Section 4.15

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4.15 TRANSPORTATION AND TRAFFIC

This section describes existing conditions and the potential impacts on transportation and traffic from construction and operation of the Proposed Project and alternatives.

4.15.1 Significance Criteria

Impacts to traffic and transportation are considered potentially significant if the project would:

- Cause an increase in traffic which is substantial in relation to the existing traffic load and capacity of the street system (i.e., result in a substantial increase in either the number of vehicle trips, the volume to capacity ratio on roads, or congestion at intersections)
- Exceed, either individually or cumulatively, a level of service standard established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways
- 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
- Substantially increase hazards due to a design feature (e.g., sharp curves or dangerous intersections) or incompatible uses (e.g., farm equipment)
- Result in inadequate emergency access
- Result in inadequate parking capacity
- Conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs supporting alternative transportation (e.g., bus turnouts, bicycle racks)

4.15.2 Applicant Proposed Measures

The following APMs would be implemented.

TRA-1. Obtain Permits. If any work requires modifications or activities within local roadway ROWs, appropriate permits will be obtained prior to the commencement of construction activities, including any necessary local permits and encroachment permits.

TRA-2. Traffic Management and Control Plans. Traffic control and other management plans will be prepared where necessary to minimize project impacts on local streets.

TRA-3. Minimize Street Use. Construction activities will be designed to minimize work on or use of local streets.

4.15.3 Environmental Setting

The Proposed Project area is served by I-10, a six- to eight-lane divided interstate highway that runs through the Coachella Valley and provides regional and statewide connections to the area. In addition, SR 111, maintained by the California State Department of Transportation (CalTrans), connects Coachella Valley with the Imperial Valley and with Mexico, via connections with SR 86. From SR 111, SR 74 extends south and west to the communities in the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto mountains and western Riverside County. Designated truck routes in the area are shown on Figure 4.15: Truck Routes.

The street network within the City of Palm Springs and the community of Thousand Palms generally consists of a grid system of east/west and north/south arterials and collectors. The Proposed Farrell-Garnet 115 kV Subtransmission Line (Route 1) would follow both I-10 and Gene Autry Trail. Gene Autry Trail is a heavily traveled north/south roadway providing access to the Farrell Substation from I-10.

The Proposed Mirage-Santa Rosa Subtransmission Line (Route 4) would cross Ramon Road, Calle Franscisco, Calle Desierto (unpaved), Calle Tosca, and I-10. The reconfigured and new 115 kV subtransmission lines within existing SCE ROWs and franchise locations would follow Vista de Oro, an unpaved, unimproved road, from Ramon Road to Calle Desierto.

North of Mirage Substation, the Proposed Devers-Coachella Valley 220 kV Loop-In would travel parallel to and east of Vista de Oro and an existing access road, both unpaved, dirt roads, but would not cross any other travel routes.

SunLine Transit provides bus service within the project area. According to the City of Palm Springs General Plan, "SunLine Transit is a joint powers authority created by the nine cities of the Coachella Valley, as well as the County of Riverside."

Amtrak uses the UPRR tracks adjacent to I-10 and makes a passenger stop, twice weekly, in Indio, which is approximately 20 miles southeast of Palm Springs.

The Palm Springs International Airport is located in the project area, south of Farrell Substation and just west of Gene Autry Trail.

