

1. Project Information

District 8	County San Bernardino	Route I-215	PM 10.5/10.7	EA 05-OA880k
Project Title Interstate 215/Palm Ave. & Kendall Dr. Interchange Improvement				
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2. Project Description

Purpose and Need

The purpose of the project is to increase capacity and address congestion at the Interstate 215 (I-215)/Palm-Kendall interchange. This project proposes to improve congestion and traffic flow between existing intersections of Palm-Hallmark and Palm-Kendall. This project will also improve pedestrian and non-motorized vehicle access along Palm Avenue and Kendall Drive within the project limits.

The need of the project is to:

- Annual regional population growth of 1.8% is expected in San Bernardino between 2025 and 2045. A future no build on Palm Avenue on/off ramps and Kendall Drive shows a LOS of F. Therefore, improvements need to be made to accommodate the high demand.
- The City of San Bernardino's General Plan shows the development of commercial, residential, industrial, public and open space within our project. We must provide alternative access to local neighborhoods and businesses from the I-215 highway.
- The City of San Bernardino's General Plan includes transportation alternatives including light rail, bus, bicycle, and pedestrian paths and trails. Currently, Palm Avenue and

Kendall Drive has no continuous pedestrian access along Palm Avenue as it crosses under the I-215. Pedestrian oriented-development is necessary.

Description of work

Within the project study area, Palm Avenue consists of an arterial roadway with four lanes, including two lanes in each direction, a bridge over the channel, and crosses under I-215. Kendall Drive consists of an arterial roadway with four lanes, including two lanes in each direction.. Little League Drive consists of two lanes, one lane in each direction. Four I-215 ramps on Palm Avenue. The existing I-215 overcrossing has four lanes, with two lanes in each direction.

Currently, I-215 consists of a tight diamond interchange for only the northbound on/off ramps and a partial cloverleaf for the southbound on/off ramp. As with the off ramps, the two lanes approach a signalized traffic intersection. The existing signalized intersection at the interchange cannot efficiently clear the traffic movements resulting in substantial delay in the project area. All study area intersections currently operate at a reduced LOS. East and west of the Palm Avenue and Kendall Drive interchange, multiple driveways serve local businesses. South of the Palm/Kendall interchange serves a large number of vehicle movements including trucks traveling to industrial zones.

The City of San Bernardino proposes to improve the operation of Palm Avenue and Kendall Drive and the I-215 ramp terminals within the project study area by installing intersection improvements on the east and west side of I-215. In addition, bicycle and pedestrian facilities are proposed to provide a needed connection between the existing Class II bikeway on Kendall Drive.

The project study area is bounded by a mix of industrial and commercial development. The existing off-ramps and on-ramps and their intersections are located within Caltrans' ROW. The segments of Palm Avenue north and south of the ramp intersections fall within the City of San Bernardino's limits

Alternatives - Currently, four (4) project alternatives are being studied, as described below.

Alternative 1: Kendall Plaza T

This alternative consists of 2 hook ramps for NB on and off movement, a loop ramp for SB on and spread diamond for southbound on and off movement. This alternative was designed to increase the intersection spacing along Palm avenue by removing the tight diamond NB ramps with hook ramps next to Kendall Plaza. The alternative also increases the LOS by decreasing the amount of left turns being made on the SB on ramps.

Alternative 2: Single Point Urban Interchange

This alternative is a single point interchange that controls all traffic movements at a single intersection. Since there is only one intersection, the minimum spacing requirements along Palm Avenue are met. The through and two turning movements of SPUI is to improve traffic conditions for our project.

Alternative 3: Partial Cloverleaf Interchange

The Partial Cloverleaf alternative layout consists of a loop on ramp, a tight diamond on ramp and a hook off ramp for NB movement. The SB movements are controlled through a loop on ramp and a spread diamond. This alternative was designed to allow yield control movements for all the onramps to decrease the amount of left turns and to decrease the amount of time a car spends at a traffic light.

Alternative4: Little League T.

The “Little League Tee” alternative consists of two hook ramps for northbound on and off movement, a spread diamond for southbound on and off movement and a loop ramp for southbound on movement. It also realigns Little League drive parallel to Cable Creek to maximize storage length for cars on the ramps. The alternative also increases the LOS by improving intersection spacing along Palm and creating new intersections away from congested intersections.

