement properties (e.g., sites to which affected businesses may relocate). These replacement sites are within the cities of Lake Forest, Laguna Hills, Laguna Woods, Mission Viejo, Aliso Viejo, and Irvine. The Project is not expected to require the displacement or relocation of any residences.

4.4.2 Environmental Consequences

4.4.2.1 Build Alternative 1 and Design Variation: Build Alternative 1a

Build Alternative 1 and its design variation (Build Alternative 1a) would have 18 non-residential displacement properties consisting of 7 retail and 11 service businesses due to the full acquisitions of APNs 621-052-04 and 616-033-05 that are strip commercial properties. Each of the 18 businesses has between 1 and 20 employees.

Characteristics of the non-residential properties requiring relocation under Build Alternative 1 and its design variation (Build Alternative 1a) (i.e., age of the business/property and estimated number of employees) would be confirmed after site surveys and owner/occupant interviews are conducted during the Plans, Specifications, and Estimates phase of the Project.

Table 4.4-3 provides a summary of the total number of comparable replacement properties available for displaced non-residential properties. Table 4.4-4 and Table 4.4-5 provides a list of comparable properties available for lease and for sale, respectively, within 3 miles of the Project limits that are based on current real estate listings as of March 2025.

Table 4.4-3. Summary of Relocation Resources Available

	For Lease (Commercial Retail Property)	For Sale (Commercial Retail Property)	Total Sites
Lake Forest	26 sites	0 sites	26
Laguna Hills	25 sites	9 sites	34
Laguna Woods	3 sites	2 sites	5
Mission Viejo	15 sites	1 sites	16
Aliso Viejo	11 sites	3 sites	14
Irvine	3 sites	2 sites	5

Source: Caltrans 2026d.

Table 4.4-4. List of Comparable Commercial Properties for Lease

Property Type	Business Category	Property Address	City	Total Available Space (sq ft)	Rent/Sq Ft/Yr
Retail (Neighborhood Center)	N/A	24000 Alicia Pkwy	Mission Viejo	8,786	\$62.04
Retail (Power Center)	Storefront Retail/Office	26711 Aliso Creek Road	Aliso Viejo	3,790	\$23.40
Retail (Strip Center)	Storefront	21212 Bake Pkwy	Lake Forest	1,269	\$54.60
Retail (Community Center)	Storefront	23602-23720 El Toro Road	Lake Forest	3,500	\$33.00
Retail (Neighborhood Center)	Storefront Retail/Office	23731 El Toro Road	Lake Forest	1,517	\$47.40
Retail (Neighborhood Center)	Storefront	24270 El Toro Road	Laguna Hills	6,490	\$42.00 - 45.00
Retail (Strip Center)	Retail Building	24381 El Toro Road	Laguna Woods	1,826	\$37.20
Retail (Neighborhood Center)	Restaurant	25571 Jeronimo Road	Mission Viejo	918	\$32.64
Retail (Neighborhood Center)	Freestanding	23762-23822 Mercury Road	Lake Forest	1,792	\$28.20
Retail (Neighborhood Center)	N/A	23572-23582 Moulton Pkwy	Laguna Woods	1,403	\$33.00
Retail (Neighborhood Center)	Storefront	24602 Raymond Way	Lake Forest	2,535	\$27.00 - 27.60
Retail (Lifestyle Center)	Freestanding	23461 Ridge Route Drive	Laguna Hills	10,613	\$20.40
Retail (Strip Center)	Retail Building	24401 Ridge Route Drive	Laguna Hills	3,071	\$28.20
Retail (Strip Center)	N/A	23591 Rockfield Blvd	Lake Forest	1,334	\$43.80
Retail (Neighborhood Center)	N/A	25431-25435 Trabuco Road	Lake Forest	1,128	\$39.00
Retail (Neighborhood Center)	Storefront	24001 Via Fabricante	Mission Viejo	1,728	\$23.40
Retail (Strip Center)	N/A	23681 Via Linda	Mission Viejo	3,100	\$42.00
Retail (Neighborhood Center)	Storefront	24801-24901 Alicia Pkwy	Laguna Hills	4,165	\$23.63 - 28.88 (Est.)
Retail (Neighborhood Center)	Supermarket	25594-25630 Alicia Pkwy	Laguna Hills	3,000	\$49.41 - 60.39 (Est.)

Property Type	Business Category	Property Address	City	Total Available Space (sq ft)	Rent/Sq Ft/Yr
Retail (Power Center)	Restaurant	26641 Aliso Creek Road	Aliso Viejo	7,914	\$57.61 - 70.42 (Est.)
Retail (Power Center)	Storefront Retail/Office	26831 Aliso Creek Road	Aliso Viejo	3,855	\$33.52 - 40.97 (Est.)
Retail	Storefront Retail/Office	23411 Aliso Viejo Pkwy	Aliso Viejo	1,200	\$47.28 - 57.79 (Est.)
Retail (Power Center)	Freestanding	25322 El Paseo Road	Laguna Hills	35,674	\$31.66 - 38.70 (Est.)
Retail (Neighborhood Center)	N/A	22335-22347 El Toro Road	Lake Forest	3,900	\$38.70 - 47.30 (Est.)
Retail (Neighborhood Center)	N/A	23330-23366 El Toro Road	Lake Forest	2,800	\$46.99 - 57.44 (Est.)
Retail	Freestanding	25250 La Paz Road	Laguna Hills	4,145	\$46.74 - 57.13 (Est.)
Retail (Strip Center)	Storefront Retail/Office	25912 La Paz Road	Laguna Hills	4,898	\$47.46 - 58.01 (Est.)
Retail (Neighborhood Center)	Restaurant	22641 Lake Forest Drive	Lake Forest	1,318	\$34.09 - 41.67 (Est.)
Retail (Neighborhood Center)	Storefront	23052 Lake Forest Drive	Laguna Hills	3,648	\$25.36 - 31.00 (Est.)
Retail (Community Center)	Storefront	25292 McIntyre Street	Laguna Hills	6,200	\$30.90 - 37.77 (Est.)
Retail (Neighborhood Center)	Retail Building	23535-23701 Moulton Pkwy	Laguna Hills	47,028	\$29.48 - 36.03 (Est.)
Retail (Neighborhood Center)	N/A	26534 Moulton Pkwy	Laguna Hills	3,113	\$32.53 - 39.76 (Est.)
Retail	Restaurant	25872 Muirlands Blvd	Mission Viejo	2,800	Not Disclosed
Retail	Restaurant	25872 Muirlands Blvd	Mission Viejo	2,800	\$73.71 - 90.09 (Est.)
Retail (Neighborhood Center)	Storefront	23600 Rockfield Blvd	Lake Forest	2,067	\$31.36 - 38.32 (Est.)
Retail (Neighborhood Center)	Health Club	8697 Irvine Center Drive	Irvine	1,425	\$27.00
Retail (Neighborhood Center)	Storefront	25565 Jeronimo Road	Mission Viejo	1,600	\$33.00
Retail (Community Center)	Freestanding	26852 La Paz Road	Aliso Viejo	2,000	\$60.00
Retail	Fast Food	22851 Lake Forest Drive	Lake Forest	2,378	\$36.00
Retail (Neighborhood Center)	Storefront	23166 Los Alisos Blvd	Mission Viejo	14,314	\$24.00

Property Type	Business Category	Property Address	City	Total Available Space (sq ft)	Rent/Sq Ft/Yr
Retail (Neighborhood Center)	N/A	24251-24271 Muirlands Blvd	Lake Forest	4,662	\$27.00 - 36.00
Retail (Community Center)	N/A	24366 Muirlands Blvd	Lake Forest	1,200	\$39.96
Retail	Auto Dealership	9829 Research Drive	Irvine	21,478	\$23.40
Retail (Neighborhood Center)	Storefront	24001 Via Fabricante	Mission Viejo	1,728	\$23.40
Retail	Restaurant	23641 Via Linda	Mission Viejo	4,620	\$43.20
Retail (Community Center)	Storefront	23626 El Toro Road	Lake Forest	1,214	\$42.00
Retail (Community Center)	N/A	23700 El Toro Road	Lake Forest	2,390	\$39.00
Retail (Neighborhood Center)	Storefront Retail/Office	23962 Alicia Pkwy	Mission Viejo	3,232	\$33.07 - 40.42 (Est.)
Retail (Neighborhood Center)	Storefront	24881 Alicia Pkwy	Laguna Hills	1,000	\$35.97 - 43.96 (Est.)
Retail (Neighborhood Center)	Freestanding	25461 Alicia Pkwy	Laguna Hills	2,400	\$28.41 - 34.73 (Est.)
Retail (Power Center)	Restaurant	26601 Aliso Creek Road	Aliso Viejo	1,400	\$48.54 - 59.33 (Est.)
Retail (Power Center)	Restaurant	26611 Aliso Creek Road	Aliso Viejo	4,145	\$47.77 - 58.38 (Est.)
Retail (Power Center)	Restaurant	26631 Aliso Creek Road	Aliso Viejo	6,180	\$46.72 - 57.10 (Est.)
Retail (Power Center)	Storefront Retail/Office	26731 Aliso Creek Road	Aliso Viejo	1,459	\$41.97 - 51.30 (Est.)
Retail (Lifestyle Center)	Freestanding	23301 Avenida de la Carlota	Laguna Hills	6,904	\$24.82 - 30.33 (Est.)
Retail (Lifestyle Center)	Storefront Retail/Office	23501 Avenida de la Carlota	Laguna Hills	15,510	\$22.73 - 27.78 (Est.)
Retail (Neighborhood Center)	Storefront	24261-24291 Avenida De La Carlota	Laguna Hills	5,550	\$39.13 - 47.82 (Est.)
Retail (Neighborhood Center)	Restaurant	24301 Avenida De La Carlota	Laguna Hills	9,500	\$37.54 - 45.88 (Est.)
Retail (Neighborhood Center)	Storefront	24321 Avenida De La Carlota	Laguna Hills	515	\$38.70 - 47.30 (Est.)
Retail	N/A	25202-25272 Cabot Road	Laguna Hills	2,400	\$35.14 - 42.95 (Est.)
Retail	Freestanding	25732 El Paseo	Mission Viejo	34,912	\$31.86 - 38.93 (Est.)

