Visual Impact Assessment Memorandum

Riverford Road Roundabouts Project

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Statement of Compliance: Produced in compliance with National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requirements, as appropriate, to meet the level of analysis and documentation that has been determined necessary for this project.

Per Exhibit D, Article XVIII, Section A. (1) of the contract: (c) 2020 California Department of Transportation.

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List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

AVE	Area of Visual Effect
Caltrans	California Department of Transportation
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
Handbook	*Caltrans 2023 VIA Handbook*
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
NEPA	National Environmental Policy Act
PDT	Project Development Team
VIA	visual impact assessment

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of Report and Assessment Methodology

The purpose of this visual impact assessment (VIA) memorandum is to document potential visual change in the Area of Visual Effect (AVE) for the County of San Diego (County) Riverford Road Roundabouts Project ('the project' or 'proposed project'). This memorandum follows the guidance outlined in the publication *Guidelines for the Visual Impact Assessment of Highway Projects*, published by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) in January 2015. The formatting of this template is aligned with the directions and examples included in the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) *2023 VIA Handbook* (*Handbook*), available at https://dot.ca.gov/-/media/dot-media/programs/design/documents/via-handbook--a11y.pdf.
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2.0 Establishment Phase

2.1 Project Location and Setting

The project location and setting provide the context for determining the type of changes to the existing visual environment. The proposed project is on State Route 67 at the Riverford Road Interchange, in the community of Lakeside in San Diego County, California. The project is located along a corridor that connects the cities of Santee and El Cajon.

The landscape is characterized as a rural valley, comprised of rolling hills and riparian river bottom bisected by a state route highway and local roadway system within a moderately built community, comprised of a mix of commercial, single-family residences, recreational vehicle (RV) dealership, and condos and schools.

Project Location Map and Limits

2.2 Project Description

The County DPW proposes the Riverford Road Roundabouts Project (proposed project), to construct roundabouts at two intersections ("two intersections"), in Lakeside, San Diego County. The northern intersection is located at the on- and off-ramps of State Route 67 (SR-67) and Riverford Road and the southern is at the Riverford Road and Woodside Avenue intersection. Both intersections currently experience traffic congestion with vehicle queues at the SR-67 ramps. The roundabouts would improve the overall traffic efficiency, circulation, and ease congestion. Caltrans is considered a CEQA Responsible Agency because they are a public agency who also has responsibility for carrying out or approving the project (i.e., the project located within the Caltrans' right-of-way of this SR-67 interchange).

The northern roundabout would replace a two-way stop-controlled intersection at the on-/off-ramps of SR-67 southbound and Riverford Road (northern roundabout). To accommodate the roundabout, the intersection would be widened. The on-/off-ramps to/from SR-67 southbound would be realigned and widened. The existing N. Woodside Avenue connection to Riverford Road would be relocated via construction of a new leg that will connect and convey existing traffic flow in and out of the northern roundabout.

The southern roundabout would replace the existing three-way signal-controlled intersection at Woodside Avenue and Riverford Road. To accommodate the roundabout, the intersection would be widened, and its elevation lowered to meet existing elevation of Riverford Road. Existing northbound SR-67 off-ramp connection to Woodside Avenue would be relocated via construction of a new leg, conveying exiting traffic flow into the southern roundabout.

The proposed project would also construct Class II bicycle lanes, sidewalks, crosswalks, and shared-use pathways (for pedestrians and bicyclists) to create a "complete street." Rapid Flashing Beacons would be installed at multiple crosswalks (southbound SR-67 off-ramp at northern roundabout and northbound SR-67 off-ramp at southern roundabout).

Stormwater drainage facilities (e.g., vegetated and/or concrete swales) and water quality treatment features (e.g., biofiltration basins) would be constructed to capture and treat roadway stormwater. Drainage facilities and water quality improvement features would vary in size and may include vegetation/plantings and permeable landscape. New curb cuts, gutters, storm drain inlets, headwalls, channels, and sidewalk underdrains would be added and convey stormwater to the proposed water quality treatment features. Additionally, dirt slopes underneath bridge overpasses would be stabilized, and the project would add multiple streetlights to help illuminate both roundabouts for drivers' safety. Riverford Road between both intersections would be widened to accommodate the shared-use pathways and stormwater drainage facilities. Retaining walls would be constructed where grading cannot be achieved and range in height from 3.5 feet to 25 feet, depending on location.

Construction of the proposed improvements would be phased over approximately one to two years, with the potential for temporary full closure of both project intersections. Traffic

detours would be in place as-needed and would utilize the adjacent Winter Gardens SR-67 Interchange, Channel Road, and Riverside Drive.

Rock removal via blasting and/or other rock fracturing methods are likely; however, access to adjacent residences and businesses in the vicinity of the project, as well as for emergency vehicles, would be maintained at all times.

The proposed project would be constructed largely within the existing County's and Caltrans' right-of-way, with slight encroachment onto the City of Santee's right-of-way. In addition, temporary and permanent property acquisitions are proposed to facilitate project design and construction needs.

2.3 Project Features

The project consists of the following features:

Street Improvements

Asphalt pavings with concrete curb and gutters and standard street markings will be used throughout the project that will remain as identifiable streetscape improvements to users that traverse the project site. Existing pavement replacements and minor additions will occur as a result of constructing the roundabouts, SR-67 on-/off- ramps' realignment and consolidation, installation of multi-use pathways and pedestrian crosswalks and beyond gore paving. Multi-use pathways, sidewalk and Class II bike lanes are proposed around each roundabout and along each side of Riverford Road and Woodside Road alignments, improving multimodal connectivity, safety, and access for bicyclists and pedestrians. Associated signage and striping will be constructed per the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) standards.

Roundabouts

The two roundabouts will be new roadway features introduced with the project to improve traffic circulation and reduce congestion, thus improving mobility and safety for motorists. The roundabouts will be a concentric, flat form and will consist of colored concrete apron, with low shrub landscaping and accented with a few trees in the center, to enhance the appearance of the intersections. New crosswalks, lane striping and signage will provide motorists, pedestrians, and bicyclists with directions on movement through the roundabouts. For this project, the roundabouts will replace an existing stoplight-controlled and a stop-sign-controlled intersections and associated roadway elements.

SR-67 Northbound and Southbound On-/Off- Ramp Legs

The existing SR-67 northbound off-ramp will be relocated further to the north to convey exiting traffic flow through the southern roundabout. The existing off ramp and light-controlled intersection would be replaced by graded slope and biofiltration basin. The SR-67 southbound off-ramp would be slightly realigned to convey traffic into the northern roundabout. The eastbound lane of North Woodside Avenue at Riverford Road would be relocated further south and realigned to connect and convey traffic into the northern roundabout.

Retaining Walls

Retaining walls would be required to accommodate the roadway roundabouts at the north and south sides of the freeway and under the bridges. At the south side, the intersection and part of the Riverford Road's grades would be lowered to comply with roadway geometrics design standards for vertical alignment, visual access, and sight distance requirements. The lowering of grades will require retaining walls at the back of sidewalk to transition to original grades. The retaining walls will be tan-colored, cast-in-place concrete that will utilize an aesthetic treatment, using form liners to develop patterns and texture. The aesthetic treatment specifications will be determined during the final design phase of the project.

The retaining walls will vary in height, depending on their purpose to accommodate either proposed cut or fill conditions. Along both sides of Riverford Road, cut conditions will be

outside of the bridge envelopes, and will require walls ranging from 3.5 to 15.5 feet tall. Wall ends would be curved in order to transition the grading to existing grades and help soften the appearance of the roundabout intersections.

A large retaining wall is proposed along the south edge of Woodside Avenue and will range between approximately 8 to 25 feet tall, with a length of approximately 625 feet. This wall will resemble the natural appearance of the indigenous soils and minor boulders found along this slope. The wall will likely be constructed by drilling into the slope and placing metal pipe tie-backs, applying a metal mesh over the surface, then shotcrete over the surface with a natural "boulder" finish, with staining and texturing. This finish would help to maintain the valley's rural character.

One fill condition retaining wall will be placed adjacent to the southbound off-ramp, to allow off-ramp realignment, providing an optimized approach to the new roundabout intersection, per Caltrans' roadway design standards.

The retaining walls are intended to have a smooth layout and profiles with long radius curves and no tangent sections, if possible. The tops of retaining walls would be near-level and profiles less than 10%, to the extent feasible. Walls shall be moved away from the edges of pavement, where possible, to provide space for plantings or enhanced paving buffers.

Walls would include natural textures and integral concrete colors to help mask the appearance of their surfaces. The walls would appear monolithic yet contextual to the existing natural soil colors and minor rock outcroppings present.

Graded Slopes

Slopes would be graded 1:2 or flatter to support planting and irrigation. Where steeper grades are needed, a retaining wall will be provided to transition from one level to the next. Grading would utilize techniques such as slope rounding, slope sculpting, and variable gradients to approximate the appearance of natural topography.

