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4.16 TRANSPORTATION AND TRAFFIC

Would the Proposed Project:	Potentially Significant Impact	Less-than-Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated	Less-than-Significant Impact	No Impact
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?			✓	
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?			✓	
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?				✓
d) Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)?				✓
e) Result in inadequate emergency access?			✓	
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?				✓

4.16.0 Introduction

This section describes the existing transportation and traffic conditions within the proposed San Diego Gas & Electric Company (SDG&E) Tie Line (TL) 649 Wood-to-Steel Replacement Project (Proposed Project) area and evaluates potential Proposed Project-related transportation and traffic impacts. The following subsections summarize the existing roadways, transit and rail services, airports, and bicycle facilities; discuss the policies and regulations related to transportation and traffic; and analyze the transportation and traffic impacts that may result from construction, operation, and maintenance of the Proposed Project.

Although the Proposed Project is situated near several major roadways—including Interstate (I-) 805, State Route (SR-) 905, SR-125, and Otay Mesa Road—as well as near Brown Field Municipal Airport, it will not have a significant impact on transportation and traffic in the area and will not conflict with any adopted transportation policies.

4.16.1 Methodology

Transportation and traffic data for the Proposed Project area were obtained primarily through internet research and reviews of relevant literature—including the City of San Diego General Plan, the City of San Diego Municipal Code, the Transportation Analysis for Otay Mesa Community Plan Update, the City of San Diego Traffic Impact Study Manual, the City of San Diego Bicycle Master Plan, the City of Chula Vista General Plan Land Use and Transportation Element, the San Diego County Code of Regulatory Ordinances, and the San Diego Association of Governments (SANDAG) 2050 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP).[1]

4.16.2 Existing Conditions

Regulatory Background

Construction projects that cross public transportation corridors may be subject to federal, state, and local encroachment permits. Permits may also be required for activities that result in the use or obstruction of navigable airspace. The following summarizes transportation and traffic regulations relevant to the construction of electric facilities, such as the Proposed Project.

Federal

All airports and navigable airspace not administered by the Department of Defense are under the jurisdiction of the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA). Title 14, Section 77 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) establishes the standards and required notification for construction of objects affecting navigable airspace. In general, construction of projects that exceed 200 feet above ground level are considered potential obstructions and require notification to the FAA. Additionally, projects that extend at a ratio greater than 100 to one (horizontal to vertical) from a public or military airport runway more than 3,200 feet long out to a horizontal distance of 20,000 feet are also considered potential obstructions and require notification to the FAA.

[1] The Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the SANDAG 2050 RTP was challenged and overturned by a court of appeal on November 24, 2014 finding that the EIR was deficient. SANDAG's petition for review of the decision was granted by the California Supreme Court on March 11, 2015. However, the applicability of the RTP is not anticipated to change as a result of the lawsuit.

State

The use of California state highways for purposes other than normal transportation may require written authorization or an encroachment permit from the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans). Caltrans has jurisdiction over the state's highway system and is responsible for protecting the public and infrastructure. Caltrans reviews all requests from utility companies that plan to conduct activities within Caltrans rights-of-way (ROWs). Encroachment permits may include conditions or restrictions that limit when construction activities can occur within or above roadways under the jurisdiction of Caltrans.

Local

Because the California Public Utilities Commission has exclusive jurisdiction over the siting, design, and construction of the Proposed Project, the Proposed Project is not subject to local discretionary land-use regulations. The following analysis of the local regulations relating to transportation and traffic is provided for informational purposes. As outlined in the following sections, the construction and operation of the Proposed Project will not conflict with any environmental plans, policies, or regulations related to transportation and traffic.

County of San Diego

Roads maintained by San Diego County are recorded in an official document known as the Road Register, which is approved by the San Diego County Board of Supervisors. However, many of the roads in San Diego County are not within the County-maintained system, including private roads maintained by adjacent property owners and many public roads such as those within cities. In addition, freeways and state highways within San Diego County are maintained by Caltrans.

San Diego County Code of Regulatory Ordinances Section 71 governs the placement of any structures on, over, or under County roads. The County requires an encroachment permit for the construction of any tower, pole, pole line, private pipe, private pipeline, nonstandard driveway, private road, fence, billboard, stand or building, or any structure or object of any kind or character, which is placed in, under, or over any portion of a County roadway.

