

RECORD OF DECISION

SAN YSIDRO LAND PORT OF ENTRY IMPROVEMENTS PROJECT SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA

Introduction

The U.S. General Services Administration (GSA) has published a Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) for the San Ysidro Land Port of Entry (LPOE) Improvements Project in San Diego, California. The Final SEIS supplements the Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that was adopted for the San Ysidro LPOE Improvements Project in August 2009. In September 2009, GSA prepared a Record of Decision (ROD) that approved the Preferred Alternative (herein referred to as the Approved Project) that was identified in the 2009 Final EIS. The Final SEIS documents and evaluates changed circumstances and proposed modifications to the Approved Project since adoption of the 2009 Final EIS; the Approved Project with proposed modifications is herein referred to as the Revised Project. The Final SEIS is available on the GSA website: <http://www.gsa.gov/portal/category/21521>.

The Approved Project and Revised Project entail the reconfiguration and expansion of the existing San Ysidro LPOE in three independent phases to improve overall capacity and operational efficiency at the LPOE. The San Ysidro LPOE is located along Interstate 5 (I-5) at the U.S.-Mexico border in the San Ysidro community of the City of San Diego, California.

As Regional Commissioner of PBS, GSA Region 9, this ROD documents the specific components of my decision and the rationale for my decision. This decision is based on information and analyses contained in the Final EIS issued in August 2009; the Draft SEIS issued in September 2014; the Final SEIS issued in May 2014; the technical studies associated with the Final EIS, Draft SEIS, and Final SEIS; the comments of Federal and state agencies, stakeholder organizations, members of the public, and elected officials; and other information in the administrative record.

Background

The Approved Project is currently being implemented as funding is obtained. The Approved Project would demolish most of the existing facilities, and new facilities would be constructed in three independent phases. Phase I focuses on the reconfiguration of the northbound facilities, but also includes a pedestrian bridge and a new southbound pedestrian crossing facility on the east side of the LPOE. Phase II primarily would involve the construction of new buildings, and Phase III mainly would involve reconfiguration of the southbound facilities as well as a new southbound roadway that would connect with Mexico's El Chaparral LPOE, and a new southbound-only pedestrian crossing and transit facility on the west side of the LPOE at Virginia Avenue.

Phase I improvements are fully funded and some Phase I improvements of the Approved Project have been, or are currently being, constructed, including the east-west pedestrian bridge over I-5 connecting Camino de la Plaza and the LPOE (completed in April 2011), the new southbound pedestrian crossing facility on the east side of the LPOE (completed in August 2012), the northbound secondary inspection area (completed in August 2012), the northbound

primary inspection area (currently under construction), and the northbound operations center (currently under construction).

GSA is proposing modifications to the Approved Project, including: (1) the incorporation of northbound pedestrian inspections at the proposed southbound-only pedestrian crossing facility on the west side of the LPOE and modification of the phasing/timing of the construction of the pedestrian crossing facility; (2) changes to the development footprint on the west side of the LPOE and design refinements to the proposed Virginia Avenue transit facility; (3) a change in the number of vehicle lanes and the installation of southbound inspection booths and overhead canopies on the proposed southbound roadway; and (4) minor changes in the design and/or timing of implementation of several project elements. In addition to these proposed changes to the Approved Project, the Revised Project also includes the other components of the Approved Project that have not changed.

The changed circumstances associated with the Approved Project include changes to the phasing/timing of funding for proposed improvements and the construction of a temporary southbound roadway that connects I-5 and the El Chaparral LPOE in Mexico.

Due to the changed circumstances and changes to the Approved Project, GSA made the decision to prepare an SEIS for the Revised Project.

Purpose and Need for the Revised Project

The purpose of the Revised Project is to improve operational efficiency, security, and safety for cross-border travelers and federal agencies at the San Ysidro LPOE.

Reconfiguration and expansion of the San Ysidro LPOE are needed because: (1) growth is outstripping capacity at the existing LPOE requiring improvements to expand capacity, improve processing efficiency, and reduce border wait times; (2) the existing facility is undersized and requires modernization due to mandated security programs; (3) the current configuration is inefficient and increases the potential for safety hazards and security concerns; and (4) the current configuration does not efficiently accommodate current and projected cross-border mobility through linkages to multi-modal facilities at and near the LPOE.

Revised Project Alternatives Evaluated in the Final EIS

GSA considered two action alternatives for the Revised Project, as well as the No Action Alternative (which would continue to implement the Approved Project with no changes). Both of the Revised Project action alternatives include the following proposed modifications, as well as the other improvements originally proposed as part of the Approved Project:

- The inclusion of the proposed Phase III pedestrian crossing facility on the west side of the LPOE at Virginia Avenue into Phase I.
- The addition of a northbound pedestrian crossing lane at this proposed pedestrian crossing facility to make it a bi-directional pedestrian crossing facility.
- Modifications to the development footprint and design of the proposed Virginia Avenue transit facility.
- Changes to the number of vehicular lanes in the proposed southbound roadway.
- Installation of southbound inspection booths in the proposed southbound roadway.