3. Anticipated Environmental Approval

Check the anticipated environmental determination or document for the proposed project in the table below.

CEQA		NEPA	
Environmental Determination			
Statutory Exemption	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Categorical Exemption	<input type="checkbox"/>	Categorical Exclusion	<input type="checkbox"/>
Environmental Document			
Initial Study or Focused Initial Study with Negative Declaration (ND) or Mitigated ND	<input type="checkbox"/>	Routine Environmental Assessment with proposed Finding of No Significant Impact	<input type="checkbox"/>
		Complex Environmental Assessment with proposed Finding of No Significant Impact	<input type="checkbox"/>
Environmental Impact Report	X	Environmental Impact Statement	X
CEQA Lead Agency (if determined):	California Department of Transportation		
Estimated length of time (months) to obtain environmental approval:	Approximately 24 months		
Estimated person hours to complete identified tasks:			

4. Special Environmental Considerations

NEPA/404 Integration MOU process

Projects that have five or more acres of permanent impacts to waters of the United States and require the preparation of an EIS are subject to the NEPA/404. Per section 404 of the Clean Water Act, any work done on bodies of water must be permitted by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. It has not been determined if this process would apply to this Project. Further evaluation of the potential impacts to waters of the U.S would help define this requirement.

Section 7

Section 7 of the Federal Endangered Species Act requires all federal agencies to consult with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) if a project action may affect listed endangered or threatened species. Consultation is necessary if a

project is likely to adversely affect a listed species. Typically starting with an informal consultation. If the Federal agency, after discussions with the Service, determines that the proposed action is not likely to affect any listed species in the project area, and if the Service concurs, the informal consultation is complete and the proposed project moves ahead. A Biological Assessment will be prepared, and determine if a Biological Opinion is necessary to also determine if the project will impact suitable habitats for endangered species.

Section 4(f)

“There are two steps in determining whether Section 4(f) applies to a federal transportation project: 1) the project must involve a resource that is protected by the provisions of Section 4(f), and 2) that there is a "use" of that resource. Protected resources include publicly-owned public parks, recreational areas of national, state or local significance, wildlife or waterfowl refuges; or lands from a historic site of national, state or local significance.” The proposed project does not involve resources protected by the provision of section 4(f). Thus, there is no constructive use.

Overall, the proposed project is not expected to require unusual, exceptional or extended environmental processes.

5. Anticipated Environmental Commitments

For all build alternatives the anticipated environmental commitments are listed:

5.1 Land Use: The project will require gaining more right of way. The right of way acquisition will disturb the city/ county’s general plan for land use and change zoning of certain parcels. Additional land use permits will need to be acquired.

Permits needed: Re-zoning permit

5.2 Water Quality and Storm Runoff: The area being developed around the floodplain will need to be watched carefully. The earth being added into the floodplain will displace the water in the floodplain. Since the water is being displaced we must make sure the levee in place does not break. If the levee will break with access water, we must reroute the water to not affect the nearby homes and businesses. The area being developed around the floodplain will need to be treated and disposed of according to the regulations prescribed by the EPA and the Army Corps of Engineers.

Permits needed: NPDES (National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit you get through the EPA), SWQMP (if we need to change the drainage system)

5.3 Cultural Resources and Paleontology: May be discovered during construction. If so, all earth-moving activity within and around the immediate area of discovery must be stopped until a qualified archaeologist can assess the findings. Macrofossils were found near the site and are classified as marine conglomerate. If macrofossils are discovered during construction, all earth-moving activity within and around the immediate area of discovery must be stopped until a qualified paleontologist can assess the findings. In order to minimize the impact, an archeologist and paleontologist will need to be present during major excavations.
No permits needed.

5.4 Noise and Vibration: Will impact all alternatives due to the proximity of the southbound onramp to nearby noise sensitive receptors. Will require a vibration study.

