

INITIAL STUDY AND PROPOSED NEGATIVE DECLARATION

FOR THE INYO COUNTY 2019 REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Prepared for

Inyo County Transportation Commission
168 N. Edwards Street
Independence, CA 93526

Prepared by

LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc.
2690 Lake Forest Road, Suite C
P.O. Box 5875
Tahoe City, California 96145
530 ♦ 583-4053

June 10, 2019

PROJECT TITLE:	Inyo County 2019 Regional Transportation Plan
LEAD AGENCY:	Inyo County Local Transportation Commission 168 N. Edwards Street Independence, CA 93526
CONTACT PERSONS:	John Pinckney (760) 878-0207 Genevieve Evans (530)583-4053
PROJECT LOCATION	Inyo County

Inyo County is located in eastern California approximately midway between the state’s northern and southern borders (Figure 1). The western border of the County is the crest of the Sierra Nevada while the eastern boundary is the Nevada State line, the northern boundary is the Mono County line and the southern boundary is shared with Kern and San Bernardino Counties. The only incorporated city is Bishop. Other towns discussed in the plan include Big Pine, Independence, Lone Pine, Olancho, Shoshone, Tecopa, and areas close by each of these communities.

PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Inyo County Local Transportation Commission (ICLTC) has recently prepared an updated draft *Inyo County 2019 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)* (which is defined as the “Project” for purposes of this study). ICLTC staff worked with a consulting firm to guide the development of the Project. A public hearing will be held during a ICLTC meeting to solicit public input. The Public Draft RTP can be viewed and downloaded from the ICLTC website: www.inyoltc.org.

In compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, the Lead Agency is required to prepare an Initial Study for the Project. The ICLTC is defined as the Lead Agency under the provisions of CEQA. The primary objective in the preparation of an Initial Study is to disclose significant environmental effects and to identify measures to avoid or reduce significant environmental effects.

The Initial Study evaluates the potential environmental impacts associated with implementation of the goals, policies and implementation measures of the RTP and the construction, use and maintenance of transportation facilities identified in the plan. This Initial Study has been prepared at a program level to enable broad consideration of the RTPs program level impacts and reduce repetitive analysis issues that may be relevant to multiple projects. Program-level consideration of the RTP provides the County and City of Bishop an opportunity to propose countywide and/or citywide programmatic mitigation that might not be possible with individual project-level analysis. Based upon the findings of this Initial Study, and pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15070, the ICLTC plans to prepare a Negative Declaration. If,

through the public review process, mitigation measures are found necessary, the ICLTC will prepare a Mitigated Negative Declaration that includes a mitigation monitoring program in accordance with CEQA Guidelines.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The project is defined as a Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), which identifies improvements to enhance or augment regional transportation in Inyo County. The RTP does not directly provide for the implementation of transportation projects and/or facilities. Rather, it identifies necessary improvements in order to provide the best possible circulation/transportation system to meet the mobility and access needs of the entire county.

The ICLTC, as the Regional Transportation Planning Agency (RTPA), is required by California law to adopt and submit an updated Regional Transportation Plan to the California Transportation Commission (CTC) and to the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) every four years. The purpose of the RTP is to provide a vision of transportation facilities and services for the region, supported by transportation goals, for ten and twenty year horizons. The RTP documents the policy direction, actions and funding strategies designed to maintain and improve the regional transportation system.

Due to the regional nature of the RTP, this analysis focuses on those impacts that are anticipated to be potentially significant on a regional system-wide level. As individual projects near implementation, it will be necessary to undertake “project specific” environmental assessments before each project is approved and implemented. Such review will be required in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and, if federally funded, the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). If necessary, mitigation measures to offset potential adverse environmental impacts resulting from those projects will be implemented. Since CEQA does not require speculation, and since some of the projects identified in the RTP are subject to delay or change in priority, it is not necessary and would be premature to analyze the environmental impacts that individual projects may generate at this stage of the RTP. This RTP is also consistent with the goals and policies in the Inyo County General Plan and City of Bishop General Plan.