- Changes in the timing of implementation of several project elements (i.e. switching among phases).
- Other design changes to the Approved Project (east-west pedestrian bridge, employee parking structure, employee parking lot, staff pedestrian bridge, communications tower, central plant, northbound primary inspection lanes, northbound secondary inspection area, southbound secondary inspection area, and U.S. Border Patrol Facility).

The only difference between the two Revised Project action alternatives is the number of lanes in the southbound roadway and the corresponding number of southbound inspection booths in the primary vehicular inspection area and vehicular spaces in the secondary inspection area.

The alternatives described and evaluated in the Final SEIS include the Six-lane Alternative, the Ten-lane Alternative, and the No Action Alternative.

Six-lane Alternative

The Six-lane Alternative would include the bi-directional pedestrian crossing facility, the modified Virginia Avenue transit facility, six southbound vehicular lanes with six southbound inspection booths with an overhead canopy in the southbound roadway, six vehicular inspection spaces with an overhead canopy in the southbound secondary inspection area, and other design modifications to the Approved Project. As the six southbound lanes approach the border, they would divide into 19 lanes, which would be compatible with the configuration of the El Chaparral LPOE on the Mexican side of the border. All other proposed improvements of the Approved Project would also be constructed under this alternative.

Ten-lane Alternative (Preferred Alternative)

The Ten-lane Alternative would include the bi-directional pedestrian crossing facility, the modified Virginia Avenue transit facility, ten southbound vehicular lanes with ten southbound inspection booths with an overhead canopy in the southbound roadway, ten vehicular inspection spaces with an overhead canopy in the southbound secondary inspection area, and other design modifications to the Approved Project. As the ten southbound lanes approach the border, they would divide into 19 lanes, which would be compatible with the configuration of the El Chaparral LPOE on the Mexican side of the border. All other proposed improvements of the Approved Project would also be constructed under this alternative.

No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, GSA would continue to implement the Approved Project that was analyzed as the Preferred Alternative in the Final EIS and approved in the ROD. None of the proposed modifications would be constructed, including the incorporation of northbound pedestrian crossings at the pedestrian crossing facility at Virginia Avenue, the changes to the development footprint of the Virginia Avenue transit facility, and the changes to the number of vehicular lanes and installation of inspection booths on the southbound roadway, and other design modifications.

Environmental Consequences

Six-lane Alternative

Land Use and Community Issues

The Six-lane Alternative would be consistent with existing and planned land uses in the Revised Project area within San Ysidro. It would also be consistent with zoning and land use designations, as well as with relevant state, regional, and local plans. In addition, no adverse impacts to public parks or recreational facilities would occur.

No adverse impacts to community cohesion or character would occur. The Six-lane Alternative would provide two bi-directional pedestrian crossings (one of each side of I-5) during Phase I of the Revised Project, thus eliminating the need to traverse the freeway to cross the border. By doing so, the Six-lane Alternative would provide improved access for both sides of the San Ysidro and Tijuana communities, as well as provide improved connections to transit on both the east side and west side.

No impacts related to parcel acquisition or relocations would occur. No additional acquisitions or relocations would be required that were not previously evaluated and addressed in the 2009 Final EIS.

While impacts of the Revised Project would fall primarily on a minority and low-income population due to the existing location of the LPOE, no adverse environmental justice impacts are anticipated because the Revised Project has been developed in accordance with Executive Order 12898, which requires public outreach and public input into the development of the action alternatives. A scoping meeting was held on May 9, 2013 and two additional public meetings were held during the environmental review process (November 14, 2013 and June 17, 2014). Additional community outreach efforts included frequent meetings of the Community Representative Committee (several times since 2005). The locations of these meetings have occurred in the San Ysidro Community.

The Revised Project design is the result of public input from community members and stakeholder agencies. Specifically, the bi-directional pedestrian crossing and enhanced Virginia Avenue transit facility were developed at the request of community stakeholders and through binational discussions without our Mexican counterparts.

No adverse impacts related to environmental health and safety risks to children would occur. Children at nearby schools would not be exposed to substantial concentrations of pollutant emissions from traffic travelling to and from the LPOE.

Utilities/Emergency Services/Life Safety

Temporary constructed-related impacts to utilities and emergency services potentially would occur during construction of the Six-lane Alternative.

Traffic and Transportation/Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

Traffic impacts under near-term conditions would occur to one roadway segment: Camino de la Plaza, between Virginia Avenue and the I-5 southbound ramps.

Traffic impacts under long-term conditions would occur to two roadway segments and two intersections, including:

- Camino de la Plaza, between Virginia Avenue and the I-5 southbound ramps
- Camino de la Plaza, between the I-5 southbound ramps and East San Ysidro Boulevard
- East San Ysidro Boulevard/Camino de la Plaza/Beyer Boulevard
- Camino de la Plaza/Virginia Avenue

No freeway queues would occur on southbound I-5 or Interstate 805 (I-805) during the AM or PM peak period with the Six-lane Alternative under near-term conditions. Under long-term conditions, no freeway queues would occur during the AM peak period, but a queue length of 0.77 mile would occur on southbound I-5 and 1.27 miles on southbound I-805. While queues would occur, they would be reduced with the additional capacity proposed by the Six-lane Alternative compared to the baseline.