4.15.4 Impact Analysis

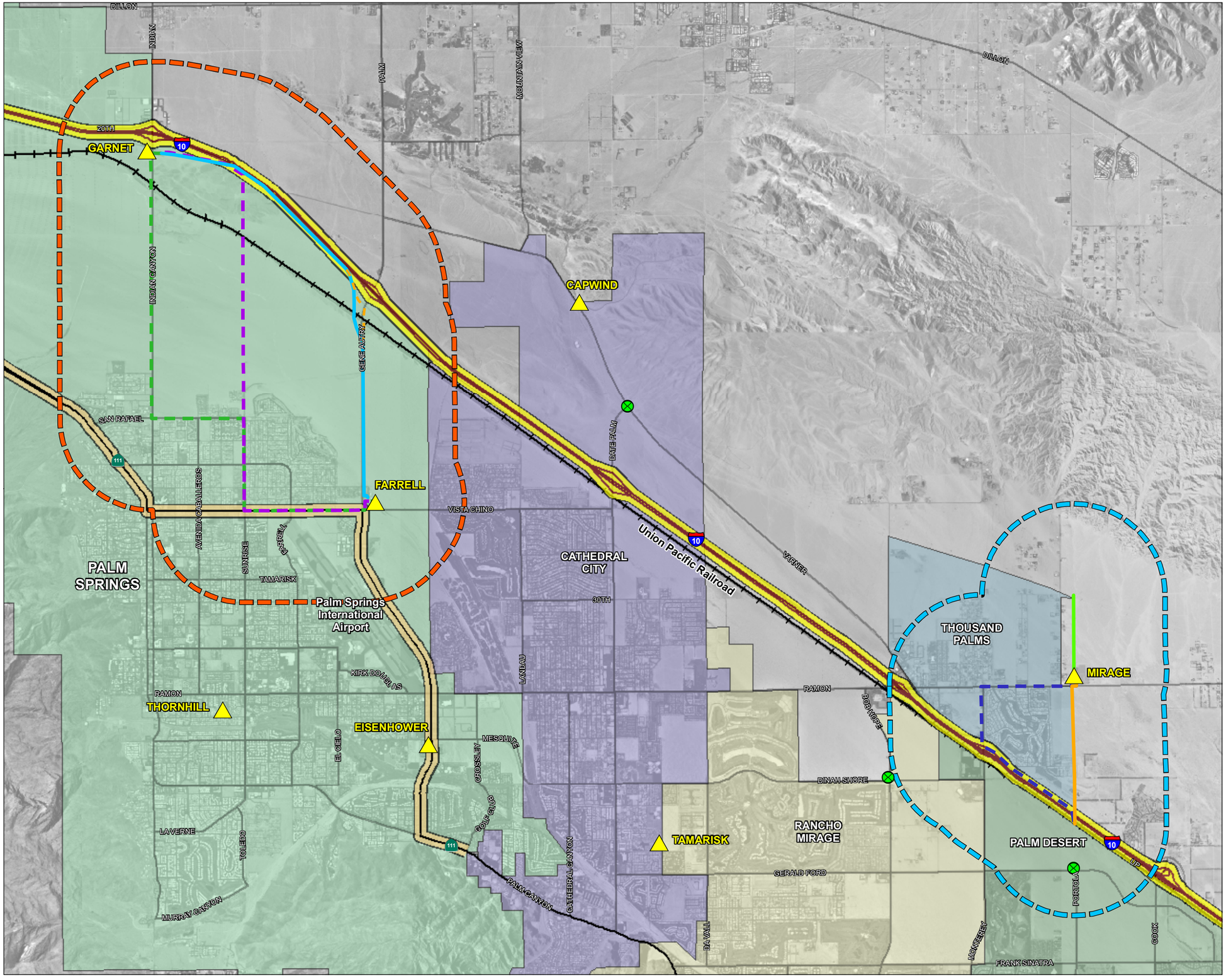
4.15.4.1 Construction Impacts

The Proposed Project would run adjacent to or cross a number of local roadways. The Proposed Mirage-Santa Rosa 115 kV Subtransmission Line (Route 4) would cross 1-10. Roadways located within the cities of Palm Springs, Cathedral City, Rancho Mirage, and Palm Desert, as well as Riverside County, would be utilized. Regional access to the area would be provided by use of I-10.

Construction traffic to and from the Proposed Project would include construction crews and construction equipment for transmission and subtransmission line construction, substation modifications, and telecommunication improvements. Construction activity, crew sizes, and equipment to be transported through the project area for the Proposed Project are presented in Tables 3.3-1: Construction Equipment and Workforce Estimates by Activity (Devers-Coachella Valley 220 kV Loop-In), 3.4-1: Roadway Personnel and Equipment, 3.4-2: Construction Equipment and Workforce Estimates, 3.5-2: Substation Construction Personnel and Equipment Summary, and 3.6-1: Telecommunication Construction Summary.