The RTP begins with a background discussion of Inyo County, including projected population growth and economic conditions, as well as a description of existing transportation services and facilities. A needs assessment follows, describing existing and future transportation needs in the county. The needs assessment analyzes various aspects of transportation including streets and highways, goods movement, public transportation, bicycle and pedestrian traffic and aviation facilities. For each aspect, goals, objectives, performance measures, policies and implementation programs are identified. Finally, an action element is presented that lists proposed projects, as well as proposed potential funding for future projects.

To implement the project, the ICLTC must adopt the updated RTP by resolution. Once the RTP is adopted, implementation of projects identified in the RTP would depend on many factors,

Figure 1

including the availability of funding, changes in priority of needs, and emergencies. Also, implementation would require the cooperation of other agencies, such as Caltrans, whose activities are beyond the control of the ICLTC.

The RTP presents a series of goals focusing on mobility, safety, quality of life, environmental impacts, and financial effectiveness. In the document, capital transportation improvement projects are identified which meet regional transportation needs and are consistent with regional goals and adopted planning documents. Projects identified in the RTP consist of the following:

- ♦ Short-term, mid-term, and long-term roadway/bridge projects including roadway maintenance and bridge rehabilitation/reconstruction on state highways, county roads and city streets.
- ♦ Caltrans projects consisting of culvert and guardrail replacement
- ♦ Federal lands access roadway rehabilitation/reconstruction
- ♦ Active transportation improvement projects, including construction of sidewalks, bike paths, and pedestrian ways to increase safety for non-motorized transportation users.
- ♦ Transit capital improvement projects
- ♦ Aviation capital improvement projects

Funding is expected to be generated through a wide range of existing state, federal, and local sources. A wide variety of natural resource agencies, public transportation providers, government agencies, tribal entities, representatives of disadvantaged groups, the private sector and the general public were contacted as part of the RTP process.

SURROUNDING LAND USES AND SETTING

According to the US Census 2017 American Community Survey, Inyo County has a total population of 18,026 people. This represents a 2.8 percent decrease from 2010 Census counts. Of this total, roughly 3,832 people live in the City of Bishop. According to this data, predominate ethnicities are White (64 percent), Hispanic (21.1 percent), and Native American (10.7 percent). Roughly 4.7 percent of the County speaks English less than “very well”. According to California Department of Finance projections, the proportion of the Inyo County population age 65 and older will increase from 4,249 in 2017 to 6,258 in 2040 or by roughly 47 percent, a greater rate than the total population.

Roughly 98 percent of the land in Inyo County is held by public agencies such as the US Forest Service, National Park Service, the Bureau of Land Management, China Lake Naval Air Weapons Station, State of California, and the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power. Limited by

public lands and geography, the developed areas of Inyo County consist largely of small communities along the US 395 corridor. Tourism and recreation is the major industry in the region, with approximately 3 million people visiting the Eastern Sierra annually.

OTHER AGENCY APPROVALS

Per Government Code Section 65080 the RTP must be adopted by ICLTC at a public hearing. After adoption, copies of the document must be submitted to Caltrans and the CTC.

CONSULTATION WITH CALIFORNIA NATIVE AMERICAN TRIBES

Pursuant to PUC 21080.3.1 and AB 52 ICLTC consulted with Native American Tribes traditionally and culturally affiliated with Inyo County. ICLTC requested a consultation list of tribes located within Inyo County from the Native American Heritage Commission. At the beginning of the project, in September 2008, ICLTC sent letters to each tribe requesting input on regional transportation needs as well to begin formal consultation. Tribes were also personally invited to the public hearing on the RTP and provided with a copy of the Draft RTP. To date, no tribes have responded.

ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS POTENTIALLY AFFECTED

None of the environmental factors mentioned below would be potentially affected by this project, involving at least one impact that is a “Potentially Significant Impact” as indicated by the checklist on the following pages.