Safety Railing

Safety railing will be required at the top of all retaining walls where fall protection is required for pedestrian and maintenance personnel safety. If and where possible, staining safety railings will be stained with a dark brown color to lessen the impact of shiny new gray-colored posts and cable, providing a softer, more-natural appearance that will blend into the surrounding environment. The colored finish will help to maintain the valley's rural character.

Fencing

Fences at Caltrans right-of-way shall match existing fence type, specifically the same height, material, metal size, and galvanized finish. If and where possible, fences shall be stained to lessen the impact of shiny new gray-colored fencing, providing a softer, more-natural appearance that will blend into the surrounding environment. Fence staining applications should consider the extents of application and termination at existing fencing,

to maintain color continuity and consistency within existing conditions. Specific locations where this would occur should be indicated in the PS&E documents, as appropriate.

Beyond Gore Paving

Pavings located beyond the end of the freeway gores (limits of landscaping at the narrowest point) will be colored concrete, potentially with an exposed aggregate finish. Options for further enhancements could include rock blanket in lieu of colored concrete.

Bridge Slope Paving

Slope pavings will be used above retaining walls under the bridges, to provide a transition to the bridge abutments minimizing erosion and allow for the collection of site runoff. Slope paving will be cobble rock set in concrete. Cobble rock materials should be comprised of a mix of red, brown, maroon, tan, and grays colors, consistent with the SR-67 corridor theme. Rock cobble colors represent the indigenous colors found in the Lakeside area.

Raised Concrete Islands

If and where possible, pavings within roadway medians would be tan-colored concrete possibly with an exposed aggregate finish or cobble set in concrete. Worker safety paving should be considered for these areas for ease of maintenance in the roundabout areas.

Pedestrian Sidewalk

A pedestrian sidewalk, approximately eight feet wide, with American with Disabilities Act ramps, will be constructed to improve pedestrian access along a segment of Woodside Avenue, immediately south of the southern roundabout and in all directions through the project and to connect to existing sidewalks. Narrow, non-traversable areas next to this sidewalks or curb ramps would be paved with small rock pebbles set in tan-colored mortar as a detectable surface not intended for walking.

Multi-Use Pathways

Multi-use or shared-use pathways would be ten-foot-wide tan-colored concrete, for bicyclists' and pedestrians' access through the SR-67 Interchange, with designated pedestrian crossings at designated locations within roundabouts and roadways. Narrow, non-traversable areas next to the pathways would be paved with small rock pebbles set in tan-colored mortar.

Bicycle Lane

A Class II bicycle lane will be constructed along a segment of Woodside Avenue, on both sides of the proposed multi-use pathway on Woodside Avenue, for bicycle facility continuity and safe transition down the roadway for bicyclists.

Drainage Facilities

Stormwater management facilities will include concrete swales, detention basins or biofiltration basins for stormwater quality improvement, all to be constructed within the project site limits. These improvements are proposed at the toe of slope areas or at low points between two slopes. Detention or biofiltration basins shall appear as natural landscape features. Swales shall be sodded with irrigated native grass sod.

If and where feasible, concrete drainage features such as headwalls, ditches, channels and aprons in roadside areas shall use tan-colored concrete to blend with native soils and to maintain color cohesiveness.

Lighting, Signage, and Related Appurtenances

Street lighting and signage would be installed along Woodside Avenue and North Woodside Avenue/Riverford Road areas at specific intersection locations. Lighting facilities would be shielded and/or point downward, to protect the nearby sensitive biological resources and residents, prevent vehicle headlight glare for motorists, and for overall safety. Lighting shall be a low-temperature color, 3000k or less.

Vegetation Control Features

If feasible, at guardrails, vegetation control shall be tan, integral-colored concrete, to blend in with native soils.

Site Landscaping

Proposed site landscaping would generally follow and be consistent with the SR-67 corridor theme. Proposed landscaping (vegetated and hardscape) can be described as natural in appearance, warmer in green/tan colors and softer textures, low maintenance, aimed at preserving open space views, and be contextual to the area's existing mix of rural and suburban setting. Plant palette would include native and ornamental drought-tolerant shrubs and trees, compliant with the County's and Caltrans standards and the Lakeside Community Design Standards. Low-growing shrubs and vegetation groundcover will be planted in the center of roundabouts, adjacent to the sidewalk, multi-use pathways, within roadway medians, and within biofiltration basins, to maintain roadway visibility while beautifying the project. Landscaping would utilize a southern California native plant palette and be consistent with the character of adjacent landscape. Plantings would control erosion, improve water quality, be sustainable, to the extent feasible, low-maintenance, and require low or minimal irrigation.

Project site would be restored and revegetated within the disturbed project footprint limits, including any construction staging areas, materials storage locations, and vehicles parking areas. Site restoration will occur within both, the County's and Caltrans' Right-of Way. The limits of landscaping, plant spacing, container plantings, and irrigation system logistics would be determined in coordination with the Caltrans' District Landscape Architect.

2.4 Description of Area of Visual Effect

The Area of Visual Effect (AVE) is defined by the edges around the project footprint that includes the trees of the San Diego River and self-storage building to the north, SR-67 and commercial properties to the east, San Diego River and SR-67 to the west, and steep hill with residences and commercial businesses to the south. See Site Area Map below.

The project site limits fit within a larger context of the visual boundaries, some of which are defined by the tree mass of the San Diego River and the southern and western facades of the self-storage facility at the northern edges of the project. On the southern and southwestern side of the project, the edges can be defined by the steep hill and the single-home residences. The western edge of the project is less defined but is considered to be the SR-67 highway, landscape areas of SR-67, and San Diego River tree massing. The east edges of the visual limits are SR-67 highway and landscape areas in that direction.

Site Area Map

2.5 Visual Resources and Scenic Resources

SR-67 is a designated San Diego County scenic highway, per the Conservation and Open Space Element of the County's General Plan. SR-67 is a designated scenic route from the Santee city limits to SR 78 (excluding a portion in the City of Poway). Based on the aerial photography review and a site visit conducted by David Preciado of RE Services on January 17, 2024, the project site is located within a small portion of the SR-67 highway corridor. The northern intersection of the proposed project site is located immediately south of San Diego River and adjacent to a large self-storage facility. The river traverses in this location with a wide greenbelt containing a multi-use recreational trail. The topography surrounding the project site is generally flat and typical of a wide river valley. However, foothills rise relatively abruptly within the southern portion of the project site, adjacent to the southern project intersection. A small single-family residential neighborhood is located on the shoulder of the foothills, south to southwest of the project site. Only one single-family residence has a direct but partial line-of-sight of a portion of the existing southern intersection, including a portion of Riverford Road before the overpass bridges, and, therefore, would have a view of the southern roundabout project area (see Section 3.3 for more details).

A review of the Lakeside Community Plan, a component of the County's General Plan, calls for the preservation of "unique and scenic views and vistas" in Policy #4. The Lakeside Community Plan does not, however, designate the project site or its immediate surroundings as scenic. Further, the project site is not located in or near one of the Lakeside Resource Conservation Areas. However, the project is located within the larger County of San Diego Scenic Highway corridor and will require minimization measures such as landscaping and architectural treatments.

Non-designated scenic resources within the vicinity of the project area include San Diego River corridor that is comprised of riparian vegetation. The river corridor provides green, dense vegetation along the valley bottom that complements the surrounding rolling hills and creates perimeter ridge boundaries of the valley, all founding key natural characteristics of the Lakeside community. These natural features contrast with the existing built environment comprised of residential housing, commercial business structures, RV dealership, schools, condominium complexes, and retail shops in the area, providing a balance between the built and natural environment.

County of San Diego – Scenic Highway SR-67

The proposed project is adjacent to a County-designated scenic highway SR-67 (County General Plan, Scenic Highway Element, Part VI). A scenic highway consists of scenic corridors and/or scenic resources located generally adjacent to and/or visible from the vehicular horizon (County Visual Resources Guidelines for Determining Significance 2007). In this case, SR-67 is a scenic local highway with a panoramic viewshed and horizons that include rolling hills, boulders, native vegetation, natural terrain, and partial skyline. The dimension of a scenic corridor is usually identified using a motorist's line of vision and the extents of distant horizons views.

Although some vegetation removal would be required to construct the roundabouts, shared-use pathways, walls, on-/off- ramp connectors, and other project components, the project site would be revegetated and landscaped with native shrub and tree species,

native grasses, rock mulch and rock blankets, decorative boulders, and would use colors, textures, curves, and transitions to help project components integrate with the surroundings, scenic SR-67 highway and the SR-67 corridor theme. This would not only improve the existing visual character within the footprint of this transportation facility, but also add new vegetation and greenery to this urbanized and largely disturbed area.

Overall, the project would be compatible with the existing viewsheds and visual environment in terms of character, visual quality, and scenic horizon/resources. While there would be changes to the physical environment, inclusion of aesthetic design treatments, visual design features, and landscaping would help to integrate project components with the surrounding natural and built environment, thus minimizing potential adverse impacts. Ultimately, the project would follow existing topography and result in improvements to the visual quality through the addition of landscape, vegetation, soft colors, more natural textures, and decorative hardscapes. No obstructions to the existing viewshed of the scenic horizon from the viewpoint of SR-67 travelers would be created. No changes are proposed to the nearby businesses, SR-67 overpass bridges, adjacent properties, or other area landmarks. Impact would be less than significant. Therefore, no significant impacts to a scenic vista of SR-67 highway would occur and the visual quality or character of its viewshed would not be significantly altered.