City of San Diego

The Mobility Element of the City of San Diego General Plan provides measures for improving the efficiency of the city's transportation system and facilitates the long-term planning required to improve mobility through the development of a balanced, multi-modal transportation network, while minimizing potential environmental and neighborhood impacts. The Mobility Element is aimed at creating a system wherein each mode of transportation contributes to an overall goal of providing transportation services that meet varied user needs, while implementing a strategy to reduce traffic congestion and provide increased transportation choices with consideration for varying land use types. The City of San Diego also utilizes a Traffic Impact Study Manual, which provides acceptable level of service (LOS) standards for the city and contains guidelines for the preparation of traffic studies.

Chapter 12, Article 9, Division 7: Public ROW Permits of the City of San Diego Municipal Code addresses the use of or encroachment into public ROWs for private uses. The City of San Diego

requires approval of a public ROW permit for the construction of privately owned structures or facilities within the public ROW.

City of Chula Vista

The Circulation Element of the City of Chula Vista General Plan provides guidance to help achieve an efficient and economical transportation system, and to facilitate the planning required to maintain and expand the existing transportation network. Chapter 12.28 of the City of Chula Vista Municipal Code governs the use of or encroachment into public ROWs for private uses. The City requires an encroachment permit for the construction of any tower, pole, pole line, private pipe, private pipeline, nonstandard driveway, private road, fence, billboard, stand or building, or any structure or object of any kind or character, which is placed in, under, or over any portion of a roadway.

San Diego Association of Governments

SANDAG's 2050 RTP[1] was approved in October 2011 and provides guidance for the establishment of a coordinated transportation system for the greater San Diego area. This plan is intended to connect and improve the regional transportation network of freeways, public transit, and roadways.

Environmental Setting

Existing Roadway Network

The Proposed Project is located within the County of San Diego, the City of San Diego, and the City of Chula Vista. Figure 3-1: Project Location Map in Chapter 3 – Project Description depicts the location of the Proposed Project area and the existing roadway network. The major roadways that may be used for construction equipment travel are listed in Table 4.16-1: Major Roadways near the Proposed Project Area. This list includes the classification, number of lanes, and LOS information for each roadway where available. LOS is defined by a letter scale of A through F; a road with LOS A has unrestricted free-flowing traffic, and a road with LOS F experiences significant traffic gridlock during peak hours.

I-805 is a major north-south transportation corridor located approximately 0.75 mile west of the Proposed Project alignment. It is an eight-lane divided freeway with a posted speed limit of 70 miles per hour.

SR-905 is a major east-west transportation corridor located approximately 1.4 miles south of the Proposed Project alignment. It is a six-lane divided freeway with a posted speed limit of 65 miles per hour. SR-905 is the main route near the eastern portion of the Proposed Project alignment, with access from the Britannia Boulevard and La Media Road exits.

The Proposed Project alignment crosses two paved roads. The first crossing occurs at Heritage Road just south of its intersection with Entertainment Circle between existing pole locations 17 and 18. At the approximate crossing, Heritage Road is a two-lane collector with a center turn lane. The second crossing occurs under the SR-125 Otay River Valley Bridge. SR-125 is a major north-south transportation corridor that crosses over the Proposed Project alignment

Table 4.16-1: Major Roadways near the Proposed Project Area

Roadway	Cross Streets	Classification	Number of Lanes	Average Weekday Traffic Volume	LOS	Crossed by the Proposed Project Alignment (Y/N)
Otay Mesa Road	SR-125 to Sanyo Avenue	Major Arterial	4	14,800	A	N
Otay Valley Road/Heritage Road	Entertainment Circle to Otay Mesa Road	Collector	2	8,700	F	Y
Main Street	Nirvana Avenue and Heritage Drive	Primary Arterial	6	14,900	A	N
Ocean View Hills Parkway	Dennery Road to Del Sol Boulevard	Major Arterial	4	14,200	A	N
Dennery Road	Palm Avenue to Regatta Lane	Major	4	10,300	A	N
Alta Road	Otay Mesa Road to End	Collector	2	Unknown	Unknown	N
Palm Avenue	I-805 Northbound Ramps to Dennery Road	Primary Arterial	6	46,900	C	N
SR-125	Birch Road and Otay Mesa Road	Other Freeway or Expressway (Private Toll Road)	6	9,082	A	Y
SR-905	I-805 to Otay Mesa Road	Expressway	6	63,800	D	N
I-805	Main Street/Auto Park Drive to Pal Avenue	Interstate	8	150,300	E	N

Sources: SANDAG, 2015b; City of San Diego Traffic Impact Study Manual, 1998; Urban Systems Associates, Inc., 2012; Gao, H., 2014

between existing pole locations 50 and 51. It is a six-lane divided expressway with a toll system and a posted speed limit of 65 miles per hour.