Aesthetics	Agriculture Resources	Air Quality
Biological Resources	Cultural Resources	Geology/Soils
Hazards & Hazardous Materials	Hydrology/Water Quality	Land Use/Planning
Mineral Resources	Noise	Population/Housing
Public Services	Recreation	Transportation/Traffic
Utilities/Service Systems	Mandatory Findings of Significance	Greenhouse Gas Emissions
Tribal Cultural Resources		

DETERMINATION

On the basis of this initial evaluation:

- I find that the proposed project COULD NOT have a significant effect on the environment, and a NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
- I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, there will **not** be a significant effect in this case because revisions in the project (mitigation measures) have been made by or agreed to by the project proponent. A MITIGATED NEGATIVE DECLARATION will be prepared.
- I find the proposed project MAY have a significant effect on the environment, and an ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required.
- I find that the proposed project MAY have a “potentially significant impact” or “potentially significant unless mitigated” impact on the environment, but at least one effect 1) has been adequately analyzed in an earlier document pursuant to applicable legal standards, and 2) has been addressed by mitigation measures based on the earlier analysis as described on attached sheets. An ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT is required, but it must analyze only the effects that remain to be addressed.
- I find that although the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment, because all potentially significant effects (a) have been analyzed adequately in an earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION pursuant to applicable standards, and (b) have been avoided or mitigated pursuant to that earlier EIR or NEGATIVE DECLARATION, including revisions or mitigation measures that are imposed upon the proposed project, nothing further is required.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Inyo County Planning Department

Initial Study Checklist and Analysis

CHECKLIST AND ANALYSIS

The following Environmental Checklist and discussion of potential environmental effects were completed in accordance with Sections 15060 to 15065 of the CEQA Guidelines and the revised Initial Study checklist, to determine whether the Project may have a significant environmental effect. The degree of impact for each discussion topic is noted based upon the following definitions:

- **Potentially Significant Impact:** An impact for which there is substantial evidence that an effect might be significant and for which no mitigation has been incorporated. Such an impact would require the preparation of an Environmental Impact Report.
- **Less Than Significant with Mitigation Incorporation:** An impact which requires mitigation to reduce the impact to a less than significant level. For such impacts, proposed mitigation measures are identified within this Initial Study.
- **Less Than Significant Impact:** An impact which is considered less than significant under the standards of CEQA.
- **No Impact:** An issue for which the Project would have no impact.

EVALUATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

I. AESTHETICS				
Would the project:	Potentially Significant	Less than Significant with Mitigation	Less than Significant	No Impact
a) Have an adverse effect on a scenic vista?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Damage scenic resources, including, but not limited to, trees, rock outcroppings, and historic buildings within a state scenic highway?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Substantially degrade the existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Create a new source of substantial light or glare that would adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Discussion: There are an abundance of scenic resources in Inyo County. Those RTP projects proposed on mountain roads are for safety and/or system preservation and will not result in significant visual changes to existing facilities. RTP Policy 2.2.2 states “Ensure that all

transportation projects have a minimum adverse effect on the environment of the county.” Less than significant impacts are identified at the plan level as all aesthetic resource impacts will be identified and mitigated on a project-specific basis.

<p>II. AGRICULTURE RESOURCES</p> <p>In determining whether impacts to agricultural resources are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to the California Agricultural Land Evaluation and Site Assessment Model prepared by the California Dept. of Conservation as an optional model to use in assessing impacts on agriculture and farmland. In determining whether impacts to forest resources, including timberland, are significant environmental effects, lead agencies may refer to information compiled by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection regarding the state’s inventory of forest land, including the Forest and Range Assessment Project and the Forest Legacy Assessment Project; and forest carbon measurement methodology provided in Forest Protocols adopted by the California Air Resources Board.</p> <p>Would the project:</p>	Potentially Significant	Less than Significant with Mitigation	Less than Significant	No Impact
<p>a) Convert Prime Farmland, Unique Farmland, or Farmland of Statewide Importance, as shown on the maps prepared pursuant to the Farmland Mapping and Monitoring Program in the California Resources Agency, to non-agricultural use?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p>b) Conflict with existing zoning for agricultural use, or a Williamson Act contract?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p>c) Conflict with existing zoning for, or cause rezoning of, forest land (as defined in Public Resources Code section 12220(g)) or timberland (as defined by Public Resources Code section 4526)?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p>d) Involve other changes in the existing environment which, due to their location or nature, could result in conversion of Farmland, to non-agricultural use or conversion of forest land to non-forest use?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Discussion:

There is no farmland in Inyo County that is currently part of a Williamson Act contract. The Inyo County General Plan Land Use Element includes an “Agriculture” designation and irrigated agriculture is an important part of the rural nature of the County. The creation of new roadways in the Bishop area and the expansion of US 395 to four-lanes in the Olancho and Cartago area have the potential to impact agricultural uses minimally. However, these projects will be subject to project-specific environmental review. The RTP in general emphasizes system preservation and safety concerns. This is a less than significant impact.

III. AIR QUALITY Where available, the significance criteria established by the applicable air quality management or air pollution control district may be relied upon to make the following determinations. Would the project:	Potentially Significant	Less than Significant with Mitigation	Less than Significant	No Impact
a) Conflict with or obstruct implementation of the applicable air quality plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Violate any air quality standard or contribute to an existing or projected air quality violation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Result in a cumulatively considerable net increase of any criteria pollutant for which the project region is non-attainment under an applicable federal or state ambient air quality standard (including releasing emissions that exceed quantitative thresholds for ozone precursors)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Create objectionable odors affecting a substantial number of people?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Discussion: Inyo County is part of the Great Basin Valleys Air Basin, with air quality managed by the Great Basin Unified Air Pollution Control District. Inyo County is considered “in attainment” or unclassified for every federal air quality standard. As for state standards, Inyo County is not in attainment for Ozone and PM-10. Local data collected by the GBUAPC indicates that PM 10 and PM 2.5 levels are “good” in Inyo County. Further, many RTP projects will rehabilitate the current road base and improve existing and future circulation wherever possible. With this focus, improvements in the RTP may benefit regional air quality by reducing congestion on

major roads within the County. Dust and emissions from construction equipment for RTP projects could cause PM10 emissions during roadway construction activities. Each project will undergo air quality analysis prior as part of the implementation phase. The construction phase of each project will need to comply with the requirements of the Inyo County Public Works Department and the Great Basin Unified Air Pollution Control Department.

IV. BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES Would the project:	Potentially Significant	Less than Significant with Mitigation	Less than Significant	No Impact
a) Have an adverse effect, either directly or through habitat modifications, on any species identified as a candidate, sensitive, or special status species in local or regional plans, policies, or regulations, or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Have an adverse effect on any riparian habitat or other sensitive natural community identified in local or regional plans, policies, and regulations or by the California Department of Fish and Game or U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Have an adverse effect on federally protected wetlands as defined by Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (including, but not limited to, marsh, vernal pool, coastal, etc.) through direct removal, filling, hydrological interruption, or other means?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Interfere with the movement of any resident or migratory fish or wildlife species, or with established resident or migratory wildlife corridors, or impede the use of wildlife nursery sites?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Conflict with any local policies or ordinances protecting biological resources, such as a tree preservation policy or ordinance?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f) Conflict with the provisions of an adopted Habitat Conservation Plan, Natural Conservation Community Plan, or other approved local, regional, or state habitat conservation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Discussion: Transportation improvements in the plan that are on existing facilities will not have a significant impact on biological resources. Those facilities that will expand existing rights-of-way into undisturbed areas or construct new rights-of-way into undisturbed area have the potential to have a significant impact to biological resources. These projects which envision new construction provide connectivity in and around developed communities. The RTP contains policies to minimize environmental impacts of transportation investments. Natural resource agencies were included in the early planning process. Project-specific environmental review and existing regulations will mitigate potential impacts to a less than significant status.