2.5.1 Site Context

Views From Within Project Footprint

Looking west toward the proposed southern roundabout from east on Woodside Avenue.

Looking east toward the proposed southern roundabout location from west on Woodside Avenue at Woodside Terrace.

Looking northwest toward the proposed southern roundabout from the proposed shared-use pathway at Woodside Avenue and Riverford Road.

Looking south on Riverford Road toward the proposed northern roundabout location from North Woodside Avenue and Riverford Road.

Views from Approach to Project Site

Looking northeast from Woodside Terrace. View of an RV dealership from the residential area southwest of the project site. Vista includes an expansive view of the valley, skyline, mountain ridge and range. A glimpse of the northbound off-ramp is visible from this location.

Shows overhead utility poles and powerlines in the line-of-sight, together with natural landscape, boulders, and rolling hills. Displays scenic views for travelers on approach to the project site from southeast.

Demonstrates SR-67 northbound drivers' focus on the roadway ahead and a peripheral view of only the southern roundabout and section of Riverford Road leading up to the project site.

Demonstrates SR-67 southbound drivers' focus on the roadway ahead and general awareness of the expansive landscape.

Shows the view upon approach to the southbound off-ramp.

Shows views of SR-67 southbound drivers where little is visible of the proposed northern roundabout improvements. Due to the difference in elevation between the highway and Riverford Road in this area, the views are limited.

The photos above provide an overview of the project site context and how motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians would view the project while traveling toward the project site, what they might be focused on and the overall experience of the wider viewshed.

3.0 Inventory Phase

3.1 Description of Landscape Visual Character

Visual character is the objective composition of the visible landscape within a viewshed, based on the organization of the pattern elements line, form, color, and texture, and is commonly discussed in terms of dominance, scale, diversity, and continuity.

Existing Visual Character

The project area is one of several entrances to the Lakeside community, providing access to the north, west and east into several different neighborhoods. The project area is approximately 400 lineal feet from north to south and 1500 lineal feet along the centerline of SR-67, following the alignment of SR-67 southwest to east. The project area is bound by the southbound and northbound on- and off- ramps, beneath the overcrossing highway bridges and those areas along North Woodside Avenue and Woodside Avenue.

The neighborhood is comprised of mostly small commercial businesses and residential housing to the southwest, SR-67 roadway and open space to the west, San Diego River, SR-67 and RV storage yard to the east, San Diego River riparian and commercial business to the north, and rolling hill with private residences to the south. The topography is comprised of rolling hills south of Woodside Avenue, and intermittent open space, commercial and housing to the south and southwest.

The area is a rural suburban environment immediately adjacent to the freeway, that borders a few commercial properties offering convenient shopping, services, and RV sales. The residential properties are one-story single-family homes located on the shoulder of the hills along the southwestern edge of the project site. The hill at the southern edge of the project is covered in natural upland plant species and minor boulder outcroppings. The hill creates a physical separation between developed areas and contributes to the rural feel of the area. The northern edge of the project is bordered by the San Diego River, comprised of various riparian tree species that create a visual edge. The project's immediate surroundings are comprised of riparian, upland, chaparral, and coastal sage scrub vegetative communities.

There are few sources of existing lighting within the project area. Streetlights along Woodside Avenue are located at the intersections of Riverford Road and off- and on-ramp locations. All other light sources are from the commercial and residential properties south of the project site. On the north side, there are only a few existing light sources: one streetlight at the bottom of the southbound SR-67 offramp, and several safety lights mounted on the commercial storage building immediately adjacent to the project site.

The existing roadway features are the visually dominant built elements in the scene. The built forms of the commercial buildings are singular in form, color, and texture, with consistent height and setback from the roadway at the northern project limits. The gray hues and smooth textures of paved features contrast evenly with the green colors and softer textures of the natural landscape features within the AVE. The roadway landscape has minimal groundcover and provides low value with regards to form, yet color provides

contrast against the roadway surfaces. The continuity between the built and landscape features is minimally interrupted in form, line, and textural patterns within the project area. The natural elements provide a balance of features in the scene and supports the rural character of the valley. The built and natural elements in the view are consistent throughout the AVE, therefore the diversity of visual elements within the AVE is considered low.

The visual character of the existing AVE is considered to be rural suburban.

3.2 Description of Landscape Visual Quality

Existing Visual Quality

Visual quality is the viewer's perception of the visual environment and varies based on exposure, sensitivity and expectation of the viewers.

Visual quality is evaluated by identifying the vividness, intactness, and unity present in the project viewshed. The three criteria for evaluating visual quality are defined below:

> **Vividness** is the extent to which the landscape is memorable and is associated with distinctive, contrasting, and diverse visual elements.
>
> **Intactness** is the integrity of visual features in the landscape and the extent to which the existing landscape is free from non-typical visual intrusions.
>
> **Unity** is the extent to which all visual elements combine to form a coherent, harmonious visual pattern.

Vividness

The project viewshed expresses a moderately low degree of vividness as it is an unmemorable scene with standard roadway features, including asphalt roadways, curb and gutter, bridge overpasses, streetlights, parking and pavement striping, anchored with commercial properties at both north and south ends of the project corridor. The built features are simple and consistent within the project area, providing little diversity amongst elements in the view. There are no distinctive features in the project area. The natural features within the view help to offset the built elements in the view. The natural features help to maintain the open, rural character of the valley. **The existing vividness rating is moderately low.**

Intactness

The project area displays a moderately low level of intactness as there is visible intrusion of other elements upon the landscape and built features in the view. The primary distractions are the overhead utility poles with powerlines, streetlights, roadway signage, and roadway fencing both in the forefront and middle ground views. **The existing intactness rating is moderately low.**

Unity
The level of unity of landscape and built elements in the area of visual effect is moderately low, as built roadway elements impede slightly upon the landscape features, creating an unharmonious balance. **The existing unity rating is moderately low.**

The combined overall existing visual quality of the AVE in terms of vividness, unity and intactness is rated as moderately low.

3.3 Viewers

Viewer groups for this project are: 1) *neighbors* (those with views *of* the transportation project), 2) *roadway travelers* (those with views *from* the road and the transportation project; includes motorists, pedestrians and bicyclists, and *SR-67 travelers*.

Neighbors:
"Neighbors" for this project are considered to be single-home residents to the south and southwest, employees of businesses in the area and their patrons, RV storage visitors, and self-storage facility users.

The residential properties are located along Woodside Terrace. They are removed from the Riverford Road/Woodside Avenue intersection (southern portion of the project site) by approximately 350 feet and are facing the west. These residences' views of the project components would be obstructed by solid fences around their residences, other homes situated immediately in front of them, hilly topography, and trees. The only residence with a direct, albeit partial, view of the southern intersection and the southern portion of the future project site would be located at 11587 Woodside Avenue. This property is immediately south and adjacent to the southern intersection and is approximately 30 above it. Presently, they can see areas north of Woodside Avenue, parts of Riverford Road going north, and distant mountain ranges. This property's views of the project site would also be limited because the property is set back from the edge of the hill by at least 90 feet, limiting their views to the proposed biofiltration basin and shared-use pathways on Riverford Road. All other proposed project components, including the large retaining wall of up to 25 feet in heigh, would be hidden from their line-of-sight and none of the project components would obstruct their existing viewshed of distant mountain ranges. Therefore, no adverse visual impact would occur for these neighbors.

A residence located at 11573 Woodside Terrace faces north and west, which would include a partial view of a southern portion of the project site. Their existing view generally includes the northbound SR-67 Woodside Avenue off-ramp/light-controlled intersection and a distant mountain range. However, their viewshed is currently highly obstructed by the fencing around their home and an RV parked immediately in front of their house. Nonetheless, if these residents were to remove their fence and move the RV, post project construction, their views would include a biofiltration basin with native grasses, which would replace the existing off-ramp/light-controlled intersection. They would continue to see mountain ridgelines in the distance and open views toward the west (away from the

project site). Therefore, as a result of the project, these neighbors' viewshed would either not change or improve from existing conditions.

Finally, the RV dealership and businesses west of the dealership currently can only see the existing SR-67 northbound off-ramp) and not the southern intersection of the proposed project. Therefore, their vista would not change from current.

The duration of time that residents or commercial business patrons would view the project would range from several minutes to less than a minute, based on the general idea of how long it takes to take in a view of their surroundings for those visiting the area on business. **The exposure rating for neighbors is low. The viewer awareness of residents is moderately low**.