No adverse impacts to pedestrian, bicycle, and transit facilities would occur. The Six-lane Alternative proposes a new bi-directional pedestrian crossing facility that would be located just south of the Virginia Avenue terminus. This facility would improve mobility and circulation within and around the LPOE by providing additional pedestrian and bicycle access. These facilities would improve pedestrian circulation and transit connectivity compared to the Approved Project. By providing bi-directional pedestrian access on both sides of the LPOE (and both sides of the I-5 freeway), the Six-lane Alternative would substantially enhance connectivity between the two sides of this divided community. Bi-directional pedestrian and bicycle access to Mexico would be provided at both the eastern and western pedestrian processing facilities. The Six-lane Alternative proposes to modify the development footprint and design of the Virginia Avenue transit facility proposed as part of the Approved Project to better accommodate multi-modal transportation options and mobility at the border. The proposed transit facility would include passenger drop-off and loading areas, bus bays, sidewalks, and a connection to the bi-directional pedestrian crossing facility.

Temporary construction-related traffic impacts could potentially occur during construction.

No adverse parking impacts would occur.

Visual/Aesthetics

No adverse visual impacts would occur.

Cultural Resources

No impacts to archaeological resources are expected to occur, although unknown subsurface resources could be subject to disturbance during construction. Interim renovation and ultimate future use of the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) - listed Old Customs House would result in an adverse direct impact to this historical property.

Hydrology and Floodplain

No short-term construction or long-term operational impacts would occur with incorporation and implementation of appropriate design and Best Management Practices (BMPs).

Water Quality and Stormwater Runoff

No short-term construction or long-term operational impacts would occur with incorporation and implementation of appropriate design and BMPs.

Geology/Soils/Seismic/Topography

No seismic or non-seismic impacts would occur based on compliance with International Building Code, California Building Code, and incorporation of geotechnical recommendations.

Paleontology

Grading and excavation activities could potentially affect previously undisturbed portions of the high sensitivity Otay Formation and Old Paralac Deposits, potentially resulting in the destruction of unique or significant paleontological resources.

Hazardous Waste/Materials

Grading and excavation activities would result in potential adverse impacts due to possible soil and/or groundwater contamination at listed facilities of potential environmental concern, and former and current uses within the Revised Project Footprint and LPOE. Additionally, potential adverse impacts could occur associated with aerially deposited lead, hazardous building materials, and polychlorinated biphenyls (PCB).

Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions

The Six-lane Alternative would not result in adverse construction or operational air quality or greenhouse gas (GHG) impacts. The Six-lane Alternative would result in a net decrease in operational criteria pollutant and GHG emissions compared to the baseline.

No adverse air quality impacts related to mobile source air toxics (MSAT) would occur. MSAT emissions associated with the proposed southbound roadway would be lower than the baseline under near-term and long-term conditions. MSAT emissions of the Virginia Avenue transit facility would decrease under near-term conditions and negligibly increase under long-term conditions. MSAT emissions from LPOE employee vehicular trips would result in negligible increases under near-term and long-term conditions.

The reductions in pollutant emissions would be attributed to the additional capacity provided by the Six-lane Alternative.

Energy

Potential short-term, construction-related energy impacts could occur during construction. No adverse operational energy impacts would occur. Energy consumption would not be excessive and would be reduced by achieving a LEED® certification for the LPOE, as is currently planned.

Biological Resources

The Six-lane Alternative would not impact sensitive vegetation communities, sensitive plant species, or sensitive animal species. Impacts to 0.08 acre of non-wetland Waters of the U.S. (WUS) would occur. Potential indirect impacts to biological resources due to decreased water quality could also occur.

Cumulative Impacts

The Six-lane Alternative would result in cumulative traffic impacts to two roadway segments and two intersections, including:

- Camino de la Plaza, between Virginia Avenue and the I-5 southbound ramps
- Camino de la Plaza, between the I-5 southbound ramps and East San Ysidro Boulevard
- East San Ysidro Boulevard/Camino de la Plaza/Beyer Boulevard
- Camino de la Plaza/Virginia Avenue

No adverse cumulative operational air quality or GHG impacts would occur. Potential adverse cumulative construction impacts to air quality could occur if multiple projects within the San Ysidro Community Plan Area are under construction at the same time.

Ten-lane Alternative (Preferred Alternative)

Land Use and Community Issues

Environmental consequences resulting from the Ten-lane Alternative associated with land use and community issues would be the same as those identified for the Six-lane Alternative.

Utilities/Emergency Services/Life Safety

Environmental consequences resulting from the Ten-lane Alternative related to utilities/emergency services/life safety would be the same as those identified for the Six-lane Alternative.

Traffic and Transportation/Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

Environmental consequences resulting from the Ten-lane Alternative associated with traffic and transportation/pedestrian and bicycle facilities would be the same as those identified for the Six-lane Alternative with the exception of southbound freeway queues. The Ten-lane Alternative would provide more capacity than the Six-lane Alternative and therefore, would further reduce freeway queues on southbound I-5 and I-805. With the Ten-lane Alternative, no freeway queues would occur on southbound I-5 or southbound I-805 during the AM or PM peak periods under near-term and long-term conditions.