V. CULTURAL RESOURCES				
Would the project:	Potentially Significant	Less than Significant with Mitigation	Less than Significant	No Impact
a) Cause an adverse change in the significance of a historical resource, as defined in Section 15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Cause an adverse change in the significance of an archaeological resource, pursuant to Section 15064.5?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Directly or indirectly destroy a unique paleontological resource or site or unique geologic feature?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Disturb any human remains, including those interred outside of formal cemeteries?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Discussion: Those Tribal Governments that have sacred lands within Inyo County were contacted and their input was requested in the RTP process. Copies of this Initial Study and the Draft RTP document have been sent to tribal representatives.

RTP projects on existing facilities will not have a significant impact on cultural resources. RTP projects that will expand existing rights-of-way into undisturbed areas or construct new rights-of-way into undisturbed area have the potential to have a significant impact to cultural resources. However, project-specific environmental review will reduce any such impact to a less than significant status.

If any human remains are discovered during archaeological investigations or during construction, the County Coroner shall be contacted and steps taken to comply with Section 9.52 of Inyo County Code and appropriate state statutes regarding the disposition of human remains.

VI. GEOLOGY AND SOILS				
Would the project:	Potentially Significant	Less than Significant with Mitigation	Less than Significant	No Impact
a) Expose people or structures to potential substantial adverse effects, including the risk of loss, injury, or death involving:	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
i. Rupture of a known earthquake fault, as delineated on the most recent Alquist-Priolo Earthquake Fault Zoning Map issued by the State Geologist for the area or based on other substantial evidence of a known fault? Refer to Division of Mines and Geology Publication 42.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
ii. Strong seismic ground shaking?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
iii. Seismic-related ground failure, including liquefaction?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
iv. Landslides?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Result in soil erosion or the loss of topsoil?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Be located on a geologic unit or soil that is unstable, or that would become unstable as a result of the project, and potentially result in on- or off-site landslide, lateral spreading, subsidence, liquefaction or collapse?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Be located on expansive soil, as defined in Table 18-1B of the Uniform Building Code (1994), creating risks to life or property?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Have soils incapable of adequately supporting the use of septic tanks or alternative waste water disposal systems where sewers are not available for the disposal of waste water?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Discussion: The RTP identifies projects for reconstruction of and improvements to existing roadways and bridges, specific impacts on geology and soils associated with these projects will be addressed and mitigated as necessary on an individual basis at the time of project review. Some of the bridge rehabilitation projects include seismic retrofit.

VI. GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS				
Would the project:	Potentially Significant	Less than Significant with Mitigation	Less than Significant	No Impact
a) Generate greenhouse gas emissions, either directly or indirectly, that may have a significant impact on the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

b) Conflict with any applicable plan, policy or regulation of an agency adopted for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
--	--------------------------	--------------------------	--------------------------	-------------------------------------

Discussion: The RTP includes goals, policies, and strategies aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions in Inyo County. RTP projects such as roadway and bridge repairs are necessary to maintain a safe regional transportation system and to prevent deterioration of roadways and bridges which may require costlier repairs in the future. Any new roadway facilities proposed will reduce congestion and improve connectivity; thereby potentially reducing idling and greenhouse gas emissions. The RTP also includes long-term bicycle and pedestrian improvement projects which will create more bicycle and pedestrian friendly communities and potentially reduce vehicle miles travelled (VMT). The RTP also includes public transit elements. By expanding alternative forms of transportation, Inyo County is in-line with statewide climate change goals. The RTP is a programmatic document and the proposed projects will be reviewed on a project-by-project basis, therefore there is no potential for significant impact.

VII. HAZARDS AND HAZARDOUS MATERIALS Would the project:	Potentially Significant	Less than Significant with Mitigation	Less than Significant	No Impact
a) Create a hazard to the public or the environment through the routine transport, use, or disposal of hazardous materials?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Create a hazard to the public or the environment through reasonably foreseeable upset and accident conditions involving the release of hazardous materials into the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Have hazardous emissions or handle hazardous or acutely hazardous materials, substances, or waste within one-quarter mile of an existing or proposed school?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Be located on a site that is included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5 and, as a result, would it create a significant hazard to the public or the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Be located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, and consequently result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f) Be located within the vicinity of a private airstrip, and consequently result in a safety hazard for people residing or working in the project area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
g) Impair implementation of or physically interfere with an adopted emergency response plan or emergency evacuation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
h) Expose people or structures to the risk of loss, injury or death involving wildland fires, including where wildlands are adjacent to urbanized areas or where residences are intermixed with wildlands?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Discussion: RTP projects will not increase hazards and hazardous materials. RTP projects are transportation improvement projects including the installation of guardrails and traffic control