Property Type	Business Category	Property Address	City	Total Available Space (sq ft)	Rent/Sq Ft/Yr
Retail (Neighborhood Center)	Freestanding	22421-22485 El Toro Road	Lake Forest	3,750	\$37.40 - 45.71 (Est.)
Retail (Neighborhood Center)	N/A	23645 El Toro Road	Lake Forest	1,200	\$36.70 - 44.86 (Est.)
Retail (Strip Center)	Retail Building	24365 El Toro Road	Laguna Woods	1,826	\$37.66 - 46.04 (Est.)
Retail	Freestanding	26131 La Paz Road	Mission Viejo	3,518	\$56.88 - 69.52 (Est.)
Retail (Community Center)	Storefront	26876-26892 La Paz Road	Aliso Viejo	1,185	\$45.22 - 55.27 (Est.)
Retail (Neighborhood Center)	N/A	16163 Lake Forest Drive	Irvine	2,000	\$33.79 - 41.29 (Est.)
Retail (Community Center)	N/A	21731 Lake Forest Drive	Lake Forest	1,105	\$38.33 - 46.84 (Est.)
Retail (Community Center)	Storefront	21751-21771 Lake Forest Drive	Lake Forest	1,190	\$29.57 - 36.15 (Est.)
Retail (Community Center)	N/A	21791 Lake Forest Drive	Lake Forest	3,867	\$33.69 - 41.18 (Est.)
Retail (Neighborhood Center)	N/A	22611-22619 Lake Forest Drive	Lake Forest	1,475	\$33.31 - 40.72 (Est.)
Retail (Neighborhood Center)	Restaurant	23000 Lake Forest Drive	Laguna Hills	5,852	\$44.65 - 54.57 (Est.)
Retail (Community Center)	Storefront	25252 McIntyre Street	Laguna Hills	13,260	\$33.51 - 40.96 (Est.)
Retail (Neighborhood Center)	N/A	26548 Moulton Pkwy	Laguna Hills	1,688	\$40.70 - 49.74 (Est.)
Retail (Neighborhood Center)	N/A	26562 Moulton Pkwy	Laguna Hills	2,326	\$37.36 - 45.67 (Est.)
Retail (Neighborhood Center)	N/A	24331 Muirlands Blvd	Lake Forest	2,280	\$33.90 - 41.44 (Est.)
Retail	Drug Store	25511 Muirlands Blvd	Mission Viejo	13,013	\$33.47 - 40.91 (Est.)
Retail (Neighborhood Center)	N/A	23900-24049 Paseo De Valencia	Laguna Hills	3,200	\$41.17 - 50.32 (Est.)
Retail (Strip Center)	Storefront Retail/Office	24601 Raymond Way	Lake Forest	975	\$29.79 - 36.41 (Est.)

Property Type	Business Category	Property Address	City	Total Available Space (sq ft)	Rent/Sq Ft/Yr
Retail (Neighborhood Center)	Freestanding	23646 Rockfield Blvd	Lake Forest	3,000	\$57.41 - 70.17 (Est.)
Retail (Community Center)	Freestanding	25432 Trabuco Road	Lake Forest	900	\$38.06 - 46.52 (Est.)
Retail (Neighborhood Center)	N/A	26861 Trabuco Road	Mission Viejo	1,005	\$39.28 - 48.01 (Est.)
Retail (Power Center)	Restaurant	26705 Aliso Creek Road	Aliso Viejo	2,133	\$48.64 - 59.45 (Est.)

Source: Caltrans 2026d.

Note: The list of comparable properties is based on current real estate listings as of March 2025 per Costar.

Bldv = Boulevard; Pkwy = Parkway; SF=square foot/feet; Yr = Year.

Table 4.4-5. List of Comparable Commercial Properties for Sale

Property Type	Business Category	Property Address	City	Building Area (sq ft)	Price/SF
Retail	Freestanding	25552 El Paseo	Mission Viejo	7,500	\$580.00
Retail (Power Center)	Restaurant	26641 Aliso Creek Rd	Aliso Viejo	7,914	\$669.70
Retail (Power Center)	Storefront Retail/Office	26711 Aliso Creek Rd	Aliso Viejo	24,986	\$376.21
Retail	Bank	24301 Paseo de Valencia	Laguna Woods	20,840	\$263.92
Retail	Auto Dealership	9829 Research Dr	Irvine	21,478	\$371.52
Retail (Power Center)	Restaurant	26631 Aliso Creek Rd	Aliso Viejo	6,416	\$584.48
Retail	Auto Dealership	11 Auto Center Dr	Irvine	70,060	\$256.92
Retail (Lifestyle Center)	Storefront Retail/Office	23451 Avenida de la Carlota (Part of a 45 Property Portfolio)	Laguna Hills	48,137	\$322.98
Retail (Lifestyle Center)	Storefront Retail/Office	23501 Avenida de la Carlota (Part of a 45 Property Portfolio)	Laguna Hills	36,072	\$270.72
Retail (Neighborhood Center)	Storefront	23052 Lake Forest Dr (Part of a 45 Property Portfolio)	Laguna Hills	38,504	\$244.35
Retail (Lifestyle Center)	Freestanding	23461 Ridge Route Dr (Part of a 45 Property Portfolio)	Laguna Hills	34,675	\$197.05
Retail (Lifestyle Center)	Freestanding	23301 Avenida de la Carlota (Part of a 45 Property Portfolio)	Laguna Hills	22,029	\$261.06
Retail (Lifestyle Center)	Freestanding	23251 Avenida de la Carlota (Part of a 45 Property Portfolio)	Laguna Hills	25,613	\$215.02

Property Type	Business Category	Property Address	City	Building Area (sq ft)	Price/SF
Retail (Lifestyle Center)	Storefront Retail/Office	23621 Ridge Route Dr (Part of a 45 Property Portfolio)	Laguna Hills	16,559	\$274.37
Retail (Lifestyle Center)	Storefront Retail/Office	23452 Ridge Route Dr (Part of a 45 Property Portfolio)	Laguna Hills	7,167	\$212.16
Retail (Lifestyle Center)	Storefront Retail/Office	23472 Ridge Route Dr (Part of a 45 Property Portfolio)	Laguna Hills	4,172	\$241.71
Retail	Gas Service Station	24362 El Toro Rd	Laguna Woods	1,833	\$2,673.21

Source: Caltrans 2026d.

Note: The list of comparable properties is based on current real estate listings as of March 2025 per Costar.

Bldv = Boulevard; Pkwy = Parkway; SF=square feet; Yr = Year.

Based on current real estate listings as of March 2025, it is apparent that there are adequate opportunities for retail occupants to locate and secure a reasonable replacement site.

Replacement sites further from the Project limits, compared to the existing locations of the displacement properties, could require longer commute times for employees or longer travel times for existing clientele. Longer travel times could affect the ability of the businesses to reestablish themselves in the replacement area and possibly result in impacts on the City's tax base.

Finally, the retail businesses are small businesses that may have financial constraints associated with adding moving expenses to existing business-related expenditures.

