

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

CALTRANS DISTRICT 5
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Governor's Office of Planning & Research

July 07 2021**STATE CLEARINGHOUSE**

*Making Conservation
a California Way of Life.*

July 7, 2021

SB-101-84.51

Antonio Garcia, Superintendent
Santa Maria Joint Union High School District
2560 Skyway Drive
Santa Maria, CA 93455

SANTA MARIA JOINT UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT AGRICULTURAL EDUCATION
AND CAREER TECHNICAL CENTER

Dear Mr. Garcia:

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) District 5 received the attached e-mail dated June 25, 2021, from Gary Smart, County of Santa Barbara Traffic Engineer, regarding the recently completed Agricultural Education and Career Technical Center (Ag High School) located east of Highway 101 and the Santa Maria Way interchange. The Final Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) for this project was approved in June 2015 by the Santa Maria Joint Union High School District (SMJUHSD).

Caltrans believes the circulation of the project documents were very limited in scope and did not provide adequate opportunity for either commenting, or in our case, responsible agencies the appropriate CEQA review.

We bring this to your attention today as the facility is completed, occupied, and subsequently generating traffic concerns and complaints about the ingress/egress with the intensified use. It is important to highlight that Caltrans does not make land use decisions, approve development, or have a funding mechanism in place to mitigate project-specific traffic impacts generated by developments such as the Ag High School. Specific areas of concern regarding the original MND traffic analysis are as follows:

- The MND approved by the SMJUHSD concluded the project would not have a significant impact on the State Highway System (SHS). Given the nature of the complaints received to date from the County of Santa

Barbara, Orcutt community, and City of Santa Maria, it appears the traffic findings in the MND were significantly flawed and did not disclose the true impacts to the SHS.

- The Associated Transportation Engineers (ATE) traffic study dated March 2015 stated only 50 daily trips, 2 AM and 2 PM peak hour, would be generated by this project. Further, it was explicitly stated that the only personal vehicles allowed would be non-student transportation, and students would be bused to campus via 3 AM and 3 PM buses. Intuitively, this seems inconsistent with similar schools that have frequent trips during non-school hours by parents and students to manage the livestock. As highlighted previously and from the attached e-mail, the Ag High School trips are much greater than disclosed, and particularly bus trips.
- Having adequate sight distance is one of the main concerns outlined in the e-mail and it appears the calculations provided by ATE were incorrect. Further, the study was finalized without having the signature and seal of a licensed Civil Engineer, see Attachment B which details this requirement.

A review of the MND indicates on Page 4 that there is a required mitigation measure (MM-3) that has yet to be completed. MM-3 requires the SMJUHSD to apply for an encroachment permit from Caltrans and install a "KEEP CLEAR" stencil at the intersection of northbound Highway 101 off-ramp and Rodeo Drive (previously referred to as Morningside Drive) to notify drivers of on-coming vehicles. To date, Caltrans does not have record of the SMJUHSD applying for an encroachment permit for MM-3 or meeting the condition of approval.

Given the nature of the complaints we are receiving, the encroachment permit process will include the need for SMJUHSD to work with Caltrans in preparing a revised traffic study to adequately identify traffic impacts. Again, the traffic study must be signed and stamped by a licensed Civil Engineer in the State of California. If the SMJUHSD does not wish to fulfill their approved MM-3 condition of approval, one option might include a public recirculation of the document to alter the previously adopted conditions.

Finally, Caltrans is engaged in ongoing discussions with Santa Barbara County regarding the potential access road connection to Union Valley Parkway interchange. While this is a long-term strategy led by the County, in the short-term if new school daily operations continue to create issues, additional access

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management strategies aimed at reducing the number of conflict points at this location may need to be implemented.

Thank you for your consideration of these important matters. We look forward to our ongoing communication and partnership to help you put in place the appropriate improvements for the new Ag High School users. If you have any questions, or need further clarification on items discussed above, please contact Ingrid McRoberts at (805) 835-6555 or ingrid.mcroberts@dot.ca.gov.