signs which will increase the safety of Inyo County roadways. The RTP is a programmatic document. Specific environmental impacts of proposed projects discussed in the RTP will be addressed and mitigated on an individual basis at the time of project review.

VIII. HYDROLOGY AND WATER QUALITY Would the project:	Potentially Significant	Less than Significant with Mitigation	Less than Significant	No Impact
a) Violate any applicable water quality standards or waste discharge requirements?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Deplete groundwater supplies or interfere with groundwater recharge such that there would be a net deficit in aquifer volume or a lowering of the local groundwater table level (e.g., the production rate of pre-existing nearby wells would drop to a level that would not support existing land uses or planned uses for which permits have been granted)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, in a manner that would result in erosion or siltation on- or off-site?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Substantially alter the existing drainage pattern of the site or area, including through the alteration of the course of a stream or river, or increase the rate or amount of surface runoff in a manner that would result in flooding on- or off-site?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Create or contribute runoff water that would exceed the capacity of existing or planned storm water drainage systems or provide additional sources of polluted runoff?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f) Place housing within a 100-year floodplain, as mapped on a Federal Flood Hazard Boundary or Flood Insurance Rate Map or other flood hazard delineation map?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
g) Place within a 100-year floodplain structures that would impede or redirect flood flows?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
h) Expose people or structures to a significant risk of loss, injury, or death involving: 1) flooding, including flooding as a result of the failure of a levee or dam, or 2) inundation by	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

seiche, tsunami, or mudflow?				
i) Otherwise substantially degrade water quality?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
j) Change the amount of surface water in a water body?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
k) Change currents or the course or direction of water movements?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Discussion: In general, this RTP identifies the need for replacement, rehabilitation, and upkeep of roadways and bridges. The construction of new transportation facilities has the possibility to increase the intensity of storm water drainage. New facilities are required to comply with Inyo County or City of Bishop Public Works Department requirements, and, if necessary, to obtain a Storm water Pollution Prevention Permit from the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board. Again, at the project level, further environmental review will be required to address and reduce this potential impact in accordance with existing regulatory requirements.

IX. LAND USE AND PLANNING				
Would the project:	Potentially Significant	Less than Significant with Mitigation	Less than Significant	No Impact
a) Physically divide an established community?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation of an agency with jurisdiction over the project (including, but not limited to the general plan, specific plan, local coastal program, or zoning ordinance) adopted for the purpose of avoiding or mitigating an environmental effect?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural communities' conservation plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Discussion: Based on preliminary review of the projects proposed by the RTP, there does not appear to be any potential for impacts that might physically divide a community, conflict with any applicable land use plan, policy, or regulation or conflict with any applicable habitat conservation plan or natural community conservation plan. Additionally, the RTP is consistent with local General Plans and natural resource agency plans. Further, the RTP is a programmatic document. Specific environmental impacts of proposed projects discussed in the RTP will be addressed on an individual basis at the time of project review. Therefore there is no potential for significant impact.

X. MINERAL RESOURCES				
Would the project:	Potentially Significant	Less than Significant with Mitigation	Less than Significant	No Impact
a) Result in the loss of availability of a known mineral that would be of value to the region and the residents of the state?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Result in the loss of availability of a locally important mineral resource recovery site delineated on a local general plan, specific plan or other land use plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Discussion: The RTP includes improvements to transportation systems such as roadways, bridges, airports and bicycle/pedestrian facilities. RTP project will not affect mineral resources.

