



SCH No. 2025091353

FINAL
INITIAL STUDY /MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

**East Valley Parkway and Midway
Drive Drainage Improvement Project**
Escondido, CA

February 2026

Lead Agency:

City of Escondido
Development Services Department,
Engineering Division
201 North Broadway
City Hall, First Floor
Escondido, CA 92025

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JN 202603

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The proposed East Valley Parkway and Midway Drive Drainage Improvement Project (project) would involve increasing the capacity of the storm water drainage systems in the central portion of the city. The project site is located within public rights-of-way associated with existing roadway corridors and the concrete-lined Escondido Creek in the central portion of the City of Escondido (City) in northern San Diego County. The proposed project would involve the construction of approximately 16,700 linear feet of reinforced concrete box culverts and approximately 4,400 linear feet of reinforced concrete pipelines beneath existing roadways and adjacent public rights-of-way (e.g., sidewalks), and four new points of connection for storm water to enter Escondido Creek within the project site. The proposed culverts/pipes would be installed beneath existing public rights-of-way primarily associated with roadways and sidewalks, including segments of North Midway Drive, South Midway Drive, East Lincoln Avenue, East Mission Avenue, North Citrus Avenue, North Rose Street, East Grand Avenue, East Washington Avenue, Daisy Street, and an unnamed alley immediately south of East Washington Avenue and north of Escondido Creek, between North Rose Street and Begonia Street.

In accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, an Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND) was prepared for the proposed project.

The IS/MND (State Clearinghouse No. 2025091353) was made available for public review and comment pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15070. The public review period commenced on October 2, 2025 and concluded on November 3, 2025. The IS/MND and supporting technical appendices were available for review by the general public at the following locations:

- City of Escondido Planning Division, 201 North Broadway, Escondido, California 92025;
- City of Escondido website: <https://www.escondido.gov/1281/East-Valley-Parkway-and-Midway-Drive-Dra>; and
- Governor's Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation, CEQAnet Web Portal, <https://ceqanet.lci.ca.gov/2025091353>.

2.0 RESPONSE TO COMMENTS

During the public review period, interested persons, firms, and agencies were given the opportunity to comment on the Draft IS/MND. One comment letter was received for the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans). No other comments from agencies, organizations, tribes, or other interested parties were received during the public review period of the Draft IS/MND. See the following pages for the California Department of Transportation's comment letter and the City's response to comments.

California Department of Transportation

DISTRICT 11
4050 TAYLOR STREET, MS-240
SAN DIEGO, CA 92110
(619) 985-1587 | FAX (619) 688-4299 TTY 711
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October 28, 2025

11-SD-78

PM VAR

East Valley Parkway and Midway Drive Drainage
Improvement Project - PL24-0257
MND/SCH# 2025091353

Mr. Matthew Souttere
Project Manager, Capital Improvement Project
City of Escondido
201 N Broadway, City Hall, First Floor
Escondido, CA 92025

Dear Mr. Souttere:

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the MND for the East Valley Parkway and Midway Drive Drainage Improvement Project - PL24-0257 located near State Route 78 (SR-78). The mission of Caltrans is to provide a safe and reliable transportation network that serves all people and respects the environment. The Local Development Review (LDR) Program reviews land use projects and plans to ensure consistency with our mission and state planning priorities.

Caltrans has the following comments:

Hauling

Caltrans has discretionary authority with respect to highways under its jurisdiction and may, upon application and if good cause appears, issue a special permit to operate or move a vehicle or combination of vehicles or special mobile equipment of a size or weight of vehicle or load exceeding the maximum limitations specified in the California Vehicle Code. The Caltrans Transportation Permits Issuance Branch is responsible for the issuance of these special transportation permits for oversize/overweight vehicles on the State Highway network. Additional information is provided online at: <https://dot.ca.gov/programs/traffic-operations/transportation-permits>

Mr. Matthew Souttere, Project Manager
October 28, 2025
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If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Charlie Lecourtois, LDR Coordinator, at (619) 985-4766 or by e-mail sent to Charlie.Lecourtois@dot.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Kimberly D. Dodson

KIMBERLY D. DODSON, GISP
Branch Chief
Local Development Review

Response to Comment Letter 1

The commenter states that Caltrans issues special transportation permits for oversized/overweight vehicles on the State highway network. The City will apply for a special transportation permits for oversized/overweight vehicles, if required for the construction of this project. No changes to the IS/MND are required based on this comment letter.