Sincerely,



John J. Olejnik
Senior Transportation Planner
Development Review, Compliance, Sustainability

Attachments

Cc: Shannon Reese, Planner, County of Santa Barbara

Allen Bell, Long Range Planning Division

Gary Smart, Traffic Engineer, County of Santa Barbara

Kathryn Lehr, Supervising Planner, County of Santa Barbara

Chuen Ng, Director of Community Development, City of Santa Maria

Gary Wuitscheick, Director of Support Services, SMJUHSD

Jerry Sitton, Transportation Manager, SMJUHSD

Marjie Kirn, Executive Director, SBCAG

OPR State Clearinghouse

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Attachment A

From: [Barnes, Roger D@DOT](mailto:Barnes.Roger.D@DOT)
To: [Barnes, Roger D@DOT](mailto:Barnes.Roger.D@DOT)
Subject: FW: Santa Maria Way Off/onramp - Ag Career Technical High School
Date: Friday, June 25, 2021 1:30:13 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

From: Smart, Gary <GSmart@cosbpw.net>
Sent: Wednesday, June 23, 2021 2:28 PM
To: Dostalek, Diane@DOT <Diane.Dostalek@dot.ca.gov>
Subject: Santa Maria Way Off/onramp

EXTERNAL EMAIL. Links/attachments may not be safe.

Diane,

I attended a meeting with the new CTE School in Orcutt. It is situated east of 101 by the rodeo grounds. The school will officially begin in August but they already have activity there with 4H students and staff. They have a concern with safety at the access road that intersects with the northbound 101 offramp. I believe Caltrans operates and maintains this intersection. There is a vertical and horizontal curve on the offramp that prevents a clear line of sight for vehicles entering the intersection from the side street. Large vehicles like farm equipment, busses, and horse trailers have to pull out without adequate time to see if someone approaching and they have time to accelerate. They are reporting close calls already happening. There is a traffic study showing sight distance numbers on page 10 of the attached. The numbers looked off in the report and you may want to not use them.

They are asking for an all way stop there but would be appreciative of any signage to help the situation. Maybe the ramp exit speed could be lower for sight distance or an intersection ahead sign. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Final MND:

http://images.pcmac.org/Uploads/SantaMaria/SantaMaria/Departments/DocumentsCategories/Documents/SMHS%20Small%20School%20Ag%20Site_FINAL%20MND_One%20File.pdf

Basic background:

http://images.pcmac.org/Uploads/SantaMaria/SantaMaria/Departments/DocumentsCategories/Documents/CTE%2011-102.1%20Ground%20Breaking%20HandOut%20073018%20One%20Sheet%20FINAL_%7BSIS1A91702949DD%7D.pdf

“Provide a safe, sustainable, integrated and efficient transportation system to enhance California’s economy and livability”

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Design Drawings:

[http://images.pcmac.org/Uploads/SantaMaria/SantaMaria/Departments/DocumentsCategories/Documents/03-117983%20CTE-AG%20FARM%20DSA%20APPROVED%20DRAWINGS%2012-1417 %7BSIS7F67A24664B0%7D.pdf](http://images.pcmac.org/Uploads/SantaMaria/SantaMaria/Departments/DocumentsCategories/Documents/03-117983%20CTE-AG%20FARM%20DSA%20APPROVED%20DRAWINGS%2012-1417%7BSIS7F67A24664B0%7D.pdf)


PSOMAS Traffic Study (prepared for County):

<https://cosantabarbara.app.box.com/s/oj3ir2ixpyc61jmeaxr90rfpn1ojf62/file/671009154829>

Thank you,

Gary Smart
Traffic Engineer County
of Santa Barbara 123 E.
Anapamu St.
Santa Barbara, CA 93101 (805)
568-3308 www.pwsb.net



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Attachment B

The March 30, 2015 Traffic Study prepared by Associated Transportation Engineers (ATE) (Appendix H) contains a sight distance calculation that appears to be flawed. A sight distance calculation is used to make engineering decisions and can only be performed by a Civil Engineer. The ATE study lacks the signature and seal of a licensed civil engineer as required by Section 6735 (§6735) of the PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERS ACT (Business and Professions Code §§ 6700 – 6799). Section 6735 states the following:

6735. Preparation, signing, and sealing of civil engineering documents

(a) All civil (including structural and geotechnical) engineering plans, calculations, specifications, and reports (hereinafter referred to as "documents") shall be prepared by, or under the responsible charge of, a licensed civil engineer and shall include his or her name and license number. Interim documents shall include a notation as to the intended purpose of the document, such as "preliminary," "not for construction," "for plan check only," or "for review only." All civil engineering plans and specifications that are permitted or that are to be released for construction shall bear the signature and seal or stamp of the licensee and the date of signing and sealing or stamping. All final civil engineering calculations and reports shall bear the signature and seal or stamp of the licensee, and the date of signing and sealing or stamping. If civil engineering plans are required to be signed and sealed or stamped and have multiple sheets, the signature, seal or stamp, and date of signing and sealing or stamping, shall appear on each sheet of the plans. If civil engineering specifications, calculations, and reports are required to be signed and sealed or stamped and have multiple pages, the signature, seal or stamp, and date of signing and sealing or stamping shall appear at a minimum on the title sheet, cover sheet, or signature sheet.