Various staging areas would be utilized along the proposed transmission and subtransmission line routes to provide convenient storage and access for construction. If any work were to require modifications or activities within local roadway ROWs, appropriate local permits would

Figure 4.15
Truck Routes



LEGEND

- Farrell - Garnet Project Area
- Mirage - Santa Rosa Project Area

Proposed Route

- SCE Substations - Proposed Modification
- Subtransmission Line Reconfiguration
- Farrell-Garnet 115 kV Route #1
- Mirage-Santa Rosa 115 kV Route #4
- Devers-Coachella 220 kV Loop-In

Alternative Subtransmission Line Routes

- Farrell-Garnet 115 kV Route #1 Option A
- Farrell-Garnet 115 kV Route #2
- Farrell-Garnet 115 kV Route #3
- Mirage-Santa Rosa 115 kV Route #5

Truck Routes (CalTrans, 2005)

- US Interstate Route
- California State Route

Transportation (TBM, 2006)

- Interstate Highway
- State Highway
- Major Road
- Railroad

0 0.5 1 2
Miles

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Project ID: 2006LE7177
Custodian: John Le
Filename: Fig 4.15 Truck Routes_epg.mxd
Date: July 25, 2007

Mapping Prepared by:
Corporate Real Estate Department
Real Estate Operations
Survey and Mapping

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be obtained prior to the commencement of construction activities (APM TRA-1). This process would involve the preparation of appropriate management plans and provisions to ensure local streets are not damaged or that damage would be repaired (APM TRA-2). In the event that oversized loads or other special construction vehicles are utilized, appropriate permits and procedures would be followed to ensure that the equipment and materials are safely hauled and do not damage state or federal roadway facilities.

All material for the transmission and subtransmission lines and substation modifications would be delivered by truck. The majority of the truck traffic would use major streets and would be scheduled during off-peak traffic hours. Concrete truck deliveries might need to be made during peak hours, when footing work is being performed. The transformer at Mirage Substation would be delivered by a heavy transport vehicle and off-loaded on site by large cranes with support trucks.

Traffic caused by the construction of the Proposed Project would be temporary, short-term, and minimal. The traffic volumes that would be generated by activities associated with the construction of the Proposed Project would not significantly affect intersection or roadway operations in the area due to the limited number of trips that would be generated. However, the Proposed Mirage-Santa Rosa 115 kV Subtransmission Line (Route 4) would cross I-10 and, as a result, there could be potential traffic delays from construction activities occurring at that location. SCE would be required to obtain encroachment permits from CalTrans in order to complete construction activities that cross I-10 (APM TRA-1). Through coordination with CalTrans, measures would be taken to minimize traffic delays along I-10. Because the movement of heavy equipment and materials to various work sites and marshalling yards has the potential to cause temporary traffic delays, such activities would occur in off-peak hours, in order to avoid the morning and evening peak vehicular travel times on weekdays, to the extent possible (APM TRA-3). In addition, SCE would implement a traffic management plan, approved by the local jurisdiction, prior to commencing construction activities. In summary, the Proposed Project would not cause an increase in traffic that is substantial in relation to the existing traffic load and capacity of the street system and would not exceed, either individually or cumulatively, a level of service standard established by the county congestion management agency for designated roads or highways.

It is not anticipated that the construction of the Proposed Project would require alterations to local roadways. However, if any work requires modifications or activities within the local road ROWs, appropriate local permits would be obtained. This process would involve the preparation of appropriate management plans and provisions to ensure that local streets are not damaged or that any damage is repaired.

Construction of the Proposed Project would not result in a change in air traffic patterns and would not increase hazards due to a design feature or incompatible uses.

Substation upgrades and modifications associated with the Proposed Project would be contained within substation property boundaries, thereby leaving adjacent roads unobstructed. Therefore, substation construction would not result in inadequate emergency access.

Parking for routine maintenance of any of the components associated with the Proposed Project would be accommodated on substation sites or within existing SCE ROWs or franchise locations. During the construction of the Proposed Project, parking for construction workers also

would be accommodated on the substation sites or within SCE ROWs and franchise locations. Overall, the Proposed Project would not result in inadequate parking capacity.

Construction of the Proposed Project would not conflict with adopted policies, plans, or programs supporting alternative transportation.

In summary, impacts to traffic and transportation due to the construction of the Proposed Project would be less than significant.

4.15.4.2 Operational Impacts

Once completed and operational, the Proposed Project would not generate vehicular trips in the area on a consistent basis. Periodic maintenance or emergency repairs might be required occasionally, as problems would arise along the proposed lines. The crews required for maintenance and repairs of these lines would generate a very small number of trips.

Following the completion of the upgrades and modifications to the 10 substations associated with the Proposed Project, the substations would continue to operate as unattended facilities. Crews occasionally would access the substation sites for periodic repairs and/or maintenance at the facilities (approximately once a week). However, these periodic trips would not cause traffic or transportation impacts at any of the intersections or roadways in the surrounding area. In addition, parking for routine maintenance would be accommodated on the substation sites or within existing SCE ROWs or franchise locations. The Proposed Project would not result in any change to air traffic or rail patterns.

