

August 21, 2009

**NOTICE OF PREPARATION (NOP) of a  
SUPPLEMENTAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT (SEIR)**

**for the**

**2010 Monterey Bay Area Metropolitan Transportation Plan,  
2010 Monterey County Regional Transportation Plan,  
2010 San Benito County Regional Transportation Plan,  
and  
2010 Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Plan**

*(Referred to collectively as the 2010 Monterey Bay Area MTP)*

The Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG) is preparing a 2010 supplement to update its previously certified 2005 Metropolitan Transportation Plan Environmental Impact Report (2005 MTP EIR, SCH# 200406103).

AMBAG is the federally-designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for Monterey, San Benito and Santa Cruz counties. The Monterey Bay Area Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) is the metropolitan long-range transportation plan for Monterey, San Benito and Santa Cruz counties. The Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (SCCRTC), the Council of San Benito County Governments (SBtCOG) and the Transportation Agency for Monterey County (TAMC) are the state-designated Regional Transportation Planning Agencies (RTPAs) for Santa Cruz, San Benito and Monterey Counties, respectively. The Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), prepared by each RTPA, is the respective county-level long-range transportation plan.

In partnership with SCCRTC, SBtCOG and TAMC, AMBAG will be the Lead Agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) for the preparation of the Supplemental Environmental Impact Report (SEIR). The SEIR will be a single environmental document evaluating all three aforementioned 2010 plan updates. SCCRTC, SBtCOG and TAMC, collectively, are responsible agencies under CEQA. AMBAG, SCCRTC, SBtCOG and TAMC hereby provide notice of preparation of this environmental document. We need to know the views of your agency as to the scope and content of the environmental information which is germane to your agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the project. Additional Project Information is attached.

Due to the time limits mandated by State law, your response to this Notice of Preparation is requested at the earliest possible date but not later than 30 days after receipt of this notice, or by September 21, 2009.

Please mail, fax, email or hand-deliver your written response to this notice to:

Randy Deshazo, Principal Planner  
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AMBAG offices are open between 8:00 AM and 5:00 PM, Monday through Friday at 445 Reservation Road, Suite G, Marina, CA 93933.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_



Randy Deshazo, Principal Planner

Date: August 21, 2009

## UPCOMING SCOPING MEETINGS

Three (3) SEIR scoping meetings will be held, one in each county, as follows:

- **Santa Cruz County:** September 15, 2009 at 7:00 p.m.  
SCCRTC Conference Room, 1523 Pacific Avenue, Santa Cruz, CA 95060
- **Monterey County:** September 17, 2009 at 1:00 p.m.  
TAMC Conference Room, 55-B Plaza Circle, Salinas, CA 93901
- **San Benito County:** September 17, 2009 at 5:30 p.m.  
San Benito County Board of Supervisors Chambers, 481 4th Street, Hollister, CA 95023

## PROJECT INFORMATION

### **Project Title:**

2010 Monterey Bay Area Metropolitan Transportation Plan

### **Proposed Action:**

The proposed action is a series of minor technical updates to the 2005 Monterey Bay Area MTP, and consequentially, to the 2005 RTPs of the three RTPAs (SBtCOG, SCCRTC and TAMC). Each RTPA is updating its list of financially constrained and unconstrained transportation projects, as well as updates to goals, policies and strategies. As a combined effort, the revised document will be referred to as the 2010 Monterey Bay Area MTP. The updates will be conducted in consultation with the following partner agencies:

- Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments (AMBAG – Federal Metropolitan Planning Organization)
- California Air Resources Board (CARB)
- Caltrans, District 5
- Council of San Benito County Governments (SBtCOG – State RTPA)
- Environmental Protection Agency, Region IX (EPA)
- Federal Highway Administration, California Division (FHWA)
- Federal Transit Administration, Region IX (FTA)
- Local Jurisdictions
- Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District (MBUAPCD)
- Monterey-Salinas Transit (MST)
- Santa Cruz County Regional Transportation Commission (SCCRTC – State RTPA)
- Santa Cruz Metropolitan Transit District (SCMTD)
- Transportation Agency for Monterey County (TAMC – State RTPA)

The federally-required MTP is a planning document that establishes the general goals, policies and strategies governing the conduct of a continuing, cooperative and comprehensive transportation program in effect for the three counties. In general, the MTP is a multimodal, financially constrained metropolitan transportation plan outlining the Monterey Bay region transportation direction for at least a twenty year-period. The purpose of the plan is to coordinate and facilitate the programming and budgeting of all transportation facilities and services within the three-county Monterey Bay region in accordance with Federal regulations. The MTP, upon adoption by the AMBAG Board of Directors, will become the basis for the Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (MTIP), the transportation projects financial programming document, for the three-county region.

The transportation projects enfolded into the MTP's constrained and unconstrained elements are solicited, prioritized and selected by the RTPAs for their county-level, state-required RTPs. AMBAG receives the

project lists from them and develops the MTP based on this collective list of constrained and unconstrained projects. The MTP and RTPs do not provide designs or a construction schedule, and adoption of the MTP and RTPs does not represent an approval action for any of the individual transportation programs and projects listed. Detailed site-specific alignment, location, design and scheduling of the improvement projects identified in the MTP and RTPs are not fixed, and these individual projects may be modified substantially from their initial description in the MTP and RTPs at the time they are implemented.

#### **Scope of Environmental Review:**

For this environmental review, AMBAG and the three respective RTPAs have elected to prepare a single program-level supplement to its certified 2005 MTP EIR that will assess and mitigate the environmental impacts of all three long range transportation plans. The certified 2005 MTP EIR provided a single CEQA document that analyzed the MTP, as well as the three RTPs that formed the MTP. The 2010 SEIR prepared for this update will address any changes in environmental conditions, regulations or potential environmental impacts based on the updates to each plan. As a supplement, the SEIR will only address information, conditions, impacts or mitigation strategies that differ from the certified 2005 MTP EIR. The 2010 MTP SEIR will also include a programmatic greenhouse gas (GHG) analysis, as required by current legislation. The GHG analysis will analyze the potential impact of the 2010 MTP on global climate change. All information and analysis updated by the SEIR will be distributed for a minimum 45-day public review period.

#### **Potential Environmental Effects:**

Similar to previous MTP/RTP updates, the long range transportation plans are anticipated to result in impacts related to the construction and operation of new or expanded improvement projects. Implementation of projects over time may result in the following impacts:

- Substantial adverse effects on scenic vistas;
- Substantial damage to scenic resources;
- Substantial degradation of visual character;
- Conversion of prime farmland, unique farmland and farmland of statewide importance;
- Potential conflicts with Williamson Act Contracts;
- Fragmentation of agricultural lands and changes in land uses adjacent to agricultural lands;
- Modification of habitat;
- Modification of riparian areas/wetlands;
- Interference with wildlife movement;
- Conflicts with protective ordinances and policies;
- Increased impervious surface/storm water runoff;
- Increased noise related to increased traffic volumes;
- Increased noise levels along rail corridors;
- Indirect growth inducement;
- Deterioration in traffic operations (due to the potential for increased localized congestion for several projects) ; and
- Deterioration of air quality, including cumulative contribution to greenhouse gas emissions.

AMBAG, SCCRTC, TAMC and SBtCOG look forward to your comments and/or participation at the upcoming scoping meetings.

# 2010 MONTEREY BAY AREA MTP LOCATION MAP

