State of California
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

California State Transportation Agency

Memorandum

Serious drought.
Help Save Water!

To: DISTRICT DIRECTORS
DIVISION OF ENGINEERING SERVICES

Date: October 20, 2016

From: JAMES E. DAVIS, Chief
Division of Project Management

Subject: **GEOTECHNICAL SERVICES WILL PERFORM SUBSURFACE INVESTIGATIONS IN THE PROJECT ZERO PHASE**

Effective immediately, earthwork parameters, foundation studies and preliminary foundation designs for structures are to be programmed in the Project Approval & Environmental Document (PA&ED) phase of a project. This includes subsurface utility engineering (SUE) work to determine the location of buried utilities that may conflict with the foundation design. If a project has several alternatives the PDT should conduct a risk analysis to determine the best plan for geotechnical services. Providing preliminary foundation designs earlier in the project will reduce project delays, project cost increases due to last minute design changes or the costly use of more conservative foundation types due to limited subsurface information available during design scoping.

For projects with existing work plans, pursue SUE, geophysics and drilling work in the PA&ED phase whenever practical. To achieve this goal, early communication and coordination between Geotechnical Services and the Project Development Teams is required. Project Managers will need to communicate with the Environmental and Right-of Way functions to ensure all environmental clearances, permits, approvals and right of entry agreements are secured early in the zero phase and with enough time for Geotechnical Services to complete utility investigations, geophysical surveys, the drilling work, and preliminary foundation reports prior to completion of PA&ED.

Success in this effort will allow Caltrans to better manage risks and reduce the overall project costs.

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