XI. NOISE				
Would the project:	Potentially Significant	Less than Significant with Mitigation	Less than Significant	No Impact
a) Generate or expose persons to noise levels in excess of standards established in the local general plan or noise ordinance, or applicable standards of other agencies?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Generate or expose persons to excessive ground-borne vibration or ground-borne noise levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Result in a substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) A substantial temporary or periodic increase in ambient noise levels in the project vicinity above levels existing without the project?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e) Be located within an airport land use plan or, where such a plan has not been adopted, within two miles of a public airport or public use airport, and consequently expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f) Be within the vicinity of a private airstrip, and consequently expose people residing or working in the project area to excessive noise levels?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Discussion: The most probable source of noise impacts would come from construction activities associated with proposed projects in this RTP. The Noise portion of the Public Safety Element of the Inyo County Goals and Policies Report establishes Day-night Average Sound Levels (Ldn) that new projects need to comply with. The maximum allowable ambient noise exposure is divided by land use. Noise sensitive land uses (receptors) include residential areas, hospitals, convalescent homes and extended care facilities, schools, libraries, day-care centers, and other similar land uses as determined by the County. General Plan Policy NOI-1.4 regarding Transportation-Related Noise is relevant in the consideration of new transportation projects. The RTP concentrates on system preservation and safety for County roadways. Future projects are subject to project specific environmental review and analysis. Given the existing General Plan policies, any potential impact will be less than significant.

XII. POPULATION AND HOUSING Would the project:	Potentially Significant	Less than Significant with Mitigation	Less than Significant	No Impact
a) Induce substantial population growth in an area, either directly (for example, by proposing new homes and businesses) or indirectly (for example, through extension of roads or other infrastructure)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Displace substantial numbers of existing housing, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Displace substantial numbers of people, necessitating the construction of replacement housing elsewhere?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Discussion: The RTP is a programmatic document. Project-specific environmental review will follow with every project proposed in the RTP. The primary focus of the RTP is Safety and Maintenance of existing facilities. Therefore, the RTP will not have an impact on population and housing. Additionally, the population of Inyo County has been declining in recent years.

XIII. PUBLIC SERVICES				
Would the project result in 1) adverse physical impacts associated with the provision of new or physically altered governmental facilities, or 2) the need for new or physically altered governmental facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental impacts, in order to maintain acceptable service ratios, response times or other performance objectives for any of the public services:	Potentially Significant	Less than Significant with Mitigation	Less than Significant	No Impact
a) Fire protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Police protection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Schools?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Parks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Roads?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f) Other public facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Discussion: As the RTP projects focus on the improvement to existing roadway facilities and other transportation facilities, not housing, there will be no impact on public services. Any impact would be beneficial, in that improvements to existing facilities would aid in access to public services.

XIV. RECREATION	Potentially Significant	Less than Significant with Mitigation	Less than Significant	No Impact
a) Would the project increase the use of existing neighborhood and regional parks or other recreational facilities such that substantial physical deterioration of the facility would occur or be accelerated?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Does the project include recreational facilities or require the construction or expansion of recreational facilities that might have an adverse physical effect on the environment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Discussion: Adoption and implementation of the RTP will not create the need for new or expanded park and recreation facilities. The project will improve recreation opportunities by upgrading and rehabilitating bike trails and trailhead facilities for hiker and biker use. The underlying goal of these projects is to increase connectivity and reduce reliance on the private automobile. The impacts of construction of those trails will be addressed on an individual basis at the time of project review.

XV. TRANSPORTATION/TRAFFIC		Less than Significant with Mitigation	Less than Significant	No Impact
Would the project:	Potentially Significant			
a) Conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance or policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system, taking into account all modes of transportation including mass transit and non-motorized travel and relevant components of the circulation system, including but not limited to intersections, streets, highways and freeways, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and mass transit?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Conflict with an applicable congestion management program, including, but not limited to level of service standards and travel demand measures, or other standards established by the County congestion management agency for designated roads or highways?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Result in a change in air traffic patterns, including either an increase in traffic levels or a change in location that results in substantial safety risks?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
d) Substantially increase hazards to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Result in inadequate emergency access?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f) Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs regarding public transit, bicycle, or pedestrian facilities, or otherwise decrease the performance or safety of such facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Discussion: All projects identified in the RTP are determined to improve the overall transportation system and related impacts. RTP projects will not likely increase vehicle miles travelled in Inyo County as no new trip generators are being constructed. Although the Olancho- Cartago 4 lane 395 project will increase the capacity of the highway, this is primarily to increase safety along the corridor. Additionally, the RTP includes a long list of potential active transportation projects will have the potential to reduce vehicle miles travelled. Furthermore, as the RTP is a programmatic document, and as the proposed projects will be reviewed on a project-by-project basis, there is no potential for significant impact.