Travelers:
"Travelers" includes motorists traveling on SR-67 and motorists, pedestrians, and bicyclists traveling on Riverford Road, Woodside Avenue, and North Woodside Avenue. They would view the project from the roadway with either direct, partial, or peripheral views of the proposed improvements in the foreground to middle ground (within and around the northern and southern roundabout), depending on which roadway they are traveling on. The quantity of viewers would be approximately eighteen thousand viewers per day (according to the PSR-PDS report prepared for this project) traveling through the project, including motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians. Highway travelers are the largest viewing group with limited viewer exposure of approximately less than one minute at a time[2], due to the small footprint of the proposed project and fast speeds on SR-67. Daily commuters from the area would have more exposure of the area due to continuous slow traffic movement through the roundabouts intersections and the project site overall. **As a result, travelers would have an exposure rating considered to be moderately low.**

Collectively, viewers would have an exposure rating considered moderately low.

3.4 Viewpoints

Viewpoints can be vistas, open landscape views, ocean views, views of mountains, views of historical or iconic buildings, rock outcroppings, heritage trees, tree groves etc. The importance of each viewpoint is determined by the level of scenic resource designation, the distance of the scenic or visual resource, and the visual quality of the scenic or visual resource.

No scenic viewpoints have been identified for this project.

[2] Exposure times are based on the length of the project area, traffic conditions, and posted travel speeds in this location.

4.0 Analysis Phase / Evaluation of Visual Impact
4.1 Project Visualizations

Key View #1 – Southern Intersection Viewpoint

Key View #1 - Existing Conditions

Key View #1 – Simulated View

Key View #2 – Northern Intersection Viewpoint

Key View #2 - Existing Conditions View

Key View #2 – Simulated View

4.2 Visual Compatibility / Potential Changes to Visual Resources

Change to Visual Character

The visual character of the proposed project would be compatible with the existing visual character of the AVE, surrounding environment, and the SR-67 corridor theme. Generally, the alignment of the roadway features would be similar, however the form of the roadway features would change by introducing more curvilinear roundabout features, peripheral curbs, drainage features, pedestrian pathways, retaining walls, and landscaping. The new alignments would replace the intersections and related signal lights, stop signs and signage with the new roundabouts, lighting and signage, only slightly reducing distractions in the AVE. The existing project area landscaping is mostly very low growing non-native grasses within non-developed areas and on embankment slopes of the SR-67, Riverford Road, Woodside Avenue, and North Woodside Avenue. Colors and textures would be improved as proposed landscaping would add more green colors year-round and natural textures via the addition of shrubs, trees, and grasses throughout the project limits, resulting in an increase in green and earthtone colors and a larger variety of textures throughout the AVE. The earthtone colors would be added in the form of retaining walls, tan-colored multi-use pathways, paving cobbles in tan mortar, and enhanced roadway pavings that will improve compatibility of all features within the AVE.

The scale of the proposed project – both built and landscape features – would slightly increase due to the minor widening of both intersections and the introduction of trees with vertical forms in landscape areas. The diversity of features would increase with the introduction of roundabouts, sidewalk and pathways, crosswalks, retaining walls, median islands, and water quality improvement features; however, the expanded landscaping will improve the AVE by creating a more harmonious balance between built and natural features.

The project would introduce expanded landscaping throughout the project, increasing green and tan colors with softer textures that will balance the expanded built forms of roadways and retaining walls of gray colors and smoother textures. The introduction of the new built and natural elements with the project would result in the low degree of change from the existing visual character to a slightly more urban appearance. It is anticipated that the project would retain the rural character of the valley and be compliant with the Lakeside Community Design Guidelines, policies and objectives for this area.

The proposed pavings and aesthetic treatments for multi-use paths and walkways will be compliant with the SR-67 corridor theme as the proposed project features provide earthtone colors for pavings, enhance pavings at beyond gore locations, stained fencings and new landscaping within gores and peripheral slopes that complies with Caltrans standards for right-of-way landscaping.

The project introduces new improvements at peripheral areas along the SR-67 highway corridor that minimizes impacts by limiting new built features, such as retaining walls and roundabouts to areas below or to the side of viewer's visual angles when traveling the SR-67 alignment. And the portions of retaining walls that extend beyond the existing bridge structures curve into slopes and reduce in height, minimizing their presence within

the AVE. The project also introduces new landscaping within highway areas that will further limit the views of SR-67 travelers toward the roundabouts and intersections proposed but would not block any extended views of the valley.

Intactness would increase to a moderate level as the project would only slightly reduce the distracting intersection-related elements in the view and improve the contrast between landscape and man-made elements in the view. The existing utility lines and overhead wires, stop lights and poles would be removed and replaced with new lights and directional signage, maintaining nearly the same level of distractions in the view. The project is highly compatible with the AVE.

The change to the existing visual character is low beneficial change.

4.3 Visual Contrast

Visual Change

Visual quality will improve with the construction of the project as the scene would become potentially more memorable to the viewer as the improvements will introduce new roadway features and landscaping. The proposed street improvements would introduce somewhat more dominant built features but with curvilinear shapes, alignments, and configurations, balanced by added natural landscape features throughout the project area. Landscape features include the biofiltration basins, within the roundabouts, medians, peripheral areas, enhanced concrete pavings and rock cobble pavings at the perimeters of roadways, all of which would soften the project area and provide transition to the surrounding existing environment. The contrast between existing visual environment and project improvements would be low as the proposed project features are highly compatible with the AVE.

4.3.1 Vividness would increase to a moderate level as the new roundabouts, walls, walkways and landscaping would contribute to a more memorable scene. The new improvements would introduce new contrasting colors, textures and shapes that would provide more diversity of features within the AVE and higher interest to the viewer, resulting potentially in a more memorable view.

4.3.2 Unity would remain at a moderately low level as the new project improvements would not markedly improve the relationship with the surrounding environment beyond the project limits. The project proposes a balance of natural and built features, resulting in a low level of contrast between existing and proposed conditions. Similarly, the project is compatible with the existing visual environment as the improvements are familiar features, yet introducing new features that would minimally impact the AVE.

4.4 Visual Change

Considering the compatibility and contrast of the project with relationship to the existing project site, vividness, intactness and unity, t**he change to the visual quality would result in a moderately low beneficial change.**

4.5 Viewer Sensitivity

4.5.1 Viewer Exposure

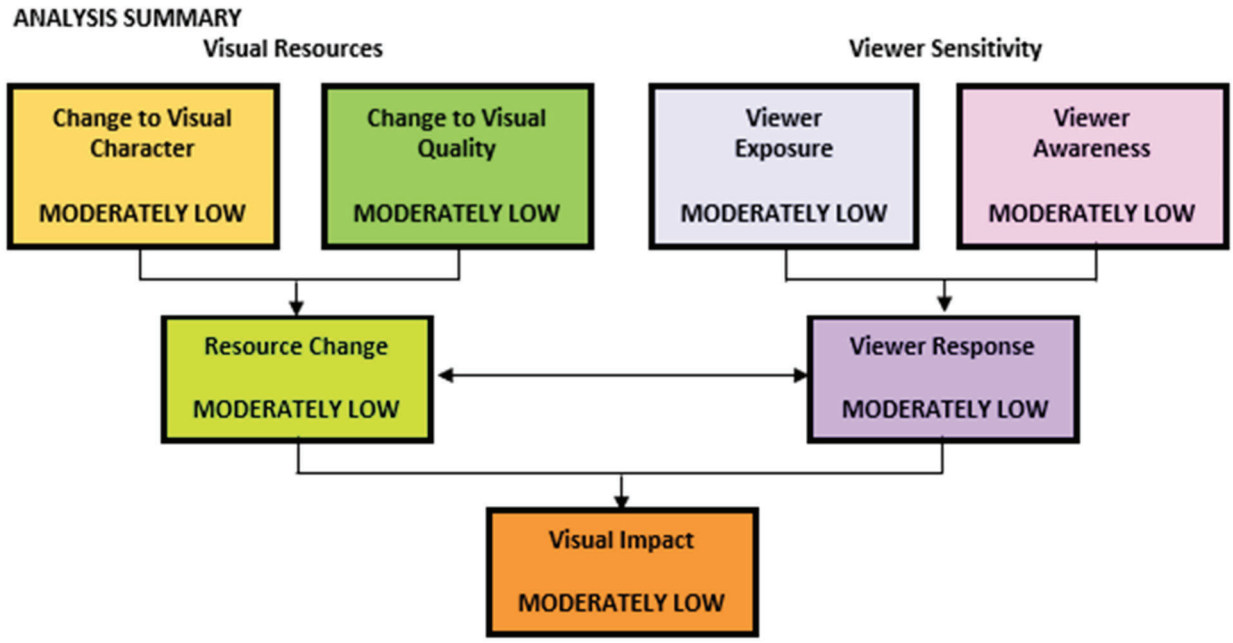
Thousands of travelers would experience a view of the project each day for several seconds to a less than a minute at a time as they traverse the SR-67 highway at high rates of speed. Travelers on Riverford Road, Woodside Avenue, and North Woodside Avenue, as well as on- and off-ramps have moderate viewer exposure due to lower rates of speed. Neighbors, though only two, would have more lengthy exposure times, possibly up to a few minutes at a time, when overlooking the project area from their residence.