In summary, impacts to traffic and transportation due to the operation of the Proposed Project would be less than significant.

4.15.5 Alternatives

4.15.5.1 Farrell-Garnet 115 kV Subtransmission Line Alternative Routes 2 and 3

The Farrell-Garnet 115 kV Subtransmission Line Alternative Route 2 would follow East Vista Chino Avenue and Sunrise Way, in addition to I-10, within Palm Springs. A portion of the line on Sunrise Way would be placed underground. Alternative Route 3 would follow the same roadways as Alternative Route 1, with the addition of San Rafael Road and Indian Canyon Drive. Alternative Route 2 would require approximately 2.5 miles of new ROW, and Alternative Route 3 would require approximately 0.5 miles of new ROW.

Impacts related to traffic and transportation for the Farrell-Garnet 115 kV Subtransmission Line Alternative Routes 2 and 3 would be similar to those of the proposed route, except for a portion of Alternative 2, which would require approximately 0.5 mile of line to be placed underground on Sunrise Way, from San Rafael Road to Four Seasons Boulevard. As a result, there could be potential traffic delays from construction activities on Sunrise Way that would be longer in duration than from the Proposed Project. Through coordination with CalTrans, measures would be taken to minimize traffic delays on Sunrise Way.

The Farrell-Garnet subtransmission line route alternatives would require the use of I-10 and local roadways in the area in order for workers to gain access to the work sites and to transport machinery and materials to various locations. If any construction work would affect public streets, the local ministerial permit process would require the preparation and approval of a traffic management and/or detour plan to ensure that potential delays are minimized. In the event that oversized loads or other special construction vehicles are utilized, appropriate permits and procedures would be followed to ensure that the equipment and materials are safely hauled and do not damage state or federal roadway facilities.

Once completed and operational, the alternative 115 kV subtransmission line routes would not generate vehicular trips in the area on a consistent basis. Periodic maintenance or emergency repairs might be required occasionally, as problems arise. However, the crews required for maintenance and repairs would generate a very small number of trips.

In summary, impacts to traffic and transportation due to the construction and operation of the subtransmission line route alternatives would be less than significant.

4.15.5.2 Mirage-Santa Rosa 115 kV Subtransmission Line Alternative Route 5

The Mirage-Santa Rosa 115 kV Subtransmission Line Alternative Route 5 would require approximately 1.9 miles of line to be placed underground adjacent to Ramon Road, Monterey Avenue, and Varner Road, within roadway ROWs, provided there is adequate space for the facilities. As a result, there could be potential traffic delays from construction activities on these roadways longer in duration than from the Proposed Project. Through coordination with Riverside County, measures would be taken to minimize traffic delays.

The Mirage-Santa Rosa 115 kV Subtransmission Line Alternative Route 5 would cross I-10, and, as a result, there could be potential traffic delays from construction activities occurring at that location. SCE would be required to obtain encroachment permits from CalTrans in order to complete construction activities that cross I-10. Through coordination with CalTrans, measures would be taken to minimize traffic delays along I-10. Because the movement of heavy equipment and materials to various work sites and marshalling yards has the potential to cause temporary traffic delays, such activities would occur in off-peak hours, in order to avoid the morning and evening peak vehicular travel times on weekdays, to the extent possible. In addition, SCE would implement a traffic management plan approved by the local jurisdiction prior to commencing construction activities.

The subtransmission line route alternative would require the use of I-10 and local roadways in the area, in order for workers to gain access to the work sites and to transport machinery and materials to various locations. If any construction work would affect public streets, the local permit process would require the preparation and approval of a traffic management and/or detour plan to ensure that potential delays are minimized. In the event that oversized loads or other special construction vehicles are utilized, appropriate permits and procedures would be followed to ensure that the equipment and materials are safely hauled and do not damage state or federal roadway facilities.

Once completed and operational, the alternative 115 kV subtransmission line route would not generate vehicular trips in the area on a consistent basis. Periodic maintenance or emergency

repairs might be required occasionally, as problems arise. However, the crews required for maintenance and repairs would generate a very small number of trips.

In summary, impacts to traffic and transportation due to the construction and operation of the subtransmission line route alternative would be less than significant.

4.15.6 References

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