With implementation of Avoidance and Minimization Measure **REL-1**, advisory assistance services such as bilingual and ethnic aides will effectively communicate the relocation claims process with minority-owned businesses, in accordance with Section 10.01.09.01 (Advisory Assistance) and Section 10.01.09.02 (Specific Advisory Assistance) of the Caltrans Right of Way Manual (Caltrans 2021). Furthermore, Caltrans would provide a longer timeline to vacate properties to give business time to secure a replacement property or convert vacant properties, in accordance with Section 10.02.05.06 (Relocation Compliance with Uniform Act) of the Caltrans Right of Way Manual (Caltrans 2021). In accordance with 49 CFR Part 24.205, advance payments to facilitate relocation of businesses for hardship situations on pre-approval and professional moving services would also be provided.

Finally, owner/occupant interviews would be conducted during the final design phase of the proposed Project to provide a greater understanding of demographics and financial challenges for each respective owner and occupant, in accordance with Section 10.02.05.05 (Contact with Data Sources, Property Owners, and Displacees) and 10.02.05.07 (Survey Methods) of the Caltrans Right of Way Manual (Caltrans 2021).

With implementation of Avoidance and Minimization Measure **REL-1**, Build Alternative 1 and its design variation (Build Alternative 1a) would not result in adverse effects related to non-residential displacements.

4.4.2.2 Build Alternative 3

Build Alternative 3 would have no relocations or property acquisitions because no ground disturbance would be required.

4.4.2.3 No-Build Alternative

The No-Build Alternative would maintain the current configuration of the I-5/EI Toro interchange within the Project limits. No relocations or property acquisitions would occur.

4.4.3 Avoidance, Minimization, and/or Mitigation Measures

Implementation of the following avoidance and minimization measure would avoid and minimize adverse impacts involving non-residential displacements; the avoidance and minimization measures are identical to those in the Supplemental Section 4(f):

- REL-1** Property acquisition shall be conducted in compliance with the requirements of the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (Uniform Act) (Public Law 91-646, 84 Statutes 1894). The Uniform Act mandates that certain relocation services and payments be made available to eligible residents, businesses, and nonprofit organizations displaced by federal or federally assisted projects. The Uniform Act provides for uniform and equitable treatment by federal or federally assisted programs of persons displaced from their homes, businesses, or farms and establishes uniform and equitable land acquisition policies.

Chapter 5 Traffic and Transportation/Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

5.1 AFFECTED ENVIRONMENT

This section is based on the TOAR (Caltrans 2026b) that was prepared for the Project.

5.1.1 Access, Circulation, and Parking

5.1.1.1 Access and Circulation

The I-5/El Toro Road Interchange configuration is a mix of loop and direct ramp configurations: the southeast quadrant contains a direct exit off-ramp from northbound I-5 to El Toro Road and a loop on-ramp from a controlled intersection at El Toro Road to northbound I-5; the northeast quadrant contains a direct on-ramp from El Toro Road to northbound I-5; the southwest quadrant contains a direct on-ramp from El Toro Road to southbound I-5; and the northwest quadrant contains a hook ramp off-ramp from southbound I-5 to Avenida De la Carlota and a hook ramp on-ramp from Avenida De la Carlota to the southbound I-5. All ramp termini incorporate controlled free-right movements.

Within the Project limits, I-5 serves the cities of Laguna Hills, Laguna Woods, and Lake Forest. I-5 connects to the southern terminus of I-405 2 miles north of the Project limits. In addition, there are two toll roads in the vicinity that connect to I-5: State Route (SR) 133 and SR 73. SR 133 is approximately 4 miles north of the Project limits, and SR 73 is approximately 6 miles south of the Project limits.

The I-5/El Toro Road interchange serves as the primary access point to I-5 for adjacent cities and is also one of the main interchanges providing access to the adjacent retirement community of Laguna Woods (formerly known as Leisure World). The interchange will also serve as the primary access point to the Village at Laguna Hills, which is an approximately 68-acre mixed-use development approved by the City of Laguna Hills in 2022. Other land uses within and adjacent to the Project limits include residential, recreational, commercial, and educational. High demand coupled with short spacing between adjacent local intersections have resulted in heavy traffic congestion during the weekday peak hours, weekends, and holidays.

The I-5 corridor serves as a vital north–south link throughout the state and provides for the interregional, interstate, and international movement of goods and vehicles from the Mexican border south of San Diego to the Oregon state line. It is the major link between San Diego, Orange, and Los Angeles Counties.

In the vicinity of the I-5/El Toro Road interchange, I-5 has five existing general-purpose (GP) lanes, an auxiliary lane, and one High-Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lane in the northbound direction. A second HOV lane picks up just north of the interchange. In the southbound direction, the existing configuration includes five GP lanes, one auxiliary lane, and two HOV lanes that merge into one just south of the El Toro Road Undercrossing. The outside shoulder varies from 10 feet to 18 feet, and there is a retaining wall separating I-5 from the adjacent westerly frontage road, Avenida De La Carlota. Along I-5, existing soundwalls are generally located throughout the Project limits in the northbound direction and north of El Toro Road in the southbound direction.

5.1.1.2 Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

Pedestrian travel within the Project limits is currently provided via sidewalks at the following roadway street/arterials:

- El Toro Road
- Paseo De Valencia
- Avenida De La Carlota
- Bridger Road
- Rockfield Boulevard

These arterials include sidewalks on at least one side of the road segments and include crosswalks, pedestrian crossing signage, ADA curb ramps with truncated domes, and lighting. Of these local roadways, Class II on-street bicycle lanes are currently available along Paseo De Valencia (0.3 mile west of the southbound on-ramps) and Rockfield Boulevard (0.25 mile east of the northbound I-5 off-ramp). Bicyclists can travel underneath the El Toro Road undercrossing, regardless of the provision of designated bicycle lanes.

According to the cities of Lake Forest, Laguna Hills, and Laguna Woods Bicycle Master Plans, there are no future planned bicycle facilities for Class II connectivity to transect the I-5/El Toro Road Interchange; however, the OCTA's District 5 Bikeway Strategy Report (OCTA 2015), Corridor C proposes a regional 15.3-mile bikeway corridor that would extend from Alicia Parkway in Rancho Santa Margarita to Paseo De Valencia, to El Toro Road, then along SR 133 and ending at Pacific Coast Highway in Laguna Beach. The proposed bikeway is south of the Paseo de Colinas/El Toro Road intersection, south of the Project limits.

The Aliso Creek Bikeway, a Class I (off-street) bike path, is within 1 mile south of the Project limits.

5.1.1.3 Parking

The Project is located within an urbanized area and parking within the Project limits consists of a mix of on- and off-street parking spaces. Existing on-street parking is located along Bridger Road that serves restaurants and small businesses, and along

Cavanaugh Road that serves a park. On-street parking in these locations is free. Existing parking lots are associated with commercial land uses. There are existing parking lots at the former Laguna Hills Mall, St. George's Episcopal Church, and at other commercial land uses such as those along Bridger Road, Avenida de la Carlota, and El Toro Road.

5.1.1.4 Public Transportation

Several bus routes service the I-5/El Toro Road area and the Laguna Hills Transportation Center at 24282 Calle de los Caballeros, operates as OCTA's main transfer hub for south Orange County and functions as a Park-n-Ride Lot. There is a high percentage of older residents in the RSA where 31.5 percent of the population is 65 years of age and over, which is a strong indicator of a transit dependent group.

OCTA bus routes operating in the vicinity of I-5/El Toro Road area are identified below. (Routes 83, 89, 91, and 177 all pass within a half mile of El Toro and I-5.)

- **Route 83:** Fullerton – Laguna Hills: via I-5/Main Street
- **Route 89:** Mission Viejo – Laguna Beach: via Laguna Canyon Road/El Toro Road/Sana Margarita Parkway
- **Route 91:** Laguna Hills – San Clemente: via Paseo de Valencia/Camino Capistrano/Del Obispo Street
- **Route 177:** Foothill Ranch – Laguna Hills: via Alicia Parkway/Muirlands Boulevard/Lake Forest Drive/Portola Parkway/Santa Margarita Parkway

The Cities of Lake Forest, Laguna Hills, and Laguna Woods also provide subsidized taxi and dial-a-ride programs for qualifying residents who are at least 60 years of age. This service is funded by OCTA's Measure M2 half-cent sales tax.

5.2 ENVIRONMENTAL CONSEQUENCES

5.2.1 Access, Circulation, and Parking

5.2.1.1 Temporary Impacts

Build Alternative 1 and Design Variation: Build Alternative 1a

Access and Circulation

Construction of Build Alternative 1 and its design variation (Build Alternative 1a) would result in temporary impacts on traffic circulation and pedestrian and bicycle access on and in the vicinity of the Project segment of I-5. Those impacts would include short-term closures of mainline, ramp, and arterial facilities as described in the following sections.

Build Alternative 1 and its design variation (Build Alternative 1a) is proposed to be constructed in three preliminary stages as discussed below.