For SR-67 and local roadway travelers, cumulative viewer exposure would be moderately low. The proposed improvements would occur within the viewers' foreground views but for periods potentially less than a minute at a time. Bicyclists and pedestrians, although small in number, would have longer duration views of the project. Cumulative viewer exposure for the neighbors viewer group would be also low and overall positive, as both residences with visual access to the project site discussed in Section 3.3 would have only partial views and the project components they would see would include vegetated areas and thus be improved from existing conditions.

4.5.2 Viewer Awareness

Viewer awareness for SR-67 travelers would be moderately low, as the majority of the "travelers" viewers group would likely be focused on their destination and traffic conditions rather than the immediate view. Viewer awareness of daily commuters using the local roads would be moderate due to the slower speeds. Viewer awareness of bicyclists and pedestrians would be moderate. Viewer response for both SR-67 and local roadway travelers would be overall positive, as the proposed improvements would incorporate appropriate design anesthetics, thus integrating well with the project setting. Viewer response for bicyclists and pedestrians would be positive for the new multi-modal project facility. Viewer awareness for the "neighbors" viewer group would be low, as their focus and attention would be relatively short and, overall, more positive compared to existing conditions of their limited and partial views of the southern intersection. "Neighbors'" distant panoramic views of the mountain ridgelines would not be impacted.

Combining viewer exposure and viewer awareness, the overall viewer response would be moderately low. See chart below for viewer exposure, view awareness and overall viewer response.



4.6 Resulting Overall Visual Impact

The construction of the project would result in a moderately low beneficial impact to the visual resources (character and quality). Viewer sensitivity would be moderately low. The visual impact would be considered moderately low.

The visual effects of the project would have a moderately low beneficial change to the existing rural suburban character and quality of the Lakeside Community. This degree of change to the visual character and environment is due to the introduction of new roundabouts, retaining walls, sidewalk and multi-use pathways, water quality improvement features, fencing, and streetscape features (e.g., asphalt paving, curb and gutter, medians, signage, etc.). The project slightly increases the limits of concrete paving through the widening and realignment of both intersections and SR-67 ramps, and a pedestrian/bicycle pathways that would improve safety and circulation. The proposed vegetated landscaping, including biofiltration basins, vegetation within the center of roundabouts, and other landscaping, will help to offset proposed built features and create a balance between the built and natural features in the AVE. The degree of visual change caused by the project would be reduced with the inclusion of the aesthetic treatments and natural landscape features with the project.

5.0 CEQA Checklist Aesthetics Questions

Address each of the CEQA Checklist Aesthetics questions listed below:

Would the project:

a) **Have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista?**

   The project would introduce a balanced composition of built and natural landscape features to the project area. The project would not have a substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista within the project viewshed.

b) **Substantially damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?**

   The project would not substantially damage scenic resources (trees, rock outcroppings, historic buildings, etc.) within a state scenic highway.

c) **In nonurbanized areas, substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings? (Public views are those that are experienced from publicly accessible vantage point). If the project is in an urbanized area, would the project conflict with applicable zoning and other regulations governing scenic quality?**

   The project would not substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of public views of the site and its surroundings as the new project features are located along a roadway corridor beyond areas where residential and commercial businesses exist, limiting visual access directly to the core areas of the project.

d) **Create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?**

   The project would not create a new source of substantial light or glare which would adversely affect day or nighttime views.

6.0 Environmental Commitments

6.1 Recommendations for Environmental Commitment/Minimization Measures

Environmental commitments have been proposed to lessen the visual impact of the project, to help with the public's buy-in. Environmental commitments will be designed and implemented in collaboration with the Caltrans' District 11 Staff and concurrence by the District Landscape Architect.

The following environmental commitments can avoid or minimize visual effects and/or improve aesthetics with proposed project's implementation. In addition to the list below, Appendix C contains additional features for the County and Caltrans to consider during the project's engineering design phase:

1.0 Retaining Walls –. The exposed wall surfaces will have a finish that integrates well with the natural colors and textures of the rural valley. The project features would complement visual resources and the design theme of the SR-67 corridor and require approval of Caltrans District Staff.

1.01 Alignment and Profile (Terrain Contoured)- Retaining walls would have long radius curves and battered faces, compatible with the topography of the area. Retaining walls that follow the contours of the proposed topography and maintain a sloped elevation at the top of the wall would lessen visual impacts. The proposed wall layout alignments and profiles will consist of long radius curves with tangents (points of intersection) occurring only at connection to straight walls beneath the highway bridge structures. Straight walls are required beneath the bridges to coincide with structural columns to remain exposed for structural inspection operations. Wall faces would complement the angles, textures, and features of the surrounding natural land features (soil texture and color, boulder outcroppings).

1.01a. Cut Section Locations. Walls from beneath the bridges would transition to mid-slope walls that curve away from the pathway and are visually compatible with the surrounding terrain. Wall ends will appear to die into the slope, allowing sufficient horizontal space in front of the wall for planting or decorative paving options.

1.01b. Retaining walls along the shared use walkway at Riverford Road between North Woodside Avenue and Woodside Avenue (Key Views #1 and #2) are proposed to have a decorative texture and color with an aesthetic complementing the context of the rural surroundings. The color would match the hue of the native soil.

1.01c. Fill Section Locations. Retaining walls at freeway ramps would be colored and textured.

1.01d. Retaining Wall with 'Natural Rock' surface treatment will have faces compatible with the topography of the area. Wall ends would curve into the slope. Sculpted shotcrete would be integrally colored and possibly stained. The color would match the hue of the native soil and/or boulder outcroppings. Walls would have a rough, natural appearance, with an undefined top edge to provide an 'unfinished' edge to blend with the rolling hills

in the background. No vertical bands shall be placed on the face of the wall surface. Cable railing at the top of wall will be stained dark brown with Natina Steel.

2.0 Landscaping – The proposed project landscaping at the SR-67 interchange, Woodside Avenue and at Riverford Road (Key Views #1 and #2), will provide a vegetative cover composed of native shrubs, groundcover plantings, trees, grasses, inert rock mulches, decorative paving materials and boulders installed as project features. Landscaping would match the aesthetic of the existing visual environment, context of the local native vegetation communities and natural features of the general project area. See Appendix for Landscape Concept Plan.

2.01 Trees – Provide trees to identify the roundabouts and interchange, to reduce apparent scale of built features, and to screen undesirable views. Locate trees outside of the clear recovery zone, or behind barriers.

2.02 Landscaping will include California natives, be sustainable, low maintenance, drought tolerant and require low or minimal irrigation. Non-native, clinging vines will be planted on walls to discourage graffiti if space allows and feasible with consideration of maintenance access.

2.03 Irrigation - Landscaped areas, with the exception of hydroseeded areas, will be irrigated.

2.04 All trees and vines require permanent irrigation to be sustainable, and therefore will be permanently irrigated by separate bubbler systems.

2.05 Landscaping, rock mulches and decorative paved surfaces in Caltrans right-of-way between the pathway and curb as well as in roundabouts, splinter islands and medians will be maintained by the County of San Diego via a Freeway Maintenance Agreement.

2.07 Areas adjacent to native habitat, such as above the Woodside Ave wall will be temporarily irrigated with the goal of turning water off at the end of the plant establishment period.

2.05 Weed germination and killing is required after irrigation installation and before planting or hydroseeding.

2.06 All paved areas and landscaped areas require weeding to remove invasive species for the duration of the construction contract period and plant establishment periods.

2.07 Highway planting would occur with the Roadway Construction project with one year of plant establishment, followed by four years of extended plant establishment under a separate contract. Long-term maintenance would include weeding, watering and additional plantings as required to meet environmental commitments.

5.0 Worker safety paving is required at beyond the gore freeway areas. The paving shall be tan colored concrete with an exposed aggregate finish.

6.0 Slopes under the freeway bridges would be paved with rock cobbles set in a concrete.

7.0 Vegetation Control at guardrail shall be tan colored concrete (not a mat).

8.0 Sidewalks and shared-use pathways will be tan colored concrete to reduce glare and blend with native soils.

9.0 Narrow, non-traversable areas next to sidewalks or curb ramps would be paved with round pebbles set in tan colored mortar.

11.0 Galvanized components of cable railing shall be stained brown dark brown with Na-tina Steel.

6.2 Temporary Construction Visual Impacts

Temporary visual impacts would occur during the project construction. Limits of construction impacts and staging areas would be defined. Temporary construction impacts would include contractor staging areas, dust, night lighting, hauling of materials, and detours. Construction impacts would cease following completion of the project. Mitigation for project construction is not necessary due to the changing and temporary nature of these impacts. The permanent project enhancement features would be implemented after construction completion. The duration of construction would be approximately either one or two years, depending on the number of project phases.