5.5 Hazardous Materials: There are three hazardous waste issues inside our project area. However we've narrowed it down to two hazardous waste sites that could come up during the construction of our project. The Cajon Landfill and the Newmark Groundwater Contamination Superfund Site are still active with an area of 6000 acres.—The Newmark Groundwater Contamination Superfund Site is currently going through cleanup and evaluation through the EPA since the aquifer used for drinking water has been affected by the contaminants that have been found

5.6 Biological resources: May have endangered species located within the study boundary or on site. If the project is to continue, coming across one or more than one species will need to be addressed and the proper actions of mitigation will be used such as relocation, or stopping the project. Minimization/avoidance measures to be implemented. This includes Pre-construction meeting, bird surveys, protocol surveys if required, and construction monitoring.
Permits may be needed if impacting any jurisdictional waters/drainages and/or endangered species or suitable habitats.

6. Permits and Approvals

Include timelines for acquiring permits or agreements. Reference PEAR Environmental Commitments Cost Estimate.

All build alternatives may impact the previously above ground location of the 100 year flood plain and will likely require a NEPA/404 Permit due to the Study Area's proximity to the underground culvert designed for a 100 year design storm. Impacts to waters of the United States will likely also trigger the need for a Section 401 Water Quality Certification from the Region Water Quality Control Board (RWQCB). In addition, the improvements to the floodplain will need to occur within an agricultural section of the Study Area. National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) coordination may be necessary at the site.

In addition, according to San Bernardino County, any development plan in a flood hazard zone needs to submit an application for approval in the following manner.

Must be reviewed by the floodplain administrator in order to determine if application meets ordinance standards and requirements, including required federal permits. A Letter of Map Revision (LOMR) may be needed if an alternative greatly impacts a floodplain. LOMR reviews take up to 90 days to process, are subject to an appeal period, and usually become effective within six months after they are issued.

7. Level of Effort: Risk and Assumptions

Risk management for this project is the process of identifying all possible challenges regarding constraints that may be found within the study area boundary. This PEAR document is prepared to help clarify and provide explanations through research and disclosure of potential challenges and whether additional actions are required. The technical summaries that are listed below provide background and rationale for the Project.

The PEAR Technical Summaries are based off research data gathered from reputable online sources and a preliminary site visit in order to provide current conditions of the Study Area. The

prepared Technical Reports and Assessments assist with the evaluation of potential environmental risks based on the Build Alternatives for the current project.

7.1 Assumptions:

- Scope is dependent on current conditions of traffic and the current road layout.
- The consensus of the community would support the idea of this project, but would like to be actively involved in the environmental/planning process through frequent updates and timely-mannered notices of upcoming events to take place.
- Due to residential homes nearby there needs to be a Health Assessment to be done to determine any long-term operation effects on Air Quality. During the build phase of the Project, monitoring air conditions is required.
- Sound walls will be required due to the proximity of homes near the proposed alternatives. A soundwall analysis will be prepared.
- Hazardous waste will be mitigated through the Resource Conservation and Recovery Act (RCRA) Laws and Regulations.
- No federally listed species or jurisdictional wetlands are expected to be present within the Study Area. Proper mitigation techniques will be used if there is an occurrence of species listed below in section 8.15
- An ASR and PSR will not be needed due to little to no effects in these categories.

7.2 Risks:

Risk is consistent with weighing events or conditions that could have either a positive or negative impact on at least one project objectives: scope, cost, or schedule. The following table defines the potential impact of a risk on the project objectives.

7.3 Evaluation of the Impact of a Risk on Project Objectives

	Low	Moderate	High
Time	Delay < 3 months	Delay of 3 months	Delay > 3 months
Cost	< 5% Cost Increase	5-10% Cost Increase	> 10% Cost Increase
Scope	Changes in project limits or features with <5% cost increase	Changes in project limits or features with 5-10% cost increase	Sponsor does not agree that scope meets the stated purpose and need

Based on our project assumptions, the following risks were identified for this project:

- Moderate Probability/Moderate Impact: Due to the public's interest in the Project, additional time for public involvement and outreach may be needed. This could delay the Project; however, this delay could be mitigated by administering early and continuous outreach with surrounding community and stakeholders.
- Moderate Probability/High Impact: Changes in the design plan due to activities that were not expected would increase project costs and schedule delay for cultural resources, traffic, air quality, noise, etc.
- Low Probability/ High Impact: If unforeseen issues of hazardous waste, air quality, noise or traffic impacts are encountered, then increased project costs and schedule delay would occur.

