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Governor's Office of Planning & Research

September 19, 2022

Sep 19 2022

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

Ernesto Gonzalez
Department of City Planning
City of Los Angeles
200 N. Spring Street, Room 667
Los Angeles, CA 90012

RE: Boyle Heights Community Plan
SCH # 2016091010
Vic. LA-101, LA-10, LA-05, LA-60
GTS # DEIR-2016-04013-DEIR

Dear Ernesto Gonzalez:

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the above referenced environmental document. The Proposed Plan includes amending both the text of the Boyle Heights Community Plan and the General Plan Land Use Map of the Boyle Heights Community Plan. The Proposed Plan would also adopt several zoning ordinances to implement the updates to the Community Plan, including rezoning all parcels in the CPA to regulate specific uses and apply development standards (including height of structures, Floor Area Ratios, site configuration) using the New Zoning Code. Additional zoning ordinances include a Community Plan Implementation Overlay (CPIO) District. The Proposed Plan will accommodate forecasted housing, population, and employment growth in the CPA for the next 20 years. The Proposed Plan directs future growth to already urbanized areas of the CPA. The proposed changes largely follow the current pattern of land use development reflecting City policies to direct growth where it can be supported by existing transportation infrastructure. The Proposed Plan promotes a balance of housing units and jobs near transit where different types of land uses (e.g., commercial and residential) can be provided to reduce the length and number of vehicle trips.

The mission of Caltrans is to provide a safe and reliable transportation network that serves all people and respects the environment. 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. You may reference the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) for more information:

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

As a reminder, VMT is the standard transportation analysis metric in CEQA for land use projects after July 1, 2020, which is the statewide implementation date.

Caltrans is aware of challenges that the region faces in identifying viable solutions to alleviating congestion on State and Local facilities. With limited room to expand vehicular capacity, all future developments should incorporate multi-modal and complete streets transportation elements that will actively promote alternatives to car use and better manage existing parking assets. Prioritizing and allocating space to efficient modes of travel such as bicycling and public transit can allow streets to transport more people in a fixed amount of right-of-way.

Caltrans supports the implementation of complete streets and pedestrian safety measures such as road diets and other traffic calming measures. Please note the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) recognizes the road diet treatment as a proven safety countermeasure, and the cost of a road diet can be significantly reduced if implemented in tandem with routine street resurfacing. Overall, the environmental report should ensure all modes are served well by planning and development activities. This includes reducing single occupancy vehicle trips, ensuring safety, reducing vehicle miles traveled, supporting accessibility, and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

VMT

The Traffic Impact Study prepared for the Proposed Plan concluded that the Citywide (2016 Baseline) average daily VMT per capita is 23.21, SCGA Region (2016) daily VMT per capita is 33.9, Future (2040) Proposed Plan Conditions VMT per capita is 21.6. Given that the Future Proposed Plan (21.6) is more than 15% below the 2016 SCAG