Visual/Aesthetics

Environmental consequences resulting from the Ten-lane Alternative related to visual/aesthetics would be the same as those identified for the Six-lane Alternative.

Cultural Resources

Environmental consequences resulting from the Ten-lane Alternative associated with cultural resources would be the same as those identified for the Six-lane Alternative.

Hydrology and Floodplain

Environmental consequences resulting from the Ten-lane Alternative related to hydrology and floodplain would be the same as those identified for the Six-lane Alternative.

Water Quality and Stormwater Runoff

Environmental consequences resulting from the Ten-lane Alternative associated with water quality and stormwater runoff would be the same as those identified for the Six-lane Alternative.

Geology/Soils/Seismic/Topography

Environmental consequences resulting from the Ten-lane Alternative associated with geotechnical issues would be the same as those identified for the Six-lane Alternative.

Paleontology

Environmental consequences resulting from the Ten-lane Alternative related to paleontology would be the same as those identified for the Six-lane Alternative.

Hazardous Waste/Materials

Environmental consequences resulting from the Ten-lane Alternative associated with hazardous waste/materials would be the same as those identified for the Six-lane Alternative.

Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Environmental consequences resulting from the Ten-lane Alternative associated with air quality and GHG emissions would be similar to those identified for the Six-lane Alternative. The Ten-lane Alternative is expected to result in greater net reductions in criteria pollutant and GHG emissions due to the additional capacity provided by the Ten-lane Alternative compared to the Six-lane Alternative.

Energy

Environmental consequences resulting from the Ten-lane Alternative related to energy would be the same as those identified for the Six-lane Alternative.

Biological Resources

The Ten-lane Alternative would impact 0.02 acre of disturbed wetland. No other impacts to sensitive habitat would occur, and no impacts to sensitive plant or animal species would occur. Impacts to 0.07 acre of non-wetland WUS would occur. Potential indirect impacts to biological resources due to decreased water quality could also occur.

Cumulative Impacts

Cumulative impacts resulting from the Ten-lane Alternative associated with traffic and air quality and GHG emissions would be the same as those identified for the Six-lane Alternative.

No Action Alternative

Land Use and Community Issues

The No Action Alternative would be consistent with existing and planned land uses within San Ysidro. It would also be consistent with zoning and land use designations, as well as with relevant state, regional, and local plans. In addition, no adverse impacts to public parks or recreational facilities would occur.

No adverse impacts to community cohesion or character would occur. Similar to the action alternatives, the No Action Alternative would restore some connectivity between the divided eastern and western sides of the community. However, the pedestrian facility on the west side of the LPOE would not be bi-directional and therefore, only one northbound pedestrian crossing facility would be provided, which would not provide as much mobility or facilitate cross-border movement of people compared to the action alternatives. Additionally, the modified Virginia Avenue transit facility would not be constructed, which also provides transit linkages and supports increased mobility of people in and around the LPOE.

No impacts related to parcel acquisition or relocations would occur because property acquisitions in progress are following guidelines of the Federal Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies as of 1970, as amended.

While impacts of the No Action Alternative would fall primarily on a minority and low-income population due to the existing location of the LPOE, no adverse environmental justice impacts would occur because the Approved Project has been developed in accordance with Executive Order 12898.

No adverse impacts related to environmental health and safety risks to children would occur. Children at nearby schools would not be exposed to substantial concentrations of pollutant emissions from traffic travelling to and from the LPOE.

Traffic and Transportation/Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

Traffic impacts under near-term conditions¹ would occur to one roadway segment and one intersection, including:

- Camino de la Plaza, between Virginia Avenue and the I-5 southbound ramps
- Camino de la Plaza/Virginia Avenue

¹ Note that the Final EIS that evaluated the Approved Project analyzed near-term conditions in 2014 compared to 2016 in the traffic analysis of the Revised Project.

Traffic impacts under long-term conditions² would occur to one roadway segment and two intersections, including:

- Camino de la Plaza, between Virginia Avenue and the I-5 southbound ramps
- Camino de la Plaza/Virginia Avenue
- Camino de la Plaza/I-5 southbound ramps

Freeway queuing under the No Action Alternative would be comparable to the Six-lane Alternative in that the number of southbound lanes would be similar.

The No Action Alternative would include a new southbound-only pedestrian crossing and southbound pedestrian processing building on the west side of the LPOE at Virginia Avenue. As with the action alternatives, these additional facilities would improve both pedestrian and bicycle mobility; however, none of the design revisions proposed with the action alternatives to enhance overall cross-border mobility would be constructed, including the incorporation of northbound pedestrian inspection capabilities at the pedestrian crossing facility at Virginia Avenue. Although the No Action Alternative would not improve pedestrian and bicycle mobility to the same extent as the Action Alternatives, adverse pedestrian or bicycle circulation impacts would not result from the No Action Alternative.