. Low Probability/Low Impacts: Potential cumulative impacts from multiple projects increase the significance of environmental impacts.

7.4 Risk Summary

Though some risks were found, it is not guaranteed that all potential risks were identified, mainly due to unforeseen impacts caused by entities such as sudden drastic environmental change. If impacts were to arise within the Study Area, proper mitigation techniques will be used and applied to lessen the significance or completely nullify said impact. If impacts are determined to be significant even after application of mitigation, the level of environmental documentation may need to be evaluated. This determination should be made during the PA&ED phase after the technical studies have been completed.

8. *Technical Summaries*

8.1 Land Use:

City of San Bernardino, General Plan indicates the surrounding land to be used as Industrial, Commercial and Residential. The land in the proximity of the Palm/Kedall project consists of residential use, industrial use, commercial use, and vacant publicly owned land. There is also vacant land meant for residential use.

The alternatives include modifying the off/on-ramps or relocating them to an empty lot, and thus will not displace any existing developments. As a result, the alternatives will be consistent with current and future land use.

8.2 Growth

This project is not anticipated to encourage growth. The purpose of the Project is to relieve traffic congestion by improving traffic operations and enhancing bicycle/pedestrian safety. The Project may have little influence on growth because future growth in the region is not constrained.

- The Project is needed in order to help with the projected growth of the area. There are large amounts of vacant land that is planned to become residential areas. In the

conversion of adjacent land uses, the Project will provide access to areas previously inaccessible and improve access in ways that would foster local development beyond that which is already planned.

- Regulatory Framework and Definitions; Land Use, Transportation and Growth; Key Concepts for Growth-related Impact Analyses; Making the First Cut; and, Performing the Analysis.

8.3 Farmlands/Timberlands

There are no farmlands or timberlands within both the Study Area. The closest farmlands or timberlands to the Study Area is approximately 600 m (2000 ft) to the north of the Study Area, which is in the San Bernardino Mountains. This area does include timberlands as there are many recreational parks and hiking trails within the mountain area itself. The Project does not anticipate any impacts to farmlands or timberlands, therefore, no further studies are required.

8.4 Community Impact

Currently, Caltrans would require additional land transfer from the City of San Bernardino to Caltrans. No business, building, or residential displacement are anticipated in the implementation of the proposed project. The proposed ramp and intersection additions and modifications may impact the local community because of disruption during construction, including alternative routing and other changes in circulation. A Community Impact Assessment should be prepared. However, in the long term operations of the Proposed Project , or proposed alternatives, will promote community integrity and increase access to local residential areas, parks, shops and schools.

8.5 Visual/Aesthetics

The I-215 Palm/Kendell and I-215 Campus proposed project is not designated a scenic highway/vista. Thus, the project would not have substantial adverse effect on a scenic vista or, result in scenic view obstruction because of the predominantly developed nature of the surrounding area. The project would not substantially damage scenic resources, degrade the

existing visual character or quality of the site and its surroundings. It would create less than significant new source of light or glare, that could adversely affect day or nighttime views in the area. It is not located within or adjacent to a County-designated Scenic Corridor. Since, there is no scenic vistas in the vicinity of the project site or project alternatives, no significant or adverse impacts or are anticipated, therefore, no Visual Impact Assessment (VIA) will need to be conducted.

8.6 Cultural Resources and Paleontology

Preparation of an Archeological Survey Report (ASR) and a Historic Property Survey Report (HPSR) is required.

8.7 Hydrology and Floodplain

The area south of I-215 is Flood Zone X Shaded which are areas where flooding is anticipated once in 500 years. A project located within Flood Zone X Shaded will require the first floor to be elevated a minimum 1 foot above the natural highest adjacent ground in compliance with San Bernardino County regulations. The area north of I-215 and south of Kendal Ave is located in Flood Zone X Unshaded which has no elevation requirements.

Any build alternatives in Zone A requires an elevation certificate to be completed by the project engineer. An elevation certificate is a document that certifies details about the elevation of a potential future or existing structure as it relates to the elevation of the projected 100 year floodplain.

