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Governor's Office of Planning & Research

**AUG 22 2019**

**STATE CLEARINGHOUSE**

August 16, 2019

Alison Spindler  
Project Manager  
Department of Development Services  
333 W. Ocean Blvd., 5<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Long Beach, CA 90802

RE: City of Long Beach – General Plan Land  
Use and Land Use Elements Project  
Recirculated Draft Environmental Impact  
Report (DEIR)  
SCH# 2015051054  
GTS# 07-LA-2016-02555  
Vic. LA-22/ 710/ 405/ 47/ 91

Dear Ms. Spindler:

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the above referenced project. The proposed project is an update to the City's existing General Plan and is intended to guide growth and future development through the year 2040. The proposed project includes the approval of both the General Plan Land Use Element (LUE) and Urban Design Element (UDE), which would replace the existing LUE and Scenic Routes Element, respectively. The proposed LUE would introduce the concept of "PlaceTypes," which would replace the current approach in the existing LUE of segregating property within the City through traditional land use designations and zoning classifications. PlaceTypes would divide the City into distinct neighborhoods, thus allowing for greater flexibility and mix of compatible land uses within the areas. The proposed UDE would define the physical aspects of the urban environment and would facilitate the PlaceTypes established in the proposed LUE by creating sustainable places; improving the urban fabric and public spaces; and defining edges, thoroughfares, and corridors.

Caltrans, the Lead Agency (City of Long Beach), and the City's consultancy group (LSA) have been in communication throughout the EIR stage in order to best identify consistent and practical solutions to alleviating congestion on State and Local facilities. Caltrans, the City of Long Beach, and LSA have agreed to a Methodology Memorandum, in which a sample of intersections within Long Beach and surrounding communities would be analyzed and future traffic volume forecasts for analyzing impacts at facilities operated by Caltrans would be developed.

The mission of Caltrans is to provide a safe, sustainable, integrated and efficient transportation system to enhance California's economy and livability. Senate Bill 743 (2013) has codified into CEQA law and mandated that CEQA review of transportation impacts of proposed development be modified by using Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) as the primary metric in identifying transportation impacts for all future development projects. As a reminder, the VMT will be the standard transportation analysis metric in CEQA for land use projects starting July 1, 2020 statewide implementation date. You may reference to The Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) for more information.

<http://opr.ca.gov/ceqa/updates/guidelines/>

After reviewing the Recirculated DEIR, Caltrans has the following comments:

1. The General Plan Land Use and Urban Design Elements identified mitigation measures for the intersections (detailed below) with significant impacts within Caltrans' right-of-way (ROW). Although, at this time, there is no established design or program to implement mitigation measures, the implementation of those improvements would require outside agency, once accepted design or program to implement the mitigation measures within Caltrans' right-of-way through the encroachment permit process.

Intersections: Pacific Coast Hwy/ Redondo Avenue  
Pacific Coast Hwy/ Anaheim Street  
Pacific Coast Hwy/ 7th Street  
Pacific Coast Hwy/ 2nd Street

Potential measures to address access or conflict issues may include, but are not limited to the following:

- Pedestrian Safety Treatments.
  - Bicycle Safety Treatments.
  - Vehicle Safety Treatments such as:
    - a. Installation or reconfiguration of turn lanes
    - b. Improve intersection and freeway ramps capacity and storage
    - c. Traffic control modification and devices
    - d. Access management
    - e. Improve striping and pavement markings
2. Per Caltrans' previous letter dated October 14, 2016, Caltrans recommended the City to consider future improvements at the following locations. Caltrans maintains the following recommendations:

- Widen the westbound State Route (SR)-22 off-ramp at College Park Drive from its current one lane to two lanes
  - Install left turn phase signal at Pacific Coast Highway (PCH) and 7th Street
  - Add an exclusive right-turn lane to westbound SR-22 to northbound West Campus Drive by striping
  - Add a 2nd eastbound left turn on SR-22 to northbound Bellflower Blvd. Add a 2nd left turn lane for westbound SR-22 to southbound Bellflower Blvd
  - Add a westbound right-turn lane on SR-22 to northbound East Campus Drive
3. Tables (G, I, & K) of the Traffic Impact Assessment (TIA) show many Caltrans freeway/highway segments and ramp intersections that will be significantly impacted when the “project” is at buildout. However, this “project” is a program document with no proposed specific project. In addition to the Mitigation Measure T-1 as outlined in the TIA, Caltrans will continue to work with the City in identifying feasible mitigation measures when a specific project is identified that may contribute project direct/cumulative impact to Caltrans facilities.