Railway

The nearest railway line is the San Diego and Arizona Eastern (SD&AE) Railway, located approximately 2.7 miles southwest of the Proposed Project. This railway is owned and operated by the San Diego Metropolitan Transit System (MTS) within San Diego County. The line runs from downtown San Diego to Plaster City, near the City of El Centro.

In 1979, the San Diego Metropolitan Transit Development Board (now the MTS) purchased the SD&AE Railway with the intention of bringing light rail transportation to the San Diego area. This service began in 1981, and three lines currently operate in and around San Diego.

Airports

The nearest public airport to the Proposed Project—Brown Field Municipal Airport—is located approximately 0.8 mile to the south. This airport has two runways, approximately 8,000 and 3,200 feet long. There are 152 aircraft based at the airport, with an average of 277 aircraft operations per day. This airport is owned and operated by the City of San Diego.

The General Abelardo L. Rodriguez International Airport is located approximately 2.7 miles south of the Proposed Project, just south of the United States-Mexico international border. This airport has a single runway, approximately 9,700 feet long. The airport served 3,649,500 passengers in 2010 and is owned and operated by Grupo Aeroportuario del Pacífico. This airport is not located in the United States and will not be impacted by the Proposed Project; therefore, it is not discussed in the impact analysis.

Buses

Bus service to the Proposed Project area is provided by the San Diego MTS. Serving the immediate area are bus routes 905, 905A, 933/934, and 703/704. The Proposed Project does not cross any existing bus routes.

Trolleys

The Blue Line of the San Diego MTS connects San Ysidro in the south to Old Town San Diego in the north. This trolley line is located approximately 2.5 miles west of the Proposed Project area and runs along the east side of I-5. Northbound weekday service from San Ysidro begins at 4:43 a.m. and continues until 12:58 a.m., with routes departing every 30 minutes or less. Similar service is provided on Saturday and Sunday, with routes beginning at 4:59 a.m. Southbound service from America Plaza begins at 4:48 a.m. and continues until 11:48 p.m., with routes departing every 30 minutes or less. Approximately 97,400 passengers use the Blue Line per day. The Proposed Project will not cross any trolley routes.

Bicycle Facilities

There are several bikeways near the Proposed Project site—including Class II bike lanes,[2] which are located and marked either along the curb or parking lane, and Class III bike routes,[3] which share the same travel lanes as motor vehicles and have signs to that effect. Class II bikeways near the Proposed Project are included on Main Street, Heritage Road, Ocean View Hill Parkway, and Dennery Road. Class III bikeways near the Proposed Project are included on Otay Mesa Road. In addition, SR-125 allows bicycle access on the shoulder.

4.16.3 Impacts

The following subsections describe the criteria of significance used to assess potential impacts to transportation and traffic that may result from implementation of the Proposed Project, and examine those potential impacts.

Significance Criteria

According to Appendix G of the California Environmental Quality Act Guidelines, the Proposed Project would have a significant impact if it:

- Results in a conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance, or policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the circulation system
- Results in a conflict with an applicable congestion management program
- Results in a change in air traffic patterns
- Results in a substantial increase in hazards due to design feature or incompatible uses
- Results in inadequate emergency access
- Conflicts with adopted policies, plans, or programs supporting alternative transportation

Question 4.16a – Traffic Plan or Policy Conflicts

Construction – Less-than-Significant Impact

Proposed Project construction personnel will generally drive to the work site at the beginning of the day and leave at the end of the day, with few people traveling to and from the work site during the day. This will result in approximately 70 to 80 vehicle trips per day in the Proposed Project area during peak construction times, which is a negligible increase in the existing daily traffic. In addition to the personnel commute travel, approximately 20 to 27 truck trips per day will be required for construction purposes. If recycled water is used, an additional 10 trips per day will be required for water delivery to the staging yards. The possibility exists for large trucks or construction vehicles to temporarily disrupt traffic flows as they enter and exit the Proposed Project alignment at designated access points from public roads. However, any disturbance will be short term (i.e., during the construction period) and each of short duration (i.e., vehicles merging in and out of traffic flows), and will not permanently affect LOS, as LOS

[2] According to the SANDAG 2050 RTP, Class II Bike Lanes are "defined by pavement markings and signage used to allocate a portion of a roadway for exclusive or preferential bicycle travel."