Stage 1 would involve:

- Construction of a new alignment of Avenida De La Carlota south of El Toro Road, including proposed southbound hook on- and off-ramp terminus
- Construction of I-5 southbound off-ramp bridge columns and abutments
- Installation of a temporary barrier system along the southbound mainline shoulder
- Restriping of southbound I-5/El Toro Road hook off-ramp
- Construction of new retaining wall with soundwall, including necessary on-ramp facilities, along the northbound I-5 on-ramp from westbound El Toro Road

Stage 2 would involve:

- Construction of I-5 southbound off-ramp bridge
- Construction of retaining walls along the proposed I-5 southbound hook on-ramp from Avenida De La Carlota
- Lengthening of the northbound I-5 on-ramp from westbound El Toro Road to merge with the northbound I-5 mainline
- Widening of El Toro Road west of El Toro Road/Avenida De La Carlota intersection to accommodate additional right-turn lane

Stage 3 would involve:

- Completion of I-5 southbound off-ramp bridge
- Completion of extension of northbound I-5 on-ramp from westbound El Toro Road
- Completion of right-turn lane on El Toro Road
- Construction and completion of I-5 southbound hook on-ramp from Avenida De La Carlota

Construction of Build Alternative 1 and its design variation (Build Alternative 1a) is anticipated to take 2.5 to 3 years, with opening year in 2035. Temporary closures of the I-5 mainline, interchange ramps, and local arterials would be limited to overnight (between 10:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m.) closures.

In addition, the following temporary modifications to the existing freeway mainline, connector and ramp facilities, and arterial streets in the construction zone could be implemented during construction of Build Alternative 1 and its design variation (Build Alternative 1a):

- Temporary lane closures and lane narrowing on the freeway mainline, ramps, and local arterials;
- Temporary full closures of freeway mainline segments and ramps, as needed;

- Temporary vehicle detour routes to accommodate full freeway mainline and ramp closures;
- Temporary pedestrian and bicycle detours, as needed to maintain safety and ADA compliance; and
- Temporary speed reductions through construction areas.

These temporary modifications would allow for traffic to pass through the Project limits along I-5, the ramps, and the arterials, but those travelers would be expected to experience some delays as they travel on those facilities.

The proposed temporary closures of, and modifications to, the freeway and local arterials and the potential effects of those closures and modifications under Build Alternative 1 and its design variation (Build Alternative 1a) are described further in the following sections.

Temporary Mainline, Ramp, or Local Arterials Closures

Construction activities are anticipated to occur primarily during overnight hours, where feasible, to minimize traffic disruptions. It is anticipated that most temporary closures of the I-5 mainline, ramps, or local arterials would occur primarily during overnight hours, where feasible. A TMP, including construction staging, traffic control, and detour details, will be developed during final design in coordination with Caltrans and affected local jurisdictions, as part of Project Feature **PF-TRA-1**. Final timing of closures will be determined during the final design phase of the Project as part of the TMP.

During construction of Build Alternative 1 and its design variation (Build Alternative 1a), there is potential for temporary interruption or delay accessing local businesses, due to detours and closures on local streets. Throughout construction, access to businesses, retail outlets, restaurants, offices and social service providers would be provided as driveways would remain open and accessible, as result of the TMP. TMP strategies include public awareness campaigns, motorist information, incident management, construction methods, demand management, and alternate route planning.

Preliminary detour routes include the following:

- For the southbound Avenida De La Carlota closure, vehicles could take either westbound El Toro Road to southbound Paseo De Valencia to eastbound Los Alisos Boulevard where Avenida De La Carlota terminates or, eastbound El Toro Road to northbound Paseo De Valencia to westbound Los Alisos Boulevard where Avenida De La Carlota terminates.
- For the northbound I-5 on-ramp from westbound El Toro Road closure, vehicles could take: northbound Rockfield Boulevard to westbound Lake Forest Drive to northbound I-5 on-ramp.
- For the southbound I-5 hook off-ramp closure, vehicles could take I-5 Alicia Parkway off-ramp.

The TMP will ensure access to local businesses, agencies and organizations is maintained at all times, thus there would be minimum financial loss to local retail businesses, restaurants or social service providers. Customers, clients and patrons will be able to access local businesses though there could be slight delays reaching a specific destination, within the Project area. In addition, the TMP will consider local jurisdictions and all emergency responders in the RSA (sheriff, police, CHP, fire/emergency medical technician (EMT) and hospital/ambulance operators). While there is potential for emergency response times to be slightly delayed during construction, such delays would be minor and temporary. Caltrans, as a standard practice develops, coordinates and implements a TMP in collaboration with local jurisdictions. This is a standard measure for all Caltrans projects.

It is not anticipated Build Alternative 1 or its design variation (Build Alternative 1a) would cause any retail store, business or agency to be land-locked as a result of the construction. There is a potential driveways to businesses would need to be re-established or re-located to maintain access for employees, customers and clients. Those driveways would be identified in advance of construction during the PS&E phase and coordination with cities and affected property owners would occur.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

Pedestrians and cyclists could experience temporary re-routing and closures on local streets and intersections during construction, including those listed in this section. These construction-related impacts would be temporary in nature and are not anticipated to cause substantial disruption for pedestrians or cyclists traveling through the Project area during construction. The TMP will include temporary re-routing for pedestrians and cyclists to maintain connectivity, including those listed in this section.

- The crosswalk on the south side of the Avenida De La Carlota/El Toro Road intersection would be temporarily closed. Pedestrians and bicyclists would be routed to the crosswalk on the north side of the intersection.
- The crosswalk on the west side of the Avenida De La Carlota/El Toro Road intersection would be temporarily closed. Pedestrians and bicyclists would be routed to the crosswalk on the west side of the Regional Center/El Toro Road intersection.
- The crosswalk on the north side of the Avenida De La Carlota/El Toro Road intersection would be temporarily closed. Pedestrians and bicyclists would be routed to the crosswalk on the south side of the intersection.

Parking

During construction, Build Alternative 1 and its design variation (Build Alternative 1a) would result in temporary disruption to existing parking spaces, including parking within adjacent properties (e.g., private parking lots) and on-street parking within the Project area.

As identified in Table 5.2-1, on-site parking at properties adjacent to the Project would be affected during the construction phase. Under Build Alternative 1 and its design variation (Build Alternative 1a), the Project would temporarily affect approximately 53 parking spaces within four parcels. These affected properties have abundant parking, and the few spaces affected during construction are not expected to substantially affect operations at the properties. Construction staging and phasing shall be designed to limit the duration and extent of the temporary removal of existing parking spaces. A parking study shall be prepared during the final design phase to evaluate the extent of temporary parking impacts and identify feasible strategies to minimize disruptions during construction (Avoidance and Minimization Measure **COM-2**). The parking spaces affected by TCEs during construction would be restored once construction activities conclude at the properties.

During construction, temporary disruptions to existing on-street parking spaces may also occur, including parking spaces along Bridger Road, which serves restaurants and small businesses. These existing on-street parking spaces could be shifted or temporarily reassigned to a nearby location. Such interruptions to available on-street parking during construction would be temporary and would not cause a substantial disruption for customers or clients when accessing local businesses or service providers. Temporary parking impacts at adjacent properties shall be minimized to the extent feasible during construction, and construction staging and phasing shall be designed to limit the duration and extent of the temporary removal of existing parking spaces, consistent with Avoidance and Minimization Measure **COM-2**.

With implementation of Project Feature **PF-TRA-1**, a TMP would be prepared to identify strategies to reduce impacts on access and circulation, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and parking during construction. Construction activities would be temporary and would cease after construction is completed. With the inclusion of the TMP, the Project would not result in adverse impacts to access and circulation, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and parking that would create a barrier or permanent disruption in connectivity of any of the communities within the RSA.

Build Alternative 3

Implementation timeframe and duration for Build Alternative 3 will be dependent on local agency TSM and operations capabilities and preferences, ability to operate and maintain devices and systems, regional and local Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) architecture, and systems integration and interoperability.

Build Alternative 3 does not include any physical or geometric improvements and therefore would not include construction activities on the I-5 mainline, ramp, or arterial facilities. As such, there would be no temporary impacts to access and circulation, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, or to parking under Build Alternative 3.

No-Build Alternative

Under the No-Build Alternative, the Project would not be constructed and there would be no temporary changes to access, circulation, pedestrian or bicycle facilities, or to parking.