Additionally, in previous correspondence to the City of Long Beach and LSA (5/28/2019), Caltrans expressed the following comments regarding future projects in the Long Beach area. These comments include the following and are applicable to the Recirculated DEIR:

1. Since future developments will be implemented after SB-743 is in full effect, the analysis of traffic impacts must use Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) as a metric. The City of Long Beach, as the Lead Agency has discretion to develop and adopt its own, or rely on thresholds of significance recommended or used by other agencies. Given regulatory requirements, comments relating to LOS may still be applicable as noted below:
2. The following guidelines should be used for project level study and analysis:
  - Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA by Governor’s Office of Planning and Research, dated December 2018. [http://opr.ca.gov/docs/20190122-743\\_Technical\\_Advisory.pdf](http://opr.ca.gov/docs/20190122-743_Technical_Advisory.pdf)
  - Preparation of Transportation Impact Study Guide by Caltrans, latest version available. Caltrans prefers the Highway Capacity Manual (HCM) methodology for analysis of Caltrans freeway mainline, weave, merge and diverge segments according to Caltrans Preparation of Transportation Impact Study Guide 2019. Its performance measures are based on density (pc/mi/ln), as opposed to volume to capacity (v/c).

3. Each project will be evaluated separately. The intersections and freeway segments to be studied and type of analysis to be included, will depend on the location and type of development. Caltrans may request studies on certain intersections and mainline segments that are not identified in the 2010 Metro Congestion Management Program if the project may cause operational/safety issues on the state highway system.
4. For project level analysis, add the following criteria to the Performance Standard and Impact Thresholds section:
  - The impact is considered to be significant, if the traffic generated by the project (a) causes one or more freeway segment's demand to exceed capacity (congested flow); or (b) when the segment is already congested, causes an increase in the demand/capacity ratio of greater than 1%.
  - Impacts to off-ramps are considered significant if the traffic generated by the project causes queueing that: (a) exceeds 85% of the off-ramp's storage capacity; or (b) when an auxiliary lane is present, exceeds the lesser of one-half the length of auxiliary lane or 1,000 feet.
5. The Performance Standard and Impact Thresholds references degradation from "acceptable LOS to LOS F." This language is ambiguous and does not adequately address degradation from LOS B to C or C to D for instance. After July 1, 2020, VMT will be the standard metric; this section should reflect this.
6. Reference to Table B: Freeway Mainline Facilities Level of Service Summary, the LOS results were based on the V/C ratio. It is suggested to analyze freeway segment LOS on the basis of vehicle density (pc/mi/ln) consistent with the most current edition of the Highway Capacity Manual (HCM).
7. For freeway mainline, weave, merge and diverge segments, the methodologies in Chapter 12, 13, 14 of the HCM 6th edition are limited to under saturated flow conditions. When a freeway facility has oversaturated flows, Chapter 10, Freeway Facilities Core Methodology, is recommended to be used to determine a more precise density for such conditions. It is acknowledged there are limitations of the HCM methodology and thus its recommended to use a traffic simulation model for the analysis at the project level (not through this Program EIR).
8. Regarding freeway ramp terminal signalized intersections, it is suggested that traffic analysis should be performed with actual traffic signal timing, not signal timing optimization.

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9. It is suggested that managed lane segments be analyzed using the most current edition of the HCM and Caltrans' HOV Guidelines, when managed lanes are present.

As a reminder, any transportation of heavy construction equipment and/or materials which requires use of oversized-transport vehicles of State highways will need a Caltrans transportation permit. We recommend large size truck trips be limited to off-peak commute periods.

If you have any questions, please contact project coordinator Mr. Carlo Ramirez, at [carlo.ramirez@dot.ca.gov](mailto:carlo.ramirez@dot.ca.gov) and refer to GTS# 07-LA-2016-02555.

Sincerely,



MIYA EDMONSON  
IGR/CEQA Branch Chief  
Cc: Scott Morgan, State Clearinghouse