[3] According to the SANDAG 2050 RTP, Class III Bike Routes are defined as being "located on shared roadways that accommodate vehicles and bicycles in the same travel lane. Established by signs, bike routes provide continuity to other bike facilities or designate preferred routes through corridors with high demand."

is a long-term measure of operational conditions. The County of San Diego, City of San Diego, and City of Chula Vista have established LOS standards for their roadways. Generally, the acceptable LOS standard in urban areas is D, and the acceptable LOS standard in undeveloped areas is C. While the Proposed Project will cross Otay Valley Road and Heritage Road, which are both operating at an unacceptable level of service, the Proposed Project will result in less than an approximately six percent increase in the average weekday traffic volume, the Proposed Project will not further reduce the LOS of affected roadways to levels below the current LOS. Therefore, impacts are anticipated to be less than significant.

The power line currently crosses under the SR-125 Otay River Valley Bridge in an underground duct bank configuration. The Proposed Project will convert this power line crossing to an overhead configuration. However, as the Proposed Project will cross under the bridge deck, no impacts to traffic will occur at this location. SDG&E proposes to use temporary guard structures where the Proposed Project crosses Heritage Road in the City of Chula Vista. The guard structures will be installed prior to any conductor work to prevent the conductor from sagging onto other overhead lines, into travel lanes, and to avoid prolonged road closures. These guard structures will limit the need for temporary lane closures during construction of the Proposed Project. At the stringing site location on Sea Lavender Way and Black Coral Way in the City of San Diego, temporary lane closures may be required during stringing activities to ensure public safety. In the event that temporary lane closures are required to ensure public safety during stringing activities or to erect and remove guard structures, SDG&E will coordinate with the County of San Diego, City of San Diego and the City of Chula Vista and develop and implement a Traffic Control Plan. The Traffic Control Plan will include a discussion of work hours, haul routes, work area definitions, traffic control and flagging methods, parking restrictions, and methods for coordinating construction activities with emergency service providers. The Traffic Control Plan will be developed in accordance with all applicable transportation plans, city and County ordinances, and LOS standards. Thus, traffic increases will be minimal and the impact will be less than significant.

Operation and Maintenance – No Impact

Operation and maintenance activities for the Proposed Project will be conducted in the same manner as the existing facilities. In addition, operation and maintenance activities are expected to decrease slightly as a result of the Proposed Project due to the lower maintenance requirements of the replacement steel poles relative to the existing wood poles. Therefore, SDG&E does not anticipate that any additional trips will be necessary for operation and maintenance of the upgraded facilities. As a result, there will be no increase in traffic and no reduction in LOS, resulting in no impact.

Question 4.16b – Congestion Management Plan Conflicts

Construction – Less-than-Significant

The congestion management program for the County of San Diego, City of San Diego, and City of Chula Vista is administered through the SANDAG 2050 RTP. The plan offers goals, measures, and projects that could potentially improve traffic and congestion due to future growth of the region. The plan focuses on providing more comprehensive public transportation, reducing transportation-related emissions, providing social equity within communities, and

reducing travel times. The 2050 RTP does not outline specific areas where problems exist; rather, it provides direction on general areas of improvement for transportation systems in San Diego County.

As previously discussed in the response to Question 4.16a – Traffic Plan or Policy Conflicts, Proposed Project-related construction traffic will result in a less-than-significant increase in daily traffic. Within the Proposed Project area in the County of San Diego, City of San Diego, and City of Chula Vista, existing LOS ranges from A through F. While some roads in the Proposed Project area are subject to congestion—including Heritage Road/Otay Valley Road (LOS F) and Palm Avenue from I-805 to Dennery Road (LOS C)—generally less than 80 personnel vehicle trips, 27 truck trips, and 10 recycled water delivery trips per day will be required during peak construction periods. In the western portion of the Proposed Project alignment, Black Coral Way and Sea Lavender Way will be used to access a stringing site. However, construction traffic at this location is not expected to result in substantial delays or congestion on either street as there are multiple routes of ingress and egress available for residents to utilize during construction. Additionally, vehicle traffic will generally be in the areas of active construction as well as at the two staging yards. The staging yards will be located on opposite sides of the Proposed Project, with the Main Street Staging Yard located west of the Proposed Project at the intersection of Main Street and Maxwell Road in Chula Vista and the Otay Staging Yard located southeast of the Proposed Project at the intersection of Otay Mesa Road and Enrico Fermi Drive. Due to the nature of linear construction, work will only occur at a specific pole or a number of poles for a relatively short time, and the number of vehicle trips will correspond with those construction activities. As such, increases in vehicle trips on roads near the Proposed Project will be relatively low and short in duration, and will not significantly contribute to congestion or contribute to an increase in LOS. Therefore, impacts to the existing LOS will be less than significant as a result of the Proposed Project.