8.8 Water Quality and Stormwater Runoff

The interchange is under control of the Santa Ana Regional Water Quality Control Board. The Study Area does not currently have any unique sources of pollutants nor will the Project create any. The majority of pollutants that will impact stormwater quality will come from the motor vehicles using the interchange. The increase in the amount of paved roadway and pedestrian

walkways will increase the amount of impervious area and runoff produced by the interchange. As such there needs to be an increase in the amount and capacity of drainage facilities both in the interchange and around it. The nearby stormwater collection facilities should also be inspected prior to construction.

On field investigation several of the drainage facilities were found to be filled with water even though it hadn't rained recently. There are two major impaired water bodies nearby. To the North-West is Lytle Creek and to the South is the Santa Ana River. There is also the Devil's Creek Channel that runs through the Study Area connecting Kendall and Cajon. The channel runs between residential housing and industrial property.

BMPs will be implemented and focus chiefly on preventing anything that is broken up from being carried away. Additionally, after construction BMPs will need to be established to capture any runoff leaving the site towards the Santa Ana River. Education BMPs will also need to be implemented to prevent littering.

8.9 Geology, Soils, Seismic and Topography:

According to information obtained from USGS, the closest fault is located in 1.5 miles northeast of the project area and no major earthquakes have been recorded in the immediate area surrounding the project site.

The topographic map of the project site obtained from USGS shows no major elevation changes in the project site. There are no historical structures or environmental resources, such as lakes, mountains, rivers, wetlands, or timberlands that could be affected.

The USGS Geologic Map identifies the type of soils found in the project sites. The first is Mesozoic Pelona Schist which is typically fine-grained which layering ranges from fine laminations to layers several meters thick and is highly susceptible to landsliding. The second is a Holocene Young Wash Deposit which consists of pebbles to boulder clasts and are sparse and abundant. The third soil type is Young Alluvial-Valley Deposits from Holocene to late Pleistocene era, which is slightly consolidated to cemented deposits of angular to subangular silt, sand and pebbles.

8.10 Paleontology

Due to the large amount of alluvial sediments there is a high potential for paleontological resources. The amount of excavation during the project will be determined mainly on the suitability of soils to handle any future expansions of the roadway and bridge, but given the soils currently handling the existing facility it is unlikely major excavation will occur. Although the potential is high the nature of the project means the discovery of any paleontological resources is low. However, a Paleontological Identification Report is recommended to fully evaluate the project site.

8.11 Hazardous Waste :

An initial Site Assessment (ISA) was conducted to identify and assess the potential presence of contaminated soils and groundwater within the project study area. Within our study area we identified three areas of concern; two in Shulti park, one in Cesar Chavez Middle School. The first is a site located in Shulti Park and is part of the North San Bernardino Area groundwater site and consists of four municipal wells known as the Newmark Well Field and may have been contaminated due to causes that include laundry services, prison, research – weapons. These four wells were forced to close down when they were found to have high levels of halogenated organic chemicals which include tetrachloroethylene (PCE) and trichloroethylene (TCE) which are above state health-based action levels for drinking water. As of October 24, 2019, the cleanup status remains active as of April 22, 1996 and remediation includes the use of air stripping towers in the area. The second site is also located in Shulti Park where contaminants such as asbestos and lead have been found in an aquifer used for drinking water and in the soil caused by landfills in the area. As of the cleanup status is unknown but is being overseen by RWQCB 8 – Santa Ana – LEAD agency. The third area of concern is located near Cesar Chavez Middle School, where the soil may have been contaminated by past agricultural use, however, after tests were made there were no contaminants found and no further action of cleanup had been made since March 27, 2001.

8.12 Air Quality:

The project is located in the southwestern portion of San Bernardino County, California, in the South Coast Air Basin (Basin), under the jurisdiction of Southern California Air Quality Management District (SCAQMD). SCAQMD is responsible for bringing air quality in areas under its jurisdiction into conformity with federal and state air quality standards. Such as Air

Quality Management Plan (AQMP), which outlines its strategies for meeting the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) for particulate matter less than 2.5 microns in diameter (PM_{2.5}) and Ozone (O₃). The basin in which the Study Area is located is currently in a non-attainment state for PM_{2.5}, PM₁₀, Ozone (O₃) standards; and nonattainment for federal 8-hour Ozone, PM_{2.5}, and PM₁₀ standards.