3.0 MITIGATION MONITORING AND REPORTING PROGRAM

CEQA requires that when a public agency completes an environmental document which includes measures to mitigate or avoid significant environmental effects, the public agency must adopt a reporting or monitoring plan. This requirement ensures that environmental impacts found to be significant will be mitigated. The reporting or monitoring plan must be designed to ensure compliance during project implementation (Public Resources Code Section 21081.6).

In compliance with Public Resources Code Section 21081.6, a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program (MMRP) has been prepared for the proposed project; refer to [Table 1, *Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program*](#). This MMRP is intended to provide verification that all mitigation measures identified in the Draft IS/MND are monitored and reported. Monitoring will include: (1) verification that each mitigation measure has been implemented; (2) recordation of the actions taken to implement each mitigation; and (3) retention of records in the project file.

This MMRP delineates responsibilities for monitoring the project. Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15097(a), however, the City of Escondido ultimately remains responsible for ensuring that implementation of the mitigation measures occurs in accordance with the mitigation program. Monitoring procedures will vary according to the type of mitigation measure. Adequate monitoring consists of demonstrating that monitoring procedures took place and that mitigation measures were implemented.

Reporting consists of establishing a record that a mitigation measure is being implemented, and generally involves the following steps:

- The City distributes reporting forms to the appropriate entities for verification of compliance.
- Departments/agencies with reporting responsibilities will review the Draft IS/MND, which provides general background information on the reasons for including specified mitigation measures.
- Issues related to compliance will be submitted to and reviewed by the City of Escondido in accordance with CEQA.
- Periodic meetings may be held during project implementation to report on compliance of mitigation measures.
- Responsible parties provide the City of Escondido with verification that monitoring has been conducted and ensure, as applicable, that mitigation measures have been implemented. Monitoring compliance may be documented through existing review and approval programs such as field inspection reports and plan review.
- The City of Escondido prepares a reporting form periodically during the construction phase and an annual report summarizing all project mitigation monitoring efforts.
- Appropriate mitigation measures will be included in construction documents and/or conditions of permits/approvals.

Minor changes to the MMRP, if required, would be made in accordance with CEQA and would be permitted after further review and approval by the City of Escondido. Such changes could include reassignment of monitoring and reporting responsibilities, plan redesign to make any appropriate improvements, and/or modification, substitution, or deletion of mitigation measures subject to conditions described in CEQA Guidelines Section 15162.

TABLE 1, MITIGATION AND MONITORING REPORTING PROGRAM

Mitigation Measure No.	Mitigation Measure	Time Frame for Implementation	Responsible Agency/Party	Verification of Compliance		
				Initials	Date	Remarks
Biological Resources						
BIO-1	Preconstruction Nesting Bird Surveys. If construction activity occurs during the bird nesting season (typically January 1 through August 31), a nesting bird survey shall be conducted within the project construction footprint and a 100-foot-wide buffer within 72 hours prior to construction. Preconstruction nesting bird surveys shall be required anytime construction begins in a new area outside a previously surveyed area. If any active nests are detected, the area shall be flagged and an appropriate buffer will be placed around the nest, as determined by the project biologist, and monitored throughout the nesting cycle. If the project biologist determines that project construction is causing a disturbance to the nest (e.g., adult birds appear agitated and are not returning to nest to incubate or feed young), the biologist may halt construction in the vicinity of the nest until the young have fledged or the nest has failed (is no longer active).	Prior to Ground Disturbance / During Construction as Applicable	City of Escondido Planning Division / Qualified Biologist / Construction Contractor			
BIO-2	Potential Aquatic Resources Permitting. Impacts to potential aquatic resources requires notification to the relevant federal and state agencies. The City of Escondido shall obtain the required federal and/or state permits from the USACE, RWQCB, and/or CDFW, pursuant to Sections 404 and 401 of the Clean Water Act and Section 1600 et seq. of the California Fish and Game Code, respectively. Permits are required to be obtained by the City of Escondido before the impact to the resources. Permits may include additional conditions of approval.	Prior to Ground Disturbance	City of Escondido Planning Division / Qualified Biologist / Construction Contractor			