Table 5.2-1. Potential Parking Impacts under Build Alternative 1 and Design Variation (Build Alternative 1a)

Parcel ^a	Property Owner	Assessor Parcel Number (APN)	Property Name	Number of Lost Parking Spaces	
				Permanent Impact	Temporary Impact
1	MGP Fund X Laguna Hills, LLC	621-221-26	In-n-Out Burger	3	34
2	Laguna Hills Restaurants, LLC	616-032-08	Farmer Boys Restaurant	8	0
		616-032-09	Rodrigo's Mexican Grill	14	0
3	City of Lake Forest	617-185-07	Community Park/Open Space	0	0
		617-185-08	Cavanaugh Park Playground	0	0
		617-451-03	Community Park/Open Space	0	0
4	Laguna Hills Restaurants, LLC	621-051-55	Laguna Hills Mall – Parking	0	0
		621-221-30	Laguna Hills Mall – Parking	7	6
5	Laguna Hills Restaurants, LLC	621-221-04	Firestone	0	0
6	CGT Group, L.P.	616-033-04	Honey Baked Ham	0	0
7	Bridger Investment Company	616-033-05	Miscellaneous Businesses	0 ^b	0
8	SWI Investors, LLC	621-052-04	Miscellaneous Businesses	0 ^b	0
9	Lake 5, LLC	616-033-02	Chevron/Subway	0	3
10	K Ishii Paseo La Cresta, LLC	616-032-04	Raising Cane's	12	0
11	City of Laguna Hills	616-022-04	City of Laguna Hills	0	0
12	Protestant Episcopal in the Diocese Church	616-022-03	St. George's Episcopal Church	10	10
Total number of affected parking spaces				54	53

^a. A *parcel* is defined as an APN having the same ownership and the same use. In addition, APNs are contiguous to each other.

^b. A parcel requiring full acquisition will require relocation of businesses; therefore, the number of lost parking spaces is not identified for full-acquisition properties.

5.2.1.2 Permanent Impacts

Build Alternative 1 and Design Variation: Build Alternative 1a

The base condition Build Alternative 1 proposes an additional I-5 southbound off-ramp and a new southbound hook on-ramp from the realigned Avenida De La Carlota south of El Toro Road. The additional I-5 southbound off-ramp will be combined with the existing I-5 southbound off-ramp when exiting the freeway mainline (freeway-ramp junction). Build Alternative 1 maintains the two lanes exiting the freeway mainline. In addition to geometric lane improvements, Build Alternative 1 includes TSM/TDM technology improvements. A design variation is proposed for the base Build Alternative 1 at the new I-5 southbound/Avenida De La Carlota ramp terminal intersection south of El Toro Road. The design variation would include the Village of Laguna Hills driveway at the ramp terminal intersection. All other improvements would be the same as the base condition Build Alternative 1.

The key changes are:

- The Avenida De La Carlota/I-5 southbound ramps intersection improves from LOS E or worse with the No-Build Alternative to LOS D with the Build Alternative 1 during the peak hours in both 2035 and 2055.
- The El Toro Road/Avenida De La Carlota intersection improves from LOS F to LOS D or better during the PM peak hour.
- The Los Alisos Boulevard/Rockfield Boulevard intersection improves from LOS F to LOS E in the 2035 AM peak hour and maintains the LOS F in the PM peak hour. In 2055, Build Alternative 1 maintains the same LOS F. In the PM peak hour, the Build Alternative 1 delay is projected to increase in 2035 and 2055. The increase in delay in the PM peak hour is attributable to the redistribution of the traffic volumes for Build Alternative 1. Because the traffic volumes redistributed are minimal (approximately 20 to 70 vehicles for the affected movements) and the intersection is anticipated to operate at LOS F for the No-Build Alternative, Build Alternative 1 is not expected to substantially affect the operations of the intersection.

Table 5.2-2 is a summary of the intersection LOS for No-Build and the base condition Build Alternative 1 for 2035 and 2055. For Build Alternative 1, almost all of the study intersections are anticipated to operate at LOS D or better. The El Toro Road/Rockfield Boulevard intersection is anticipated to operate at LOS E during the 2055 AM peak hour, and the Los Alisos Boulevard/Rockfield Boulevard intersection is anticipated to operate at LOS E or worse during the peak hours in both 2035 and 2055.

Table 5.2-2. No-Build Alternative and Build Alternative 1 Level of Service Comparison

ID	Intersection	Level of Service (LOS) (AM/PM Peak Hour)			
		2035 No-Build	2035 Build Alternative 1	2055 No-Build	2055 Build Alternative 1
1	Avenida De La Carlota (NS)/Paseo De Valencia/I-5 SB Ramps (EW)	F/E	D/D	F/E	D/D
2	El Toro Road (EW)/Avenida De La Carlota (NS)	D/F	D/C	D/F	D/D
3	El Toro Road (EW)/Bridger Road/I-5 NB Ramps (NS)	D/C	C/B	D/C	C/B
4	El Toro Road (EW)/Rockfield Boulevard (NS)	E/D	D/D	E/D	E/D
5	El Toro Road (EW)/Paseo De Valencia (NS)	D/D	D/D	D/D	D/D
6	El Toro Road (EW)/Swartz Drive (NS)	--/--	--/--	--/--	--/--
7	Avenida De La Carlota (NS)/I-5 SB Ramps (EW)	C/B	B/B	C/B	B/B
8	Rockfield Boulevard (NS)/Orchard Lane (EW)	B/C	C/C	B/C	B/C
9	Rockfield Boulevard (NS)/Landisview Avenue (EW)	C/B	C/B	C/B	C/B
10	Avenida De La Carlota (NS)/Oakbrook Village (EW)	B/B	B/B	B/B	B/B
11	Los Alisos Boulevard (EW)/Avenida De La Carlota (NS)	C/D	D/D	C/D	D/D
12	Los Alisos Boulevard (EW)/Rockfield Boulevard (NS)	F/F	E/F	F/F	F/F

Source: Caltrans 2026b.

EW = east-west; NB = northbound; NS = north-south; SB = southbound.

Based on the 95th percentile queues, the base condition Build Alternative 1 results in fewer excess vehicles compared to the No-Build Alternative, especially for the existing I-5 southbound off-ramp to Avenida De La Carlota north of El Toro Road. Most of the intersection approaches are not expected to have queues extend beyond the upstream intersection for the base condition Build Alternative 1. There are a few intersection approaches where fewer than five vehicles are expected to extend beyond the upstream intersection. The intersection queue analysis is conservative because it only assumes the benefits of the lane geometric improvements for base condition Build Alternative 1.

With the implementation of the TSM/TDM technology improvements, the resulting queues could be shorter. A design variation (Build Alternative 1a) is proposed for Build Alternative 1 at the new I-5 southbound/Avenida De La Carlota ramp terminal intersection south of El Toro Road. Build Alternative 1a would include the Village of Laguna Hills driveway at the ramp terminal intersection. With the addition of Village of Laguna Hills driveway to the new I-5 southbound ramp/Avenida De La Carlota ramp terminal intersection south of El Toro Road, the ramp terminal intersection is expected

to operate at LOS D or better during the peak hours for 2035 and 2055. Without the Village of Laguna Hills driveway (Build Alternative 1), the ramp terminal intersection is expected to operate at LOS C or better during the peak hours.

For I-5 freeway operations within the study limits for Build Alternative 1 (base condition Build Alternative 1 and its design variation [Build Alternative 1a]), the I-5 mainline segments (both GP and HOV) and ramps in the northbound and southbound directions are anticipated to operate at LOS E or better except for three weaving mainline segments (one northbound and two southbound segments). LOS F is expected in 2055 due to traffic demand exceeding the weaving segment capacity. Freeway traffic operations between Build Alternative 1 and the No-Build Alternative are expected to be generally the same.

Access and Circulation

The Project proposes improvements to existing roads and the I-5; it would not create or eliminate any new freeways or roadways. The Project improvements proposed are limited to modification/addition to the on and off ramp connections to the I-5 and widening and realignment of local roads. The Project would improve traffic flow, optimize traffic signalization, improve traffic mobility through adjacent local street intersections, reduce freeway ramp queuing, and apply technology to help manage expected traffic demand. The Project would improve access and circulation on the I-5 mainline and local arterial streets, and would also improve access to city destination points. These destination points include homes and neighborhoods, employment centers, retail stores and shopping centers as well as medical and social service providers.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

Build Alternative 1 and its design variation (Build Alternative 1a) include minor modifications to existing arterials at their crossings of I-5 to accommodate the permanent improvements to the I-5/EI Toro Road Interchange and contributing ramps/intersections proposed by the Build Alternatives. Existing sidewalks and/or bicycle facilities on arterials affected during construction would also be returned to their original or better conditions no later than the completion of construction. At arterial crossings where modifications to the sidewalks are needed as part of Build Alternative 1 and its design variation (Build Alternative 1a), those modifications would be consistent with ADA accessibility requirements. The permanent improvements in Build Alternative 1 and its design variation (Build Alternative 1a) would not permanently affect the existing on-street Class II bicycle lanes along Rockfield Boulevard, Paseo De Valencia, or Los Alisos Boulevard or Aliso Creek Bikeway (Class I bicycle path); therefore, Build Alternative 1 would not permanently result in gaps or disruptions in the regional bicycle lane network and would not interfere with the regional bicycle lane planning efforts.