The No Action Alternative would construct a transit facility at the terminus of Virginia Avenue, but the transit facility would consist of a loop turn-around at the end of Virginia Avenue within the western portion of the existing LPOE. Under this alternative, modifications to the development footprint and design of the transit facility proposed for the action alternatives and the anticipated benefits of better accommodating multi-modal transportation options and mobility at the border would not occur.

Temporary construction-related traffic impacts could potentially occur during construction.

No adverse parking impacts would occur.

Visual/Aesthetics

No adverse visual impacts would occur.

Cultural Resources

No impacts to archaeological resources are expected to occur, although unknown subsurface resources could be subject to disturbance during construction. Interim renovation and ultimate future use of the NRHP-listed Old Customs House would result in an adverse direct impact to this historical property.

Construction of the Central Plant building under the No Action Alternative would indirectly impact the abutting International Building, which is recommended eligible to the NRHP, California Register of Historic Resources, and City Register.

² Note that the Final EIS that evaluated the Approved Project analyzed long-term conditions in 2030 compared to 2035 in the traffic analysis of the Revised Project.

Hydrology and Floodplain

No short-term construction or long-term operational impacts would occur with incorporation and implementation of appropriate design and BMPs.

Water Quality and Stormwater Runoff

No short-term construction or long-term operational impacts would occur with incorporation and implementation of appropriate design and BMPs.

Geology/Soils/Seismic/Topography

No seismic or non-seismic impacts would occur based on compliance with International Building Code, California Building Code, and incorporation of geotechnical recommendations.

Paleontology

Grading and excavation activities could potentially affect previously undisturbed portions of the high sensitivity Otay Formation and Old Paralac Deposits, potentially resulting in the destruction of unique or significant paleontological resources.

Hazardous Waste/Materials

Grading and excavation activities would result in potential adverse impacts due to possible soil and/or groundwater contamination at listed facilities of potential environmental concern, and former and current uses within the LPOE. Additionally, potential adverse impacts could occur associated with aerially deposited lead, hazardous building materials, and polychlorinated biphenyls.

Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions

The No Action Alternative would not result in adverse construction or operational air quality or greenhouse gas (GHG) impacts. The No Action Alternative would result in a net decrease in operational criteria pollutant and GHG emissions compared to the baseline.

No adverse air quality impacts related to mobile source air toxics (MSAT) would occur. The No Action Alternative would result in a net decrease in MSAT emissions due to a decrease in queue times at the border crossing attributable to the additional capacity provided by the Approved Project.

Energy

Potential short-term, construction-related energy impacts could occur during construction. No adverse operational energy impacts would occur. Energy consumption would not be excessive and would be reduced by achieving a LEED® certification for the LPOE, as is currently planned.

Biological Resources

The No Action Alternative would not impact sensitive vegetation communities, sensitive plant species, or sensitive animal species. Impacts to 0.07 acre of non-wetland WUS would occur. Potential indirect impacts to biological resources due to decreased water quality could also occur.

Cumulative Impacts

The No Action Alternative would result in cumulative traffic impacts to one roadway segment, two intersections, and three freeway segments, including:

- Camino de la Plaza, between Virginia Avenue and the I-5 southbound ramps
- Camino de la Plaza/Virginia Avenue
- Camino de la Plaza/I-5 southbound ramps
- Northbound I-5, between the international border and East San Ysidro Boulevard
- Northbound I-5, between East San Ysidro Boulevard and the I-805 interchange
- Northbound I-5, between the I-5 interchange and East San Ysidro Boulevard

No adverse cumulative operational air quality or GHG impacts would occur. Potential adverse cumulative construction impacts to air quality could occur if multiple projects within the San Ysidro Community Plan Area are under construction at the same time.

General Services Administration Decision

As Regional Commissioner of PBS, GSA Region 9, it is my decision to approve the Ten-lane Alternative for the San Ysidro Land Port of Entry Improvements Project.

Environmentally Preferred Alternative

The Environmentally Preferred Alternative is the alternative that best promotes the national environmental policy expressed within NEPA. In general, this refers to the alternative that will result in the least damage to the environment and best protects the natural and cultural resources. GSA has identified the Ten-lane Alternative as the Environmentally Preferred Alternative. I selected this alternative because it will best meet the Revised Project purpose and need and result in the greatest overall benefits while minimizing environmental consequences.

Rationale for Implementing the Preferred Alternative

The decision to implement the Ten-lane Alternative as the Preferred Alternative is based on a balancing of likely adverse impacts to the San Ysidro community with the pressing need to improve operational efficiency, security, and safety for cross-border travelers and federal agencies at the San Ysidro LPOE. This decision takes into account resource concerns, the U.S. Customs and Border Protection's (CBP) national security mission and program, and public interests as analyzed in the Final EIS and Final SEIS. I reached my decision after careful consideration of the environmental analysis of the effects of the action alternatives and the No Action Alternative in concert with the needs of CBP, the nation, the San Diego region, and the community. My primary consideration in reaching this decision was that the Ten-lane Alternative would best satisfy the purpose and need of the Revised Project, and would result in greater benefits to operational efficiency at the LPOE, cross-border circulation, and mobility within the Revised Project area compared to the Six-lane Alternative. The Ten-lane Alternative is anticipated to provide the greatest benefit in alleviating southbound border wait times and queue lengths because it would provide the largest increase in southbound capacity.