Mitigation Measure No.	Mitigation Measure	Time Frame for Implementation	Responsible Agency/Party	Verification of Compliance		
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Cultural Resources						
CUL-1	<p>Archaeological and Native American Monitoring. An archaeological monitor meeting the Secretary of the Interior’s Professional Qualification Standards for archaeology (48 Federal Register 44738) and a Native American monitor representing one of the consulting tribes shall be present during ground-disturbing activities for project construction, including, but not limited to, site clearing, grubbing, demolition, boring, trenching, and excavation.</p> <p>Because soil underlying the construction area has been previously disturbed during the development of the roads and utility infrastructure, the archaeological monitor, in consultation with the Native American monitor, may determine that soils are sterile for resources. Upon such determination, monitoring frequency may be reduced or halted.</p> <p>The archaeological and Native American monitors shall log all monitoring activity and provide monitoring logs to the City on a minimum bi-weekly basis. If a discovery is made, the archaeological monitor shall notify the City within 24 hours.</p> <p>A final compiled monitoring report shall be submitted to the City that documents monitoring activities conducted by the archaeological and Native American monitors within 60 days of completion of monitoring. The report shall document impacts to any known resources on the property; describe how each mitigation measure was fulfilled; document the type of cultural resources recovered and the disposition of such resources; and, in a confidential appendix, include the monitoring logs. The final monitoring report</p>	Prior to Ground Disturbance / During Construction	City of Escondido Planning Division / Qualified Archaeologist / Archaeological Monitor / Native American Monitor / Construction Contractor			

Mitigation Measure No.	Mitigation Measure	Time Frame for Implementation	Responsible Agency/Party	Verification of Compliance		
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	shall be submitted to the City, the South Coastal Information Center, and any consulting tribes.					
CUL-2	<p>Unanticipated Discoveries. If a potentially significant archaeological resource is unearthed during excavation activities, work shall stop immediately within 100 feet of the find and the discovery shall be evaluated by a qualified archaeologist meeting the Secretary of the Interior's Professional Qualification Standards for archaeology (48 Federal Register 44738), pursuant to the procedures set forth at California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines Section 15064.5. If the resource is determined not significant, no further work is needed. If the find is deemed to be potentially significant, the City shall make a determination of significance on the basis of the recommendations of the qualified archaeologist and submit this determination of significance to the consulting tribe(s) for review and comment. The consulting tribe(s) shall be notified within 24 hours of the discovery via email and phone. The consulting tribe(s) shall be allowed access to the discovery, in order to assist with the significance evaluation. Depending on the nature of the find, the determination of significance may require additional excavation, potentially including the preparation and execution of a Phase II archaeological testing plan and excavation. Repatriation (i.e., re-bury resources) shall be the preferred method of resource treatment for any tribal cultural resources. The City shall consult with the consulting tribe(s) to determine culturally appropriate repatriation locations and practices. The contents and location of repatriated resources shall be recorded to avoid future disturbance, but kept confidential.</p>	During Construction	City of Escondido Planning Division / Qualified Archaeologist / Archaeological Monitor / Native American Monitor / Construction Contractor			
Geology and Soils						
GEO-1	Paleontological Resources Construction Monitoring. Prior to the commencement of excavation	Prior to Ground Disturbance /	City of Escondido Planning Division /			