Operation and Maintenance – No Impact

As described previously, operation and maintenance activities for the Proposed Project will be conducted in the same manner as the existing facilities. Operation and maintenance activities are expected to decrease slightly as a result of the Proposed Project due to the lower maintenance requirements of the replacement steel poles relative to the existing wood poles. As a result, there will be no impact to the existing LOS due to operation and maintenance of the Proposed Project.

Question 4.16c – Air Traffic Changes

Construction – No Impact

Helicopter use is not anticipated for the construction of the Proposed Project. Because no aircraft will be required for the Proposed Project, no changes to air traffic patterns will be required to accommodate construction. Thus, there will be no impact.

As discussed in Section 4.10 Land Use and Planning, the Proposed Project is located within the Brown Field Municipal Airport Land Use Compatibility Plan (ALUCP) study area and within the FAA Height Notification Boundary. The Proposed Project is located within 20,000 feet of the Brown Field Municipal Airport, which has a runway length longer than 3,200 feet. Because the 69 kV steel poles—which will reach approximately 90 feet high and are located within

one mile of the airport—will exceed the one-to-100 ratio required by 14 CFR Part 77.9 for airspace and navigation, SDG&E consulted with the FAA. The FAA conducted an obstruction evaluation and determined that there is no need for lighting or marking on the poles. Therefore, the Proposed Project will not result in a change in air traffic patterns or an increase in safety risks, and no impact to air traffic will occur.

Operation and Maintenance – No Impact

Operation and maintenance activities will include routine inspections, ongoing maintenance, and repairs necessary to ensure that integrity of the system is maintained over the long term. Inspections may occur in the form of aerial patrol via helicopter or ground patrols visiting the facilities. Consistent with the existing operation and maintenance protocols for inspecting TL 649, if helicopters are used to assist with operation and maintenance activities, SDG&E will notify the FAA and any additional local agencies, as appropriate, in advance. Therefore, no impact will occur.

Question 4.16d – Increase in Hazards

Construction – No Impact

Because the Proposed Project construction will take place within or immediately adjacent to an existing SDG&E alignment and because pole construction will occur in generally the same locations as existing poles, there will be no permanent modifications to existing public roadways or construction of new roadways and no new uses incompatible to existing roads will be introduced. Therefore, there will be no increase in hazards and no impact will occur.

Operation and Maintenance – No Impact

Operation and maintenance activities for the Proposed Project will be conducted in the same manner as the existing facilities. Operation and maintenance activities are expected to decrease as a result of the lower maintenance requirements of the replacement steel poles relative to the existing wood poles. The Proposed Project will be built along the existing alignment. As a result, no additional hazards will be created and no impact will occur.

Question 4.16e – Emergency Access Effects

Construction –Less-than-Significant Impact

Emergency access will not be directly impacted during construction because all streets will remain open to emergency vehicles at all times throughout construction. Increased vehicle traffic and brief (10- to 15-minute) lane closures may occur while the conductor is pulled across roadways, if flaggers are used, or during the installation and removal of guard structures. Although this can indirectly impact emergency access by causing slower response times due to congestion, emergency vehicles will be provided access even in the event of temporary lane closures. Thus, impacts will be less than significant.

Operation and Maintenance – No Impact

As discussed previously, operation and maintenance activities for the Proposed Project will be conducted in the same manner as the existing facilities. Operation and maintenance activities are expected to decrease slightly as a result of the Proposed Project due to the lower maintenance

requirements of the replacement steel poles relative to the existing wood poles. Emergency vehicle access in the Proposed Project area will not change following construction. Therefore, no impact to emergency vehicle access will occur from operation and maintenance activities.

Question 4.16f – Alternative Transportation Conflicts

Construction – No Impact

Pole construction will occur within existing power line alignment and will not involve any activities that conflict with transportation policies, plans, or programs, including bus transportation in the area. The only overhead roadway crossing on the Proposed Project, Heritage Road, is not a bikeway at the location of the crossing and is not part of an MTS bus route. Additionally at the stringing site located on Sea Lavender Way and Black Coral Way, neither of the streets are classified as bikeways and are not part of MTS bus routes. Therefore, there will be no impacts to alternative transportation.

Operation and Maintenance – No Impact

Operation and maintenance activities for the Proposed Project will be conducted in the same manner as the existing facilities. Operation and maintenance activities are expected to decrease slightly as a result of the Proposed Project due to the lower maintenance requirements of the replacement steel poles relative to the existing wood poles. Therefore, there will be no impact to alternative transportation during operation and maintenance activities.

4.16.4 Applicant-Proposed Measures

Because the Proposed Project will not result in any significant impacts to transportation and traffic, no applicant-proposed measures have been proposed.

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