Additionally, the following GSA mission considerations were weighed in reaching my decision:

- Providing the client (CBP) with a safe, secure, and more efficient workplace.
- Providing the taxpayer with a cost-effective government facility.

Avoidance, Minimization, and Mitigation Measures

All practicable means of avoiding, minimizing, or mitigating substantial, adverse environmental consequences of the selected alternative were NOT adopted, though the attached program of mitigation, monitoring, and enforcement will be carried out. Some measures that would avoid, minimize, or mitigate identified adverse environmental consequences of the selected alternative have been modified to better integrate with the Preferred Alternative (particularly in the Traffic Section) were determined not to be feasible or consistent with existing laws, regulations, and authorities applicable to GSA, particularly with regard to the availability of, and authority to expend, funds.

The following avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures will be implemented during the Phase in which the associated impact occurs.

Land Use and Community Issues (Section 4.1 in the Final SEIS)

1. A Traffic Management Plan (TMP) will be implemented during construction. Access to existing businesses within the vicinity of the LPOE will be maintained during construction by creating temporary driveways, and/or providing alternate access points.

Utilities/Emergency Services/Life Safety (Chapter 4 [pages 4.12 and 4.1-3] in the Final SEIS and Subchapter 3.3 in the Final EIS)

1. Bollards and barriers will be used to protect structural elements from vehicle damage. Anti-ram barriers must be provided wherever moving vehicles approach booths or buildings.
2. Exterior walls and interior walls in high-risk areas, such as lobbies and public screening spaces, will be reinforced with cast-in-place or precast reinforced concrete.
3. Exterior windows and interior windows between high-risk areas and occupied space will be thermally tempered or laminated glass.
4. Bullet resistant glazing will be provided on windows that face inspection areas, on-coming traffic, or the border.
5. Building perimeters and doors between inspection areas will be designed to resist forced entry.
6. Utilities critical to LPOE operations will be located within the Central Plant, which would be structurally reinforced.
7. Where utilities are located within occupied buildings they will be separated from inspection and public lobby areas by at least 25 feet or by reinforced walls and floors.
8. Building systems will be secured.

9. Mechanical equipment will not be placed at grade and directly adjacent to vehicle movement pathways.
10. Utilities and feeders will not be located adjacent to vehicle pathways, or on the Mexican side of the primary inspection lanes.

Traffic (Section 4.2 in the Final SEIS)

1. A traffic signal will be installed at the intersection of Camino de la Plaza and Virginia Avenue in conjunction with the development of the transit facilities at Virginia Avenue.

In addition, pedestrians and bicyclists will be provided access to LPOE facilities throughout each Phase. The level of such access will be equal to the current condition at the time each Phase is implemented.

The following traffic mitigation measures identified in the Final SEIS will NOT be implemented as part of the Revised Project because authorized funds are not available for these specific measures:

- Widening the segment of Camino de la Plaza, between Virginia Avenue and the I-5 southbound ramps, to Four-lane Collector standards;
- Widening Camino de la Plaza to provide an additional dedicated right-turn lane onto East San Ysidro Boulevard;
- Widening the segment of Camino de la Plaza, between the I-5 southbound ramps and East San Ysidro Boulevard, to Four-lane Major standards; and
- Re-striping of the northbound approach of the Camino de la Plaza/Virginia Avenue intersection to provide one shared left-turn/through lane and a dedicated right-turn lane, and widening the southbound approach to provide one exclusive left-turn lane and shared through/right-turn lane.

Visual/Aesthetics (Section 4.3 in the Final SEIS)

Implementation of the following measures will provide increased visual quality within the Project Study Area:

1. A comprehensive landscape concept plan will be developed and implemented, including landscape features such as:
 - Drought tolerant and sustainable plant palettes.
 - Vine planting at fences and walls to reduce the visual scale and to act as a graffiti deterrent.
2. Street trees and landscaping will be retained to the extent practicable during construction.
3. Architectural treatments will be consistent throughout the proposed LPOE buildings to the extent practicable.
4. Fencing and safety railing will be consistent throughout the proposed pedestrian walkways.

Cultural Resources (Section 4.4 in the Final SEIS)

1. If cultural materials are discovered during construction, all earth-moving activity within and around the immediate discovery area will be avoided until a qualified archaeologist can assess the nature and significance of the find.
2. All renovation of the Old Customs House will conform to *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*.
3. Prior to alteration or removal of building features, detailed documentation of the Old Customs House will be completed as agreed to in the Section 106 consultation process.

If all adverse effects cannot be avoided, then other mitigation measures will be determined through the Section 106 consultation.

Hydrology and Floodplain (Chapter 4 [page 4.1-3] in the Final SEIS and Subchapter 3.7 in the Final EIS)

Impacts related to hydrology and floodplain will be addressed by appropriate design, sizing, and location of proposed storm drain facilities, incorporation of applicable recommendations from detailed geotechnical investigations, and consideration of the location and extent of proposed retention/infiltration basins with respect to potential surficial saturation issues.