XVI. UTILITIES AND SERVICE SYSTEMS Would the project:	Potentially Significant	Less than Significant with Mitigation	Less than Significant	No Impact
a) Exceed wastewater treatment requirements of the applicable Regional Water Quality Control Board?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
b) Require or result in the construction of new facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
c) Require or result in the construction of new storm water drainage facilities or expansion of existing facilities, the construction of which could cause significant environmental effects?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d) Have sufficient water supplies available to serve the project from existing entitlements and resources, or are new or expanded entitlements needed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
e) Result in a determination by the wastewater treatment provider that serves or may serve the project that it has adequate capacity to serve the project's projected demand in addition to the provider's existing commitments?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
f) Be served by a landfill with sufficient permitted capacity to accommodate the project's solid waste disposal needs?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
g) Comply with federal, state, and local statutes and regulations related to solid waste?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Discussion: As the RTP projects focus primarily on the improvement to existing roadway facilities, the potential for significant impacts on utilities and service system is low. Some of the new routes or route improvements contemplated in the RTP could have direct impacts on utilities or service systems, especially during project construction on a project-specific basis. Goal 2, Policy 2.2.2 of this RTP requires that all road improvement projects undergo environmental impact analysis in accordance with CEQA (or NEPA, if appropriate). No impacts are identified at the plan level as all potentially affected water resources and/or utility interests will be identified and mitigated on a project-specific basis.

XVII. MANDATORY FINDINGS OF SIGNIFICANCE	Potentially Significant	Less than Significant with Mitigation	Less than Significant	No Impact
a) Does the project have the potential to degrade the quality of the environment, substantially reduce the habitat of a fish or wildlife species, cause a fish or wildlife population to drop below self-sustaining levels, threaten to eliminate a plant or animal community, substantially reduce the number or restrict the range of a rare or endangered plant or animal or eliminate important examples of the major periods of California history or prehistory?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b) Does the project have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? "Cumulatively considerable" means that the incremental effects of a project are significant when viewed in connection with the effects of past projects, the effects of other current projects, and the effects of probable future projects.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c) Does the project have environmental effects that will cause substantial adverse effects on human beings, either directly or indirectly?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Discussion: Preparation and adoption of the RTP represents long-term transportation planning for the Inyo County Region, and by definition does not involve individual projects that would have individual impacts. Policies are included in the RTP to minimize environmental impacts of transportation investments. Specific environmental impacts of proposed projects discussed in the RTP will be addressed on an individual basis at the time of project review.

The forecast growth in Inyo County is minimal over the next 20 years and will result in minimal impacts to current facilities. The RTP will benefit regional transportation and circulation as it provides a policy framework to reduce or eliminate vehicle trips and traffic congestion, safety hazards for automobiles, bicyclists, and pedestrians, and air traffic conflicts. The RTP proposes a couple road extensions in the Bishop area. All other capacity road projects are Caltrans MOU projects on State facilities that have already been programmed. These have undergone an extensive environmental review and analysis prior to implementation and construction so that any impacts will be mitigated to "less than significant." The RTP addresses connectivity and safety of the transportation system. Implementation of the Plan should result in a decrease in automobile conflicts and improved safety for both drivers and bicycle travel. As such, this impact is considered to be less than significant.

PREPARERS

Report Authors: LSC Transportation Consultants, Inc.
Genevieve Evans, Planner, AICP

Inyo County Public Works