6.3 Construction Impact Avoidance Measures

Project would:

- Avoid tree removal and rock outcroppings as much as possible.
- Placement of fill, grading, or trenching would avoid areas immediately under tree canopies, to prevent damage to tree roots.
- No construction equipment, material storage, or vehicles would be placed under the dripline of trees to be preserved (includes contractor-use areas and temporary access routes). If necessary, a stake and rope system or Environmentally Sensitive Areas (ESA) fencing would be installed around the edge of the tree dripline canopy, to delineate ESA limits.
- Severe tree pruning would be avoided. Pruning and shaping of trees would be performed under the supervision of a certified arborist, in accordance with the current standards of the Western Chapter of the International Society of Arboriculture and the current American National Standards Institute's A300 Plant Maintenance Standard Practices, and as directed and approved by the County.
- Vegetation outside of the work area limits would be protected and, if necessary, fenced, to keep construction activities and materials out.

7.0 Conclusions

The proposed project would introduce several new roadway elements that would have a **low positive** effect on the visual character or appearance of the project area. Several of

the project features would be built near the existing intersections where lanes would converge at the roundabouts. Existing pavement replacement, minor new additions, and proposed intersection widening would be minimal and have a moderately low effect on the balance of elements in the view. The overall change to the existing visual character would be considered moderately low. The net change in visual quality is projected to have a moderately low beneficial impact at all locations for multiple viewer groups. The overall impact of the project would be moderate as the project improvement would occur in viewer's foreground views. The degree of impact will be lessened with the implementation of the proposed minimization measures. With the implementation of minimization measures, the proposed project would result in a moderately low positive change to the existing visual character and quality of the project area and AVE. No significant impacts to visual resources would occur and therefore no mitigation is required.

Appendix A: Scoping Questionnaire

Questionnaire to Determine Visual Impact Assessment (VIA) Level

Use the following questions and subsequent score as a guide to help determine the appropriate level of VIA documentation. This questionnaire assists the VIA preparer (i.e. Landscape Architect) in estimating the probable visual impacts of a proposed project on the environment and in understanding the degree and breadth of the possible visual issues. The goal is to develop a suitable document strategy that is thorough, concise and defensible.

Enter the project name and consider each of the twelve questions below. Select the response that most closely applies to the proposed project and corresponding number on the right side of the table. Points are automatically computed at the bottom of the table and the total score should be matched to one of the four groups of scores at the end of the questionnaire that include recommended levels of VIA study and associated annotated outlines (i.e., memo, standard, advanced).

This scoring system should be used as a preliminary guide and should not be used as a substitute for objective analysis on the part of the preparer. Although the total score may recommend a certain level of VIA document, circumstances associated with any one of the ten question-areas may indicate the need to elevate the VIA to a greater level of detail. For projects done by others on the State Highway System, the District Landscape Architect should be consulted when scoping the VIA level and provide concurrence on the level of analysis used.

The Standard Environmental Reference, Environmental Handbook, Volume I: Chapter 27-Visual & Aesthetics Review lists preparer qualifications for conducting the visual impact assessment process. Landscape Architects receive formal training in the area of visual resource management and can appropriately determine which VIA level is appropriate.

Preparer Qualifications:

> "Scenic Resource Evaluations and VIA's are performed under the direction of licensed Landscape Architects. Landscape Architects receive formal training in the area of visual resource management with a curriculum that emphasizes environmental design, human factors, and context sensitive solutions. When recommending specific visual mitigation measures, Landscape Architects can appropriately weigh the benefits of these different measures and consider construction feasibility and maintainability."

Calculate VIA Level Score

Project Information

Project Name

SR-67 Riverford Road Roundabout - County Project CT Oversight

Project Identification #

EA 11-43118, PI# 1120000244

Project Location (Dist-Co-Rte-PM)

11 -SD-67-PM R3.7 to PM R4.2

Preparer Name and CA LA License Number

Marlene Gros, RLA 2970 D-11, Enviornmental

Caltrans District Landscape Architect (DLA)

For projects on State Highway System Only, Name of Caltrans District Landscape Architect (DLA) providing VIA Questionnaire Score Concurrence - if different than above.

Visual Features of Project and its Alternative(s)

Walls, Det. Basins, Roundabouts, Slope Pvg., Signs, Multi-Use Trail, Ltg.

Additional Visual Context Remarks

SD River & Walker Preserve Trail, foothill terrain & river vegetation.

Regulatory Framework

Potential Agencies that may have to be Involved

☑ **Federal** ☑ **State** ☑ **Local** ☐ **Tribal** ☐ **Other**

Visual Change and Sensitivity

Landscape Observations

☐ **Water** ☑ **Visually dominant landforms** ☑ **Natural vegetation**

☐ **Visually Appealing Structures** ☐ **Other features of interest**

Impact of Project on Natural, Cultural, and Existing Project Environments

☐ **Highly compatible** ☑ **Moderately compatible** ☐ **Not compatible**

☐ **Other**

Landscape Context and Development Patterns

☐ **Natural/Undeveloped** ☑ **Rural** ☐ **Suburban** ☐ **Urban**

Scenic, Visual and Historic Resource(s) within the Area of Visual Effect

☐ **Officially designated State Scenic Highway**

☐ **Eligible Scenic Highway** ☐ **Visual resources**

☐ **Federally (or otherwise) designated historic, scenic resource**

Expected Agency Involvement

US Fish and Wildlife, Stormwater, (Minimal Agency Involvement for Visual

Expected Public Feedback

- [ ] **Scenic resources identified as important**
- [x] **Not important**
- [ ] **No public feedback**

Change to Visual Environment

1. **Does the project's aesthetic approach appear to be consistent with applicable laws, ordinances, regulations, policies, or standards?**

   Although the State is not required to comply with regional and local planning ordinances and other regulations, these documents are critical in understanding the importance that communities place on visual resources. The Caltrans Environmental Planning branch may have copies of the planning documents that pertain to the project. If not, this information can be obtained by contacting the local planning department.

   High Consistency (2 point)

2. **Will permits be required by outside regulatory agencies (i.e., federal, state, or local)?**

   Permit requirements can have an unintended consequence on the visual environment. Anticipated permits, as well as specific permit requirements may be determined by talking with the project Environmental Planner and Project Engineer. Note: coordinate with the Caltrans representative responsible for obtaining the permit prior to communicating directly with any permitting agency.

   Yes, either federal, or state, or federal and local, or state and local (3 poin

3. **Will the project character be compatible with the visual character of the existing landscape?**

   Consider the types of adverse changes to the scenic integrity of the landscape caused by the project. Evaluate the scale and extent of the project features compared to the surrounding scale of the community. Is the project likely to give an urban appearance to an existing rural or suburban community?

   Moderate Compatibility (2 point)

4. **Will the project contrast adversely with the memorability (vividness), natural harmony and/or cultural order (unity) of the existing landscape?**

   Evaluate the scale and extent of the project features compared to the scale of the visual elements within the surroundings. Is the project likely to change the appearance in a way that is contrasting with the line, color, form, and texture of the existing landscape visual character?

   Low Adverse Contrast (2 point)

5. **Will the project, when viewed together with other past or foreseeable projects, result in a cumulative adverse change in the visual quality or character of the existing landscape?**

   Identify any projects in the area (both Caltrans' and others') that have been recently constructed and/or are reasonably foreseeable and/or currently planned for future construction. The window of time and the extent of area applicable to possible cumulative impacts should be based on a reasonable anticipation of the viewing public's awareness of cumulative change.

Project will not result in cumulative impacts (1 point)

6. **Will the project produce a new source of substantial light or glare, which will adversely affect daytime or nighttime views within the area?**

Identify new sources of lighting and glare and how day- and nighttime visual conditions may change.

Low potential for adverse effects (2 point)

7. **What is the potential that the project proposal will be controversial within the community?**

Assess the level of public concern by talking with local agency management and staff familiar with the affected community's sentiments as evidenced by past projects and/or current information.

Moderate Potential that project will be controversial (3 points)

8. **How sensitive are potential viewer groups likely to be regarding visible changes proposed by the project?**

Consider among other factors who the viewer groups represent, the number of viewers within the group, probable viewer expectations, activities, viewing duration, and orientation. The expected viewer sensitivity level may be scoped by applying professional judgment, and by soliciting information from other Caltrans staff, local agencies and community stakeholders familiar with the affected community's sentiments and demonstrated concerns..

Low Sensitivity (2 points)

9. **What level of local concern is there for the types of specific project features (e.g., bridge structures, large excavations, sound barriers, or median planting removal) and construction impacts that are proposed?**

Certain project improvements can be of special interest to local citizens, causing a heightened level of public concern, and requiring a more focused visual analysis.

Low Level of Concern (2 points)

10. **Are there federally, state, locally designated scenic or historic resources, or other visual resources within the project area of visual effect (i.e., viewshed)?**

For example: protected viewsheds, visually sensitive public use areas, national historic/scenic trails, historic sites or structures, scenic designated viewpoints, wild and scenic rivers, state scenic highways or federal scenic byways, or potential visual resources such as stands of trees, rock outcroppings, etc.