Parking

As shown in Table 5.2-1, Build Alternative 1 and its design variation (Build Alternative 1a) would result in the permanent loss of approximately 54 parking spaces within five parcels due to the partial acquisition of properties. In addition, permanent loss of private commercial parking lots would occur due to the full acquisition of two commercial

properties, APN 621-052-04, associated with Village Plaza, and APN 616-033-05, located along Bridger Road. Although Build Alternative 1 and its design variation (Build Alternative 1a) would result in a net reduction in the number of parking spaces, owners of parcels requiring full and partial acquisitions would be compensated, including for the permanent loss of parking spaces, per the Uniform Relocation Act (Avoidance and Minimization Measure **COM-3**).

Some available free on-street parking at the Bridger Road cul de sac may also be permanently removed. However, it is used primarily by businesses that would also be acquired; therefore, the parking would not be needed after the completion of Project construction.

The Project, under Build Alternative 1 and its design variation (Build Alternative 1a), would improve circulation on the I-5 mainline and local arterial streets and would outweigh the loss of parking due to improved traffic conditions in the RSA. The Village at Laguna Hills is currently being developed. Caltrans, OCTA, and the City of Laguna Hills will work together to ensure there are no conflicts with the Project's realignment of Avenida de la Carlota and the development plans for the Village at Laguna Hills (Avoidance and Minimization Measure **COM-1**). The proposed loss of parking at the Village at Laguna Hills will also be considered in their redesign.

Build Alternative 3

Build Alternative 3 applies technology options to the No-Build Alternative. Traffic volumes and lane geometrics are assumed to be the same as the No-Build Alternative. Table 5.2-3 is a summary of the intersection LOS for No-Build and Build Alternative 3 for 2035 and 2055. For the Build Alternative 3, the majority of the study intersections are anticipated to operate at LOS D or better. Four intersections are anticipated to operate at LOS E or F during one or both peak hours for the Build Alternative 3:

- Avenida De La Carlota/I-5 southbound ramps
- El Toro Road/Avenida De La Carlota
- El Toro Road/Rockfield Boulevard
- Los Alisos Boulevard/Rockfield Boulevard

With the application of the TSM/TDM technologies, the number of locations that are anticipated to operate at LOS E or F stays the same as the No-Build Alternative. Although reductions in delay are expected with the application of the TSM/TDM technologies, the operations at the four intersections will remain LOS E or LOS F during one of the peak hours.

Table 5.2-3. No-Build Alternative and Build Alternative 3 Level of Service Comparison

ID	Intersection	Level of Service (LOS) (AM/PM Peak Hour)			
		2035 No-Build	2035 Build Alternative 3	2055 No-Build	2055 Build Alternative 3
1	Avenida De La Carlota (NS)/Paseo De Valencia/I-5 SB Ramps (EW)	F/E	F/D	F/E	F/E
2	El Toro Road (EW)/Avenida De La Carlota (NS)	D/F	D/F	D/F	D/F
3	El Toro Road (EW)/Bridger Road/I-5 NB Ramps (NS)	D/C	C/C	D/C	D/C
4	El Toro Road (EW)/Rockfield Boulevard (NS)	E/D	D/D	E/D	E/D
5	El Toro Road (EW)/Paseo De Valencia (NS)	D/D	D/D	D/D	D/D
6	El Toro Road (EW)/Swartz Drive (NS)	--/--	--/--	--/--	--/--
7	Avenida De La Carlota (NS)/Plaza Lane/Laguna Hills Development Driveway (EW)	C/B	B/B	C/B	C/B
8	Rockfield Boulevard (NS)/Orchard Lane (EW)	B/C	B/C	B/C	B/C
9	Rockfield Boulevard (NS)/Landisview Avenue (EW)	C/B	B/B	C/B	B/B
10	Avenida De La Carlota (NS)/Oakbrook Village (EW)	B/B	B/B	B/B	B/B
11	Los Alisos Boulevard (EW)/Avenida De La Carlota (NS)	C/D	C/D	C/D	C/D
12	Los Alisos Boulevard (EW)/Rockfield Boulevard (NS)	F/F	F/E	F/F	F/F

Source: Caltrans 2026b.

EW = east-west; NB = northbound; NS = north-south; SB = southbound.

Intersection queue analysis was not conducted for this Build Alternative 3. However, with the implementation of the TSM/TDM technology improvements, the resulting queues for Build Alternative 3 compared to the No-Build Alternative could potentially be shorter due to the improvements to the intersection delay.

The lane configurations along the I-5 mainline and ramp junctions are assumed to be the same for the No-Build Alternative and Build Alternative 3. Therefore, traffic operations on the I-5 mainline and ramp junctions for Build Alternative 3 are expected to be the same as the No-Build Alternative.

Access and Circulation

Overall, although Build Alternative 3 does not include any geometric changes, the traffic analysis shows reduced delay and overall improved intersection operations compared to the No-Build Alternative. Although reductions in delay are expected with the application of the TSM/TDM technologies, the operations at four intersections will remain LOS E or LOS F during one of the peak hours.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

Build Alternative 3 does not include any physical or geometric improvements. As such, there would be no permanent impacts to pedestrian and bicycle facilities under Build Alternative 3.

Parking

Build Alternative 3 does not include any physical or geometric improvements. As such, there would be no permanent impacts to parking under Build Alternative 3.

No-Build Alternative

For the No-Build Alternative, no Project roadway improvements would occur. This alternative includes lane improvements on the freeway mainline and ramps from the South County I-5 Improvement Project between SR-73 and El Toro Road. The No-Build Alternative also includes general growth and traffic demand associated with the Village of Laguna Hills project, the major redevelopment project within the RSA.

Table 5.2-4 is a summary of the intersection LOS for year 2023 existing, year 2035 and 2055 No-Build conditions. The intersection LOS at the study intersections for the No-Build Alternative either stays the same or becomes worse during either of the peak hour, as compared to existing conditions, for all study intersections except one where the LOS improves. Four of the 12 study intersections deteriorate from a LOS D/E to LOS E/F. All other study intersections operate at LOS D or better. The El Toro Road/Bridger Road/I-5 northbound ramp intersection improves from LOS F to LOS D due to the additional lane on the off-ramp from the South County I-5 Improvement project.

For the intersection 95th percentile queues, without improvements at the study intersections, queues are expected to increase resulting in more movements exceeding the available storage. The key queue location for the No-Build Alternative is the I-5 southbound off-ramp to Avenida De La Carlota/El Toro Road. Without improvements to the intersection, the off-ramp queue is expected to increase and continue to extend onto the freeway mainline.

Table 5.2-4. Existing and No-Build Alternative Level of Service Comparison

ID	Intersection	Traffic Control	Level of Service (LOS) (AM/PM Peak Hour)		
			Existing	2035 No-Build	2055 No-Build
1	Avenida De La Carlota (NS)/Paseo De Valencia/I-5 SB Ramps (EW)	Signalized	E/E	F/E	F/E
2	El Toro Road (EW)/Avenida De La Carlota (NS)	Signalized	C/D	D/F	D/F
3	El Toro Road (EW)/Bridger Road/I-5 NB Ramps (NS)	Signalized	F/C	D/C	D/C
4	El Toro Road (EW)/Rockfield Boulevard (NS)	Signalized	D/D	E/D	E/D
5	El Toro Road (EW)/Paseo De Valencia (NS)	Signalized	D/D	D/D	D/D
6	El Toro Road (EW)/Swartz Drive (NS)	Unsignalized	--/--	--/--	--/--

ID	Intersection	Traffic Control	Level of Service (LOS) (AM/PM Peak Hour)		
			Existing	2035 No-Build	2055 No-Build
7	Avenida De La Carlota (NS)/Plaza Lane/Laguna Hills Development Driveway (EW)	Signalized	C/B	C/B	C/B
8	Rockfield Boulevard (NS)/Orchard Lane (EW)	Signalized	B/C	B/C	B/C
9	Rockfield Boulevard (NS)/Landisview Avenue (EW)	Signalized	C/B	C/B	C/B
10	Avenida De La Carlota (NS)/Oakbrook Village (EW)	Signalized	B/B	B/B	B/B
11	Los Alisos Boulevard (EW)/Avenida De La Carlota (NS)	Signalized	C/D	C/D	C/D
12	Los Alisos Boulevard (EW)/Rockfield Boulevard (NS)	Signalized	F/E	F/F	F/F

Source: Caltrans 2026b.

EW = east-west; NB = northbound; NS = north-south; SB = southbound.