Water Quality and Stormwater Runoff (Chapter 4 [pages 4.1-3 and 4.1-4] in the Final SEIS and Subchapter 3.8 in the Final EIS)

Water quality and stormwater runoff impacts would be addressed through conformance with the applicable National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Construction Permit, Municipal Permit and related City standards. Associated BMPs and a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) would define measures to address potential effects associated with short-term construction (erosion and sedimentation, construction-related hazardous materials, demolition-related debris generation, and disposal of extracted groundwater) and long-term operation and maintenance (site design/low impact development BMPs, source control BMPs, treatment control BMPs, and post-construction BMP monitoring/maintenance schedules and responsibilities).

Geology/Soils/Seismicity/Topography (Chapter 4 [page 4.1-4] in the Final SEIS and Subchapter 3.9 in the Final EIS)

Avoidance, minimization, and mitigation recommendations related to geotechnical issues would include incorporation of appropriate design and construction measures to accommodate potential seismic and non-seismic hazards, if applicable, pursuant to associated industry/regulatory standards and subsequent detailed geotechnical analysis.

Paleontology (Chapter 4 [page 4.1-4] in the Final SEIS and Subchapter 3.10 in the Final EIS)

Avoidance, minimization, and mitigation recommendations related to paleontology would involve preparing and implementing a Paleontological Monitoring Plan. The Paleontological Monitoring Plan would likely include the following types of measures in accordance with standard

construction practices in southern California, with detailed requirements to be determined during the plan preparation and approval process:

A Qualified Paleontologist will be present at pre-grading meetings to consult with grading/excavation contractors regarding the potential location and nature of paleontological resources and associated monitoring/recovery operations. A Qualified Paleontologist is defined as an individual with an M.S. or Ph.D. in paleontology or a related field, and who has knowledge of local paleontological resources and documented experience in field identification and collection of fossil materials. A Qualified Paleontologist or Paleontological Monitor (working under the direction of the Qualified Paleontologist), will be on site to monitor for paleontological resources during all original grading/excavation activities involving previously undisturbed areas of the Otay Formation and/or Old Paralac Deposits. A Paleontological Monitor is defined as an individual with at least one year of experience in field identification and collection of fossil materials.

1. If paleontological resources are discovered, the Qualified Paleontologist (or Paleontological Monitor) will implement appropriate salvage operations, potentially including simple excavation, plaster-jacketing of large and/or fragile specimens, or quarry excavations for richly fossiliferous deposits. The Qualified Paleontologist and Paleontological Resources Monitor will be authorized to halt or divert construction work in salvage areas to allow for the timely recovery of fossil remains.
2. Paleontological resources collected during the monitoring and salvage portion of the mitigation program will be cleaned, repaired, sorted, and cataloged pursuant to accepted industry methods.
3. Prepared fossils, along with copies of all pertinent field notes, photos and maps, will be deposited in an approved scientific institution with paleontological collections.
4. A final report will be prepared by the Qualified Paleontologist to describe the results of the mitigation program, including field and laboratory methods, stratigraphic units encountered, and the nature and significance of recovered paleontological resources.

Hazardous Waste/Materials (Section 4.5 in the Final SEIS)

1. Soil sampling will be conducted in areas within the Revised Project Footprint proposed to be disturbed and/or excavated prior to soil export, reuse, or disposal to characterize the soil for the presence of hazardous materials. If contaminated soil is present, appropriate abatement actions will be implemented in accordance with applicable regulatory requirements.
2. Health risk assessments will be conducted for facilities within the LPOE in which contamination has been documented to evaluate whether the levels of contaminants would pose a risk to human health.
3. Prior to commencement of excavation activities, a Site and Community Health and Safety Plan will be prepared to manage potential health and safety hazards to workers and the public.
4. Prior to commencement of excavation activities, a Soil Management Plan will be prepared to address the notification, monitoring, sampling, testing, handling, storage, and disposal of contaminated media or substances that may be encountered during construction activities.

5. Prior to commencement of excavation activities, a Groundwater Management Plan will be prepared to address the notification, monitoring, sampling, testing, handling, storage, and disposal of potentially contaminated groundwater.
6. Existing transformers and elevator equipment within the Revised Project Footprint will be sampled for PCB content if proposed to be disturbed and/or moved during construction activities. If PCBs are present, appropriate abatement actions for their disposal will be implemented in accordance with regulatory requirements, and soil beneath transformers and/or elevators will be evaluated for evidence of releases. If present in underlying soils, appropriate abatement actions for removal and disposal will be implemented in accordance with applicable regulatory requirements.
7. Wastes and potentially hazardous waste within the Revised Project Footprint, including trash, debris piles, and equipment, will be removed and recycled and/or disposed of off site, in accordance with applicable regulatory requirements.
8. Prior to renovation or demolition of existing structures, surveys will be conducted to evaluate the presence, locations, and quantities of hazardous building materials. Suspect materials will be sampled and analyzed, and if present, appropriate abatement actions will be implemented in accordance with applicable regulatory requirements.
9. Contract specifications will include references to the potential to encounter contaminated soil, groundwater, or other regulated wastes during construction activities.

Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Emissions (Section 4.6 in the Final SEIS)

The following the following measures would help minimize construction-related criteria air pollutant emissions and GHG emissions. GSA will advise construction contractors to incorporate the following measures where reasonable:

1. Suspend grading and earth moving when wind gusts exceed 25 mph unless the soil is wet enough to prevent dust plumes.
2. Cover trucks when hauling loose material.
3. Stabilize the surface of materials stockpiles if not removed immediately.
4. Limit vehicular paths on unpaved surfaces and stabilize any temporary roads.
5. Trucks will be washed off as they leave the construction site(s), as necessary, to control fugitive dust emissions.
6. Track-out reduction measures such as gravel pads will be used at access points to minimize dust and mud deposits on roads affected by construction traffic.
7. Construction equipment and vehicles will be properly tuned and maintained. Low sulfur fuel will be used in all construction equipment.
8. Minimize unnecessary vehicular and machinery activities.

9. Sweep paved streets at least once per day where there is evidence of dirt that has been carried on to the roadway.
10. Revegetate disturbed land, including vehicular paths created during construction to avoid future off-road vehicular activities.
11. Locate construction equipment and truck staging and maintenance areas as far as feasible and nominally downwind of schools, active recreation areas, and other areas of high population density.
12. To the extent feasible, construction traffic will be routed and scheduled to reduce congestion and related air quality impacts caused by idling vehicles along local roads during peak travel times.
13. Provide landscaping where possible, which reduces surface warming and decreases CO₂ through photosynthesis.
14. Use lighter color surfaces, such as Portland cement, which helps to increase the albedo effect (i.e., surface reflectivity of the sun's radiation) and cool the surface.
15. Use of energy efficient lighting.

Energy (Chapter 4 [page 4.1-4] in the Final SEIS and Subchapter 3.13 in the Final EIS)

The following avoidance and minimization measures will be implemented during construction activities:

1. Construction equipment and vehicles will be properly tuned and maintained.
2. Idling times of construction equipment will be minimized, to the extent practical.
3. To the extent feasible, construction traffic will be routed and scheduled to reduce congestion and related air quality impacts caused by idling vehicles along local roads during peak travel times.

Biological Resources (Section 4.7 in the Final SEIS)

1. Prior to the commencement of construction, jurisdictional areas and sensitive vegetation within the Revised Project BSA will be fenced with orange plastic exclusionary fencing, and no personnel, debris, or equipment would be allowed within the jurisdictional areas.
2. Impacts to 0.07 acre of non-wetland WUS will be mitigated at a 1:1 ratio through purchase of mitigation credits equal to 0.08 acre of ephemeral drainage at an approved mitigation bank.
3. Impacts to 0.02 acre of disturbed wetland will be mitigated at a 2:1 ratio through a combination of creation, restoration, enhancement, and acquisition (at an approved mitigation bank) of 0.04 acre of wetlands.
4. If removal of habitat and/or construction activities is necessary adjacent to nesting habitat during the bird breeding season (January 15 to September 15), the GSA shall retain an

approved biologist to conduct a pre-construction survey to determine the presence or absence of: (1) non-listed nesting migratory birds on, or within, 100 feet of the construction area; (2) Federally- or State-listed birds on, or within, 300 feet of the construction area; and (3) nesting raptors within 500 feet of the construction area. The pre-construction survey will be conducted within 10 calendar days prior to the start of construction. The results of the survey will be submitted to the GSA for review and approval prior to initiating any construction activities.

5. If nesting birds are detected by the approved biologist, the following buffers will be established: (1) no work will occur within 100 feet of a non-listed nesting migratory bird nest; (2) no work will occur within 300 feet of a listed bird nest; and (3) no work will occur within 500 feet of a raptor nest. If construction within these buffers cannot be avoided, GSA, in consultation with the resource agencies, will determine the appropriate buffer.

Mitigation Monitoring and Enforcement Program

A Mitigation Monitoring and Enforcement Program (MMEP) will be implemented to ensure that the proposed avoidance, minimization, and mitigation measures identified above are implemented as part of the Revised Project. The MMEP will identify the timing, responsibility, and method of implementation of the proposed measures, as well as any required monitoring and enforcement activities. As part of this program, each project contractor will be required to implement the mitigation measures arising from their project activities. These measures will be inspected and monitored to ensure compliance. Any operational mitigation measures will be implemented through the GSA Property Manager.


The MMEP will be maintained by GSA throughout Revised Project implementation and will be included as part of the administrative record for the Revised Project.

Availability of the Final SEIS

The Notice of Availability for the Final SEIS was published in the *Federal Register* on May 30, 2014 (79 FR 31110). GSA received six letters regarding the Final SEIS, which were considered in developing this ROD. The letters were received from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), Barob Group Ltd., Border Station Partners L.P., David Golman, and Marni Wilton. These letters did not represent significant new circumstances or information that would warrant additional analysis or environmental documentation pursuant to CEQA NEPA implementing regulations (40 CFR 1502.9(c)).

Record of Decision Approval:

Signature: _____



PBS Regional Commissioner
GSA Region 9

7 August 2014
Date