One potential visual resource (2 points)

11. **Will the project sponsor or public benefit from a more detailed visual analysis in order to help reach consensus on a course of action to address potential visual impacts?**

Consider the proposed project features, possible visual impacts, and probable environmental commitments.

Low Benefit (2 points)

12. **Will the project likely require design changes to reduce the extent of visual resource impacts?**

Consider design changes and enhancements such as realignment, additional alignment alternatives, vertical profile adjustments, extensive landscaping, architectural treatment, color and texture treatments and/or lighting of aboveground structures.

Some redesign or minimization measures (3 points)

Assumptions/Issues

Riverford Rd would appear more urban with roundabout, sidewalks, walls, & slope paving. Tree and CA native planting needed. The Woodside Ave ret. wall will need surface texture and tan color.

Calculate Total

It is recommended that you print a copy of these calculations for the project file.

Project Score: 26

Select An Outline Based Upon Project Score

The total score will indicate the recommended VIA level for the project. In addition to considering circumstances relating to any one of the 12 questions that would justify elevating the VIA level, also consider any other project factors that would influence level selection.

Score 12-18 VIA Questionnaire

No visual resource related regulatory requirements. No or negligible visual changes to the environment are proposed. None or minimal public concern has been identified. This Questionnaire with rationale for selected responses to questions in the available spaces after each question along with a statement of no visual resource impact is appropriate and provides a sufficient rationale why a technical study is not required.

Score 19-28 VIA Memorandum

Very limited visual resource related regulatory requirements. Minor visual changes to the environment are proposed. Minor public concern from the public may be expected. A VIA Memorandum is appropriate in this case. The VIA Memorandum should briefly describe project features, impacts and any environmental commitment measures. Visual simulations are not necessary. Go to the Directions for using and accessing VIA Memorandum Annotated Outline (website link).

Score 29-38 Standard VIA Report

Several visual resource related regulatory requirements. Moderately noticeable visual changes to the environment are proposed. Moderate public concern may be expected. A fully developed Standard VIA Report is appropriate. The report should describe in detail the project's visual attributes, its visual impact and potential environmental commitment measures. Visual simulations are recommended. This report will likely receive public review. Go to the Directions for using and accessing the Standard VIA Annotated Outline (website link).

Score 39-48 Advanced VIA Report

Extensive visual resource related regulatory requirements and clearly noticeable changes to the environment are proposed. Moderate to high public concern may be expected. A fully developed Advanced VIA Report is appropriate. The report should describe in detail and numerically score the project's visual change and sensitivity, its visual impact and any environmental commitments proposed. Visual simulations are required. It is appropriate to alert the Project Development Team to the potential for

highly adverse impacts and to consider project alternatives to avoid those impacts. This technical study will receive close public review. Go to the Directions for using and accessing the Advanced VIA Annotated Outline (website link coming soon).

Statewide Campaigns

- ADA Access
- Adopt-A-Highway
- Amber Alert
- Be Work Zone Alert
- CAL FIRE
- Cal OES: Power Outage and Fire Recovery Resources
- California Climate Investments
- California Connected
- California Transportation Plan 2050
- Clean California
- Energy Upgrade
- Go Safely California
- HeatReadyCA.com
- Move Over Law
- REAL ID
- Save Our Water
- Stormwater Education Campaign
- Tenant and Landlord Resources
- Unclaimed Property

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Appendix B: Landscape Concept Plan

PLANT MATERIAL LEGEND

SYMBOL	BOTANICAL NAME	COMMON NAME	PERCENTAGE / SIZE
EVERGREEN TREE SUCH AS:			
	QUERCUS AGRIFOLIA	COAST LIVE OAK	50% / 24" BOX
	QUERCUS SUBER	CORK OAK	50% / 15 GALLON
DECIDUOUS TREE SUCH AS:			
	PLATANUS RACEMOSA	CALIFORNIA SYCAMORE	50% / 24" BOX
	POPULUS FREMONTII	COTTONWOOD	50% / 15 GALLON
	-	-	
	-	-	
ACCENT TREE SUCH AS:			
	CERCIS CANADIENSIS 'FOREST PANSY'	EASTERN REDBUD	50% / 24" BOX
	-	-	50% / 15 GALLON
	-	-	

SYMBOL	BOTANICAL NAME	COMMON NAME	PERCENTAGE / SIZE
DIEGAN CSS AND HYDROASEED SUCH AS:			
	BAHIOPSIS LANCINIATA	SAN DIEGO SUNFLOWER	1 GAL
	CALYOPHUS DRUMMONDII	SUNDROPS	
	ERIOGONUM FASCICULATUM 'WARRINER LYTLE'	CREEPING BUCKWHEAT	
	ERIOGONUM FASCICULATUM 'THEODORE PAYNE'	CREEPING BUCKWHEAT	
	ROSMARINUS PROSTRATUS	TRAILING ROSEMARY	
	SALVIA 'DARA'S CHOICE'	CREEPING SAGE	
LOW GROWING SHRUBS AND GROUNDCOVERS SUCH AS:			
	BACCHARIS PILULARIS 'PIGEON POINT'	PIGEON POINT COYOTE BUSH	1 GAL
	CEANOTHUS SP.	CEANOTHUS	
	CARISSA SP.	NATAL PLUM	
	DIANELLA SP.	DIANELLA	
	MYOPORUM SP.	-	
DIEGAN COASTAL SAGE SCRUB (CSS) HYDROSEED MIX SUCH AS:			
	ARTEMISIA CALIFORNICA	CALIFORNIA SAGEBRUSH	HYDROSEED
	PLANTAGO INDICA	PLANTAIN	
	ERIOGONUM FASCICULATUM	CALIFORNIA BUCKWHEAT	
	ESCHSCHOLZIA CALIFORNICA	CALIFORNIA POPPY	
	LOTUS SCOPARIUS	DEERWEED	
	MUHLENBERGIA RIGENS	DEERGRASS	
	TRIFOLIUM HIRTUM 'HYCON'	ROSE CLOVER	
	ACHILLEA MILLEFOLLUM	WHITE YARROW	
	LASTHENIA CHRYSTOSTOMA	GOLDFIELDS	
	LUPINUS SUCCULENTUS	ARROYO LUPINE	
	LUPINS NANUS	SKY LUPINE	
BIOSWALE PLANTINGS SUCH AS:			
	CAREX PANSA	CALIFORNIA MEADOW SEDGE	1 GAL
	JUNCUS PATENS	COMMON RUSH	
	JUNCUS PATENS 'ELK BLUE'	CALIFORNIA GRAY RUSH	
	LEYMUS CINEREUS	GRAY WILD RYE	
	MUHLENBERGIA RIGENS	DEER GRASS	

Landscape Concept

Project Goal:
The primary goal of the Riverford Roundabouts Landscape Concept Plan is to create a safe, contextual, and sustainable landscape design that creates a balance of built and natural features that support maintaining the rural character of the area and the SR-67 corridor theme. Built features will be minimized where possible and colored to blend into the surrounding environment. Landscape features will include trees, native shrubs, and streetscape plantings. The design aims to enhance the visual appeal and functionality of the project by proposing a palette of plant materials, scales, colors, and textures of naturalistic themes best suited to blend the project into the surrounding context.

Objectives:
1. Maintain a rural character by proposing contextual project features in the design that respond sensitively to the surrounding urban and rural context, reflecting the unique character of East County's chapparal setting and Lakeside Community Design Standards. This would include the use of colored concrete, rock blanket treatments at key areas, rock mulch, boulders, contextual plantings, and 'naturalistic' wall treatments.
2. Incorporate sustainable principles and practices throughout the design process, including low water use plant materials, native/adapted plantings, and high-efficiency irrigation systems.
3. Enhance biodiversity by promoting native and locally adapted vegetation and integrating green infrastructure elements such as bioswales to manage stormwater runoff.
4. Improve mobility and connectivity and accessibility for pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists by thoughtfully integrating a system of walkways, bike lanes, and travel lanes, supported by a combination of crosswalks, signage, protected pedestrian islands and a plant palette that takes into consideration growth patterns for unobstructed visibility.
7. Introduce low maintenance plant materials consisting of native, riparian, and locally adapted species, ensuring that landscapes succeed in the climate zone. Additionally, the proposed plantings for the project are low-maintenance and can see reduced irrigation demands once established.