For I-5 freeway operations within the study limits for the No-Build Alternative, the I-5 mainline segments (both GP and HOV) and ramps in the northbound and southbound directions are anticipated to operate at LOS D or better, except for the following four mainline segments (three weaving segments and one basic segment):

- I-5 northbound from Alicia Parkway on-ramp to El Toro Road off-ramp
- I-5 northbound eastbound El Toro Road loop on-ramp to westbound El Toro Road loop on-ramp
- I-5 southbound from Lake Forest Drive on-ramp to Avenida De La Carlota/El Toro Road off-ramp
- I-5 southbound from Avenida De La Carlota/Paseo De Valencia hook on-ramp to El Toro Road on-ramp
- I-5 southbound from El Toro Road on-ramp to Alicia Parkway off-ramp

The three weaving segments are expected to operate at a vehicle/capacity ratio greater than 1.0 resulting in an LOS F operation in year 2055.

Access and Circulation

Overall, without implementation of the Project, access and circulation would not improve on the I-5 mainline and local arterial streets. As shown in Table 5.2-4, with the exception of one location, all other intersection LOS at the study intersections for the No-Build Alternative either stays the same or becomes worse during either of the AM or PM peak hours under 2035 and 2055 No-Build conditions, as compared to existing conditions. Four of the 12 study intersections also deteriorate from a LOS D/E to LOS E/F. Without implementation of the Project, queues are expected to increase resulting in more movements exceeding the available storage. The off-ramp queue is expected to increase and continue to extend onto the freeway mainline.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

Under the No-Build Alternative, the Project's roadway improvements would not be implemented. As such, there would be no permanent impacts on pedestrian and bicycle facilities under the No-Build Alternative.

Parking

Under the No-Build Alternative, the Project's roadway improvements would not be implemented. As such, there would be no permanent impacts on parking facilities under the No-Build Alternative.

5.2.2 Public Transportation

5.2.2.1 Temporary Impacts

Build Alternative 1 and Design Variation: Build Alternative 1a

Under Build Alternative 1 and its design variation (Build Alternative 1a), bus stops within the Project limits could be affected during construction, including those located along El Toro Road and Paseo de Valencia associated with Route 89 and Route 83, respectively. However, this impact would be temporary and would occur only during the construction period. The TMP will ensure the ADA population group that may also be transit dependent is carefully considered and Caltrans will meet or exceed access and accommodation requirements. For example, if a bus stop is temporarily relocated during construction, TMP strategies will be employed. These strategies include public awareness campaigns, motorist information, incident management, construction methods, demand management, and alternate route planning. With the implementation of the TMP, no adverse temporary impacts to public transportation are anticipated.

Build Alternative 3

Build Alternative 3 does not include any physical or geometric improvements. As such, there would be no temporary impacts on public transportation under Build Alternative 3.

No-Build Alternative

Under the No-Build Alternative, the Project would not be constructed and there would be no temporary changes to public transportation.

5.2.2.2 Permanent Impacts

Build Alternative 1 and Design Variation: Build Alternative 1a

Under Build Alternative 1 and its design variation (Build Alternative 1a), the locations of transit stops would not need to be changed. As the road is widened, the physical location of the signs would need to move to be aligned with the new sidewalk, but changes to the general area of the stops would not be necessary. No permanent adverse impacts related to public transportation are anticipated as a result of Project operation.

Build Alternative 3

Build Alternative 3 does not include any physical or geometric improvements. As such, there would be no permanent impacts on public transportation under Build Alternative 3.

No-Build Alternative

Under the No-Build Alternative, the Project would not be constructed and there would be no permanent changes to public transportation.

5.3 AVOIDANCE, MINIMIZATION, AND/OR MITIGATION MEASURES

The following Project feature and avoidance and minimization measures, including Avoidance and Minimization Measure **COM-1** (see Section 2.1, *Existing and Future Land Use*), will be implemented during final design and/or the construction phase:

- PF-TRA-1** The Project will include preparation of a Transportation Management Plan (TMP) during the Plans, Specifications, and Estimates (PS&E) phase. “TMP” is an approach for alleviating or minimizing traffic delays by the effective application of traditional traffic handling practices and an innovative combination of various strategies. These strategies include public awareness campaigns, motorist information, incident management, construction methods, demand management, and alternate route planning.
- COM-2** During construction, temporary impacts to on-site parking at adjacent properties shall be minimized to the extent feasible. Construction staging and phasing shall be designed to limit the duration and extent of temporary removal of existing parking spaces. A parking study shall be prepared during the final design phase to evaluate the extent of temporary parking impacts and identify feasible strategies to minimize disruptions during construction.
- COM-3** Caltrans shall provide compensation to affected businesses and/or property owners for the permanent loss of parking spaces in accordance with the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, as amended.

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Chapter 6 Cumulative Impacts

6.1 BUILD ALTERNATIVE 1 AND DESIGN VARIATION: BUILD ALTERNATIVE 1A

Construction of the Project, under Build Alternative 1 and its design variation (Build Alternative 1a), in combination with other development and transportation projects listed in Table 2.1-3, would not induce population growth or have an effect on population characteristics or housing. Community character and cohesion would not be adversely affected during construction of the Project due to temporary lane closures or detours. When combined with other development and transportation projects, the Project would not cause a substantial change because all of the projects listed in Table 2.1-3 are proposed to complete construction prior to the start of construction of Build Alternative 1 and its design variation (Build Alternative 1a).

The Project would not divide connected neighborhoods. No development features are proposed that would divide an established community or limit movement, travel, or social interaction between established communities. The Project would not introduce a new barrier that would divide any existing communities, separate residences from community facilities, result in substantial growth, or impede connectivity between neighborhoods because the Project proposes improvements to existing roads and the I-5 that currently traverses communities and neighborhoods. In addition, under Build Alternative 1 and its design variation (Build Alternative 1a), the proposed improvements facilitate pedestrian travel by providing ADA-compliant sidewalks, access ramps, and crosswalks throughout the Project limits at all curb returns and sidewalks being reconstructed, which would benefit community members.

Standard Project features are included to minimize impacts related to noise, air quality, visual, utilities, traffic and property acquisition and relocation. The Project, in combination with other development and transportation projects, is not anticipated to result in permanent and temporary community character and cohesion impacts specific to any community; therefore, implementation of the Project and other related projects would not contribute to cumulative community impacts.

6.2 BUILD ALTERNATIVE 3

Build Alternative 3 does not include any physical or geometric improvements. The Project, under Build Alternative 3, would not contribute to cumulative impacts on community resources in combination with other projects listed in Table 2.1-3.

6.3 NO-BUILD ALTERNATIVE

Under the No-Build Alternative, the Project would not be constructed. Existing conditions would remain, and the No-Build Alternative would not contribute to cumulative impacts on community resources in combination with other projects listed in Table 2.1-3.

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Chapter 7 Public Involvement

Early and continuing coordination with the general public and public agencies is an essential part of the environmental process. Agency and tribal consultation and public participation for this Project have been and will continue to be accomplished through a variety of formal and informal methods, including Project Development Team (PDT) meetings. Staff from Caltrans District 12, OCTA, City of Lake Forest, City of Laguna Hills, and the City of Laguna Woods attend these meetings.

As part of the CEQA scoping process for the Project, a Notice of Preparation (NOP) of an EIR/EA) was prepared and distributed via mail and posting at the State Clearinghouse and Orange County Clerk. The NOP was posted to the State Clearinghouse on July 11, 2023, beginning the required 30-day review period under CEQA. The State Clearinghouse number assigned was 2019049006, which is referenced in subsequent CEQA filings. In response to public comments received during the initial scoping period, Caltrans extended the public scoping period by 45 days. The second NOP that extended the public comment period an additional 45 days was posted to the State Clearinghouse on November 1, 2023.

The purpose of the scoping period was to inform the public about the Project and provide the opportunity for public engagement and input through questions and written comments about the Project. An in-person scoping meeting was held at the Lake Forest Community Center on Wednesday, July 26, 2023, from 4:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. The meeting was held in an open house format with various stations staffed by Project staff to answer questions from the public and provide an overview on the following topics: Project description, Project alternatives, the PDT, purpose and need of the Project, Project cost and schedule, CEQA/NEPA environmental studies to be conducted, environmental study milestones, and public participation. Written comments were collected and there was also a court reporter on hand to receive any public comments from members of the public who prefer to communicate verbally rather than in writing. In addition to an in-person scoping meeting, a virtual scoping meeting was held via Zoom on Thursday, August 3, 2023. The live virtual scoping meeting was held in an open house format with a lobby, seven breakout rooms, and a video presentation. The video presentation was developed using the information boards that were printed and on display at the in-person public scoping meeting describing the process, the alternatives, and the opportunities for public participation. The video was used at both the in-person as well as the virtual scoping meetings for those who were interested in an overview of the Project in a succinct format.

A total of 172 comments were received over the course of both scoping periods. The first scoping period received a total of 43 comments, and the second extended scoping period received 129 comments. In total, 178 comments were collected during the public scoping process from the in-person meeting, the online meeting, OCTA Online Comment Form, email to the Caltrans Project email (D12.ElToro@dot.ca.gov), and through U.S. mail.