Mitigation Measure No.	Mitigation Measure	Time Frame for Implementation	Responsible Agency/Party	Verification of Compliance		
				Initials	Date	Remarks
	<p>activities, the City of Escondido shall retain a Society of Vertebrate Paleontology (SVP) qualified paleontologist (i.e., professional with a graduate degree in paleontology, geology, or related field, with demonstrated experience in the vertebrate, invertebrate, or botanical paleontology of California, as well as at least one year of full-time professional experience or equivalent specialized training in paleontological research and at least four months of supervised field and analytic experience in general North American paleontology as defined by the SVP) to conduct full-time paleontological monitoring during excavation activities in areas with the potential to support unknown buried paleontological resources. Monitoring logs shall be submitted monthly to the City of Escondido Director of Development Services, or their designee.</p> <p>A final report shall be prepared describing the results of the paleontological monitoring efforts associated with the project. The report shall include a summary of the field and/or laboratory methods, an overview of the project site geology and paleontology, a list of taxa recovered (if any), an analysis of fossils recovered (if any) and their scientific significance, and recommendations. The report shall be submitted to the City of Escondido Director of Development Services, or their designee. If the monitoring efforts produced fossils, a copy of the report shall also be submitted to the designated museum repository.</p> <p>If evidence of subsurface paleontological resources is found during construction activities, excavations within 50 feet of the find shall cease and the construction contractor shall contact the City of Escondido Director of Development Services, or their designee. With direction from the City of Escondido Director of</p>	During Construction	Qualified Paleontologist / Paleontological Monitor / Construction Contractor			

Mitigation Measure No.	Mitigation Measure	Time Frame for Implementation	Responsible Agency/Party	Verification of Compliance		
				Initials	Date	Remarks
	Development Services, or their designee, a qualified paleontologist shall be retained to evaluate the find prior to resuming construction activities in the immediate vicinity of the find. If the City of Escondido determines the resource is significant and cannot be immediately recovered, the qualified paleontologist shall prepare and execute a Paleontological Resources Mitigation Program (PRMP) for the salvage and curation of the identified resource(s). The PRMP shall specify the fieldwork and laboratory methods to be undertaken, curation requirements, proposed staff qualifications, and whether the entire resource is to be collected or a specified statistically significant sample.					
Transportation						
TR-1	<p>Prepare and Implement a Traffic Control Plan. The construction contractor shall prepare a Traffic Control Plan for roadways and intersections affected by the proposed improvements for approval by the City Engineer. The Traffic Control Plan shall include, but not be limited to, the following elements based on local site and roadway conditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide street layout showing location of construction activity and surrounding streets to be used as detour routes, including "special signage." Post a minimum 72-hour advance warning of construction activities within affected roadways to allow motorists to select alternative routes. • Restrict delivery of construction materials to non-peak travel periods (9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.) or as appropriate. Weekend and night work shifts shall be allowed in non-residential areas only. • Maintain the maximum travel-lane capacity during non-construction periods, and provide flagger-control at construction sites to manage traffic control and flows. 	Prior to Ground Disturbance / During Construction	City of Escondido Planning Division / City Engineer / Construction Contractor			

Mitigation Measure No.	Mitigation Measure	Time Frame for Implementation	Responsible Agency/Party	Verification of Compliance		
				Initials	Date	Remarks
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limit the construction work zone in each block to a width that, at a minimum, maintains alternate one-way traffic flow past the construction zone. • Maintain access for driveways and private roads, except for brief periods of construction, in which case property owners will be notified. • Require temporary steel-plate trench crossings, as needed, to maintain reasonable access to homes, businesses, and streets. When required by the applicable encroachment permit, maintain the existing lane configuration during nonworking hours by covering the trench with steel plates or by using temporary backfill. • Require appropriate warning signage and safety lighting for construction zones. • Access for emergency vehicles shall be maintained at all times. Police, fire, and emergency services shall be notified of the timing, location, and duration of construction activities that could hinder and/or delay emergency access through the construction period. • Coordinate with the North County Transit District to plan, as needed, for the temporary relocation of bus stops and/or detour of transit routes on affected storm water drainage alignments. • Identify detours, where available, for bicyclists and pedestrians in areas potentially affected by project construction. • Provide adequate off-street parking locations for workers' vehicles and construction equipment in those areas where on-street parking availability is insufficient. • Repair and restore the roadway right-of-way to its original condition or better upon completion of work. 					