RE SERVICES
CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT & LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

NORTH
0 20 40 80
SCALE IN FEET

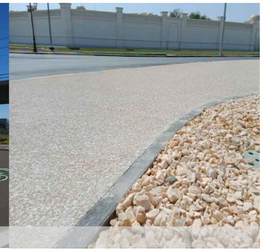
L-1

RIVERFORD ROAD ROUNDABOUTS PROJECT
LANDSCAPE CONCEPT PLAN

06-25-2024

Rock Mulch

Rock Blanket Paving


Enhanced Paving

Colored Concrete

'Natural' Form Textured Wall

Slope Paving

Matchline, see sheet L-1

PAVING TYPES			
	TYPE 'A'	ROCK BLANKET	ROUNDED COBBLED EMBEDDED IN TAN MORTAR BED BETWEEN VEHICULAR LANES AND PATHWAYS
	TYPE 'B'	ENHANCED PAVING	TAN COLORED CONCRETE AND/OR COLORED CONCRETE WITH EXPOSED AGGREGATE AT ROUNDABOUT CIRCLES AND/OR GORE PAVINGS
	TYPE 'C'	SLOPE PAVING	ROCK COBBLE IN TAN MORTAR BED COLOR: EARTH TONES (TANS, BROWNS, REDS, MAROONS, GREYS)
	TYPE 'D'	PATHWAY PAVING	COLOR: TAN CONCRETE
	TYPE 'E'	SIDEWALK PAVING	COLOR: NATURAL GRAY CONCRETE
WALL TYPES			
	TYPE 'A'	RETAINING WALL	COLOR: NATURAL EARTH TONES TO COMPLEMENT PATHWAYS; TEXTURES
BOULDERS / ROCK MULCH			
		DECORATIVE BOULDERS	COLOR: NATURAL EARTH TONES SIZE: 3-4' +
FENCING			
		CHAIN LINK FENCING	DARK BROWN STAIN TO REDUCE VISUAL IMPACTS
		SAFETY RAILING	DARK BROWN STAIN TO REDUCE VISUAL IMPACTS

Notes:

- Landscaping details and irrigation locations, type and duration as well as maintenance roles and responsibilities for County of San Diego and Caltrans will be discussed and negotiated at a later project phase and documented accordingly. Same details will also be added to the technical specifications of the contract bidding documents for future construction contract bidding.
- Trees would be on separate bubbler irrigation systems.
- Irrigation systems within the County of San Diego limits would have a separate irrigation point of service and automated irrigation controller.

NORTH

0 20 40 60
SCALE IN FEET

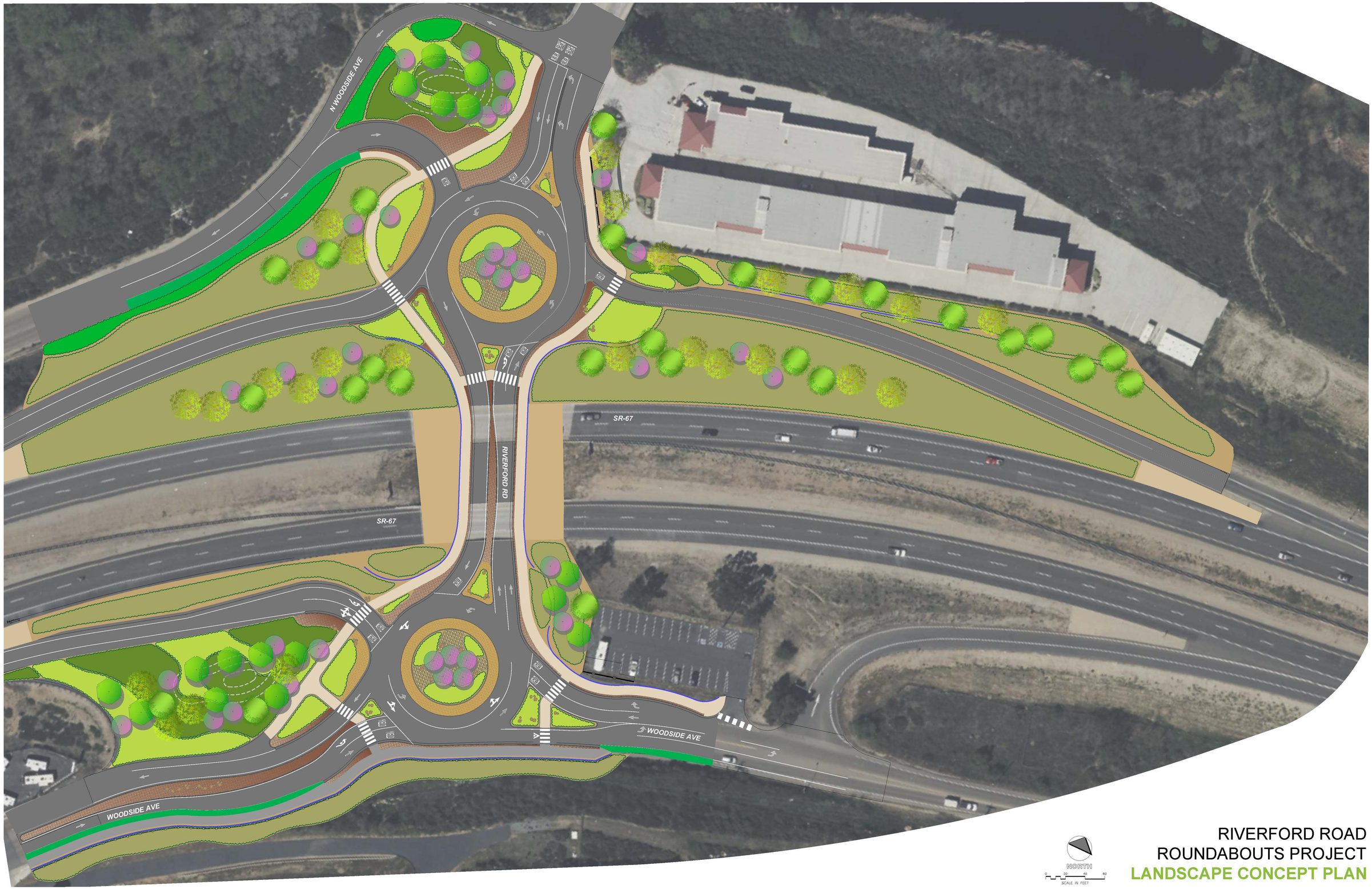
RE SERVICES
CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT & LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

L-2

RIVERFORD ROAD ROUNDABOUTS PROJECT

LANDSCAPE CONCEPT PLAN

06-25-2024



RE SERVICES
CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT
& LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE

NORTH
0 20 40 80
SCALE IN FEET

RIVERFORD ROAD ROUNDABOUTS PROJECT

LANDSCAPE CONCEPT PLAN

06-25-2024

Appendix C: Future Project Aesthetic Treatments Considerations

RIVERFORD ROAD ROUNDABOUTS PROJECT

Visual Impact Assessment Memorandum

Appendix C – Future Project Aesthetic Treatments Considerations

Future project coordination between the County of San Diego and Caltrans District 11 will include discussion and negotiation regarding the inclusion of the Caltrans-requested visual treatments and design features listed below. The items listed below will be addressed at a later phase of the project in one of the following project records: an amendment to the existing Freeway Maintenance Agreement for the SR-67/Riverford Road interchange, landscape PS&E, Landscape Monitoring Plan, Landscape Maintenance Agreement, technical specifications of the project's contractor bid package, and/or any other applicable contracts/documents that identify project requirements.

Note: the Visual Impact Assessment Memorandum contains potential improvements to the visual environment as part of the proposed project. Future commitments agreed to by the County and Caltrans (as stated above) shall supersede the conceptual improvements identified in the Visual Impact Assessment Memorandum.

Caltrans-requested visual treatments and design features include:

- Dark brown staining with natina steel of cable railings at the top of retaining walls.
- Battered face (e.g., from 10:1 to 12:1) on the large retaining wall of the project, in order to be compatible with the topography of the area.
- Trees plantings along the multi-use-use pathways and sidewalk (versus only within the roundabouts and the retention basins as presently proposed).
- Below-grade automatic irrigation systems for all landscape areas.
- Permanent irrigation for plantings maintained by the County within Caltrans' Right-of-Way (ROW) and to be connected to the County's water meter.
- SR-67-adjacent plantings within Caltrans' ROW be subject to one year of plant establishment, followed by four years of extended plant establishment.
- Tan-colored concrete for specialty paving and concrete drainage features in order to blend with native soils.
- Tan-colored concrete/staining headwalls, ditches, channels, and aprons within the roadside areas.
- Colored concrete with an exposed aggregate finish for pavings located beyond the freeway gores.
- Tan-colored concrete with a possible exposed aggregate finish or cobble set in concrete for pavings within the roadways' medians.
- Maintenance access paths to the bio retention basins to be either paved with compacted crushed rock or use cobble set in concrete.
- For landscaping tree palette, select eucalyptus cladocalyx in place of cork oak and desert museum palo verde trees in place of eastern redbud.
- Sidewalks and multi-use pathways may require freeway access-control fencing. Fencing height to be up to 4ft maximum, chain-link fence, and stained dark brown with natina steel.

A key consideration for deciding how these features will be resolved depends on facility ownership and maintenance responsibilities. Specifically, through the project's engineering design phase, the County and Caltrans shall delineate the limits of each agency's right-of-way along with maintenance roles and responsibilities. In other words, many of the aesthetic treatments listed above may depend on which agency is ultimately responsible for ownership and/or maintenance for facilities such as:

- Roundabouts, sidewalk, shared-use paths, bike lanes, crosswalks, medians, islands, retaining walls (including anti-graffiti coating), retention basins, landscaping and hardscaping, irrigation (including above/below ground and duration), and water meters.