Current environmental laws do not require that responses be provided to public comments made during the scoping period. Key concerns raised by agencies and the public during both scoping periods included traffic impacts both during and after construction, potential noise impacts, soundwall construction, and issues related to business relocations and land acquisitions. Commenters also noted confusion about the overall project approval process, particularly how the current Project relates to the previously analyzed 2019 project alternatives. Additional concerns included construction fatigue from ongoing I-5 work, the need for bike and pedestrian improvements, landscaping and aesthetic considerations, and proposed signage. Residents near the freeway in Laguna Woods highlighted carbon emissions and noise impacts, while others raised questions about proposed alternatives and right of way specifics prior to the scoping meeting. Finally, there were requests to decrease the speed limit on El Toro Road as traffic was perceived to move too quickly for senior citizens in the neighborhood. Although no official responses were developed, the comments were reviewed and considered by the PDT as it conducted technical studies and advanced the development of the environmental document.

7.1 COMMUNITY-BASED ORGANIZATIONS

Outreach to inform the public of the scoping period and public meetings included bilingual direct-mail postcards, print advertising, local agency and business outreach, social media, the Project website, and postings at local cities and libraries, as discussed further below.

Public outreach efforts would continue throughout the CEQA and NEPA processes of the proposed Project, including during the public circulation phase of the environmental document, and would include community-based organizations.

7.1.1 Newspaper Advertisements

Print advertisements containing the public notice were published in each of the following local English and Spanish newspapers: Orange County Register, Saddleback Valley News, Laguna Woods Globe, and Excelsior. These full-color notices ran twice in each publication between July 12 and July 21, 2023. A subsequent notice announcing the extension of the public comment period was published in the Orange County Register on November 1, 2, and 5, 2023; in Excelsior on November 10, 2023; and in the Laguna Woods Globe and Saddleback Valley News on November 9, 2023.

7.1.2 Postcards

A bilingual postcard was mailed to 22,839 homes and businesses surrounding the El Toro Road interchange to announce the initial scoping period and provide meeting details. A second bilingual postcard was mailed to the same distribution area to notify the public of the extended comment period from November 1 through December 18, 2023.

7.1.3 Local Outreach

Local outreach included providing bilingual flyers to the Cities of Lake Forest, Laguna Hills, and Laguna Woods for distribution, with hard copies delivered to public libraries in all three cities. Additional notices were delivered to libraries within the Project area. Outreach to the Saddleback Valley Unified School District was initiated; however, distribution was not possible due to the district's summer recess. Door-to-door business outreach was conducted during both the initial and extended comment periods, reaching more than 400 businesses near the El Toro Road interchange.

7.1.4 Electronic Outreach

A targeted social media campaign using Facebook and Twitter was also conducted throughout July to promote the public scoping meetings and encourage participation. In addition, the Project website (www.octa.net/i5eltoro) served as an online repository for Project materials and provided portals for submitting comments on the proposed Project and alternatives during the scoping period.

7.2 STAKEHOLDERS

Stakeholders include the universe of those whose influence can veto or significantly affect the efforts of the proposed project. Stakeholders include individuals, community-based organizations, neighborhood groups, etc., and governmental agencies. Governmental agencies get a special mention here since there have been instances where it is assumed the project is compatible with another agency's mission statement when in fact there might be differences to discuss.

7.2.1 *Project Development Team*

The PDT includes representatives from OCTA, Caltrans, and the Cities of Lake Forest, Laguna Woods, and Laguna Hills.

A PDT kick-off meeting with representatives from the Cities of Laguna Woods, Laguna Hills, and Lake Forest, as well as OCTA and Caltrans, was held on September 21, 2023. The meeting initiated the PA/ED phase for Build Alternatives AA-1 (subsequently renamed Build Alternative 1), Build Alternative AA-5 (subsequently renamed Build Alternative 2), and the TDS/TMS Build Alternative (subsequently renamed Build Alternative 3). The meeting included a discussion of traffic studies, scoping activities, environmental studies, and associated action items. The Project overview, Project limits, purpose and need, funding, and schedule were presented at the meeting. Since then, PDT meetings have been held every month to keep the PDT updated on the progress of the Project.

Caltrans conducted coordination with the Cities of Laguna Woods, Laguna Hills, and Lake Forest during development of Build Alternative 2 to refine the proposed design and address local considerations. Based on coordination in 2023 and subsequent engineering analysis, revisions to the alternative were evaluated for consistency with Caltrans policy

and operational performance. Additional coordination meetings were held with the local jurisdictions in February and March 2026 to present the revised configuration; however, consensus on the modified design was not reached. Build Alternative 2 was eliminated from further consideration in March 2026.

7.2.2 Agencies and Organizations

Agencies and organizations who commented during the scoping periods include the City of Laguna Woods, CHP, Orange County Parks (OC Parks), the City of Laguna Hills, South Coast Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD), Laguna Woods Village, the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC), St. George's Episcopal Church, and the Pathway School, which is located at St. George's Episcopal Church.

7.2.3 Section 4(f) Consultation

The Project is expected to result in a *de minimis* use of one Section 4(f) property, Cavanaugh Park. All other parks, schools, and multi-use trails within 0.5 mile of the Project limits were evaluated; it was determined that a use under Section 4(f) would not occur. In accordance with Section 4(f) requirements, Caltrans District 12 initiated preliminary consultation with the agency that has jurisdiction over Cavanaugh Park by transmitting a consultation letter to the City of Lake Forest (City).

Consultation began with issuance of a preliminary Section 4(f) coordination letter on October 1, 2018, which provided a description of the Project and discussed its potential to affect park features. Following this initial correspondence, Caltrans held meetings with the City on October 18, 2018, and November 27, 2018, to discuss the Section 4(f) process, identify resource considerations, and review the original Project alternatives that were under study at that time. During these meetings, the City expressed a preference to conduct community outreach during Project design to gather public input on potential replacement features for Cavanaugh Park. A follow-up preliminary Section 4(f) coordination letter, dated February 4, 2025, was sent to the City to provide updated information regarding the currently proposed alternatives. During the April 2025 PDT meeting, the City communicated that it was initiating efforts to revitalize Cavanaugh Park and indicated it would continue coordinating with Caltrans to ensure park improvements align with the design for the I-5/EI Toro Road Interchange Project. The City of Lake Forest held two community outreach meetings to provide more information about the Cavanaugh Park renovations and gather public input on September 6, 2025, and October 29, 2025.

On December 8, 2025, Caltrans and the City met to discuss the latest design and Project schedule for Cavanaugh Park. During the meeting, the City engineer, Doug Erdman, confirmed that the City considered the I-5/EI Toro Road Interchange Project in the final concept design plans for Cavanaugh Park. Based on subsequent correspondence with the City in May 2026, the City anticipates park construction to begin in late 2028. The City indicated that it would share the most recent I-5/EI Toro Road Interchange Project design with its design consultant to avoid conflicts between the proposed park improvements and planned interchange improvements.

The Project would require both a temporary acquisition (approximately 0.5 acre) and permanent acquisition (approximately 0.59 acre) from the park, constituting less than 10 percent of the park's total acreage. As detailed in the Supplemental Section 4(f) Evaluation (Caltrans 2026c), these impacts would not adversely affect the activities, features, or attributes that qualify the park for Section 4(f) protection; therefore, the Project meets the criteria for a preliminary *de minimis* determination.

The City has agreed to work with Caltrans and OCTA to provide concurrence on the preliminary *de minimis* determination, based on the analysis and findings thus far. Caltrans will continue to coordinate with the City prior to approval of the EIR/EA to finalize the *de minimis* determination.

The Section 4(f) analysis will be included in the EIR/EA, which will be circulated concurrently with public review of the environmental document. Following the close of the public review period but prior to finalizing the EIR/EA, Caltrans will request concurrence from the City on the proposed *de minimis* determination for Cavanaugh Park.

7.3 COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION PROGRAM

A specialized community participation program is not warranted for the Project. However, Caltrans follows a robust outreach effort that includes public participation to Hispanic and Latino residents. Caltrans must comply with Title VI requirements. There will be additional opportunities for public involvement during the CEQA and NEPA processes, where comments regarding the proposed Project can be made for consideration in the environmental document that is being prepared.

7.4 RESULTS

A public meeting will be conducted in conjunction with the release of the draft environmental document for public review so that the public can learn about the proposed Project, ask questions, and speak to Caltrans and OCTA staff regarding the proposed Project. Spanish language interpretation will be provided at the public meeting. The public meeting may be conducted in person and/or virtually by internet or phone. Members of the public would have the opportunity to provide comments on the draft environmental document during the public review period. Response to all applicable public comments would be provided in the final environmental document prepared for the proposed Project.

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