Air quality analysis has already been made and the Study Area is nonattainment. Nonattainment is an area considered to have air quality worse than the National Ambient Air Quality Standards as defined in the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1970 (P.L. 91-604, Sec. 109).

8.13 Noise and Vibration:

The Study Area is located by an industrial/commercial area or adjacent to residential communities, which are considered to be the noise and vibration sensitive receptors for the Project. The only noise sensitive receptors located near the Project are residential communities located adjacent to the proposed(I-215 Campus Ave) northbound off ramp and adjacent to the extension of campus ave. Noises and vibrations due to construction will most affect the area. Once the proposed ramp and road is constructed then the noise and vibration heard by the neighborhood may increase slightly due to the close proximity of the ramp and road extension of campus ave. A noise and vibration study will need to be conducted for this project to determine the extent of impact on the residential communities adjacent to the Project site. The report shall yield the most effective noise and vibration techniques to use.

8.14 Energy and Climate Change:

Per Caltrans SER, would be required Energy Technical Report if the project was to be considered a "major project" for the consumption of energy during project construction or operation.

8.15 Biological Environment:

The setting of the current project takes place with multiple land use areas that include single-family residential (SFR), multi-family residential (MFR), commercial – general (CG), Industrial (I), public facility/quasi-public (PF), and open space (OS) areas. The site area mainly takes place within the single-family residential and industrial areas, taking up more than 90%.

More open space areas are to the north/northeast of Study Area which include the San Bernardino Mountains, being maintained at a national level. This open space area however is not within the Study Area boundaries so no consultation on wildlife is needed at the moment in that area.

Around the Study Area boundaries however, there are areas which include wildlife, both animals and plants, where either could be at any given time. Wildlife will be listed under Table A for reference for current status.

Table A. Federal and/or State Wildlife Species Known to Occur or Potentially Occur within the city of San Bernardino

Common Name	Scientific Name	Status*
California Gnatcatcher	Polioptila Californica	FT
California Spotted Owl	Strix Occidentalis Occidentalis	FS, SSC
Least Bell's Vireo	Vireo Bellii Pusillus	FE, SE
Mohave Ground Squirrel	Spermophilus Mohavensis	ST
San Bernardino Flying Squirrel	Glaucomys Sabrinus Californicus	FS, SSC
San Bernardino Merriam's Kangaroo Rat	Dipodomys Merriami Parvus	FE
Slender-Horned Spineflower	Dodecahema Leptoceras	FE, SE

Southwest Willow Flycatcher	Empidonax Traillii Extimus	FE
Thread-Leaved Brodiaea	Brodiaea Filfolia	FT, SE

*Status Meanings:

FE = Federally endangered

FT = Federally threatened

SE = State endangered

ST = State threatened

SSC = State sensitive concern

The project could have a negative impact on the existing wildlife, where one (San Bernardino Kangaroo Rat) has been seen nesting in the past 30 years within the city of San Bernardino. A study will be needed to further investigate whether or not this or any other species are located around/within the vicinity of the Study Area, resulting in the continuation or halt of the current project. If the Project is to continue, coming across one or more than one species will need to be addressed and the proper actions of mitigation will be used such as relocation, or stopping the project. The Project will have no effect on plant species, but may have an affect on animal species, which will be based on the further study needed to come to a conclusion.

9. Summary Statement for PSR

The findings of the Preliminary Environmental Analysis Report was that no significant impacts would be expected to come from this project. However, there are a few unique issues that require further discussion.

Overhead power lines are prevalent throughout the project area. Two of the proposed alternatives are encroaching into a flood zone. Flood zone encroachment calls for additional Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plans and implementation of Best Management Practices. A soundwall is to be considered due to the noise that may come during and after construction along with a possible sound analysis for the area. There are three endangered species within the project area; the San Bernardino Kangaroo Rat, Slender-Petaled Thelypodium, and Thread-Leaved Brodiaea Proper mitigation techniques such as relocation of a species was thought to be the best tactic not only to ensure the completion of this project, but also the safety and prosperity of the species.

10. Disclaimer

The estimates and conclusions in the PEAR are approximate and are based on cursory analyses of probable effects. A reevaluation of the PEAR will be needed for any changes in project scope or alternatives, or in environmental laws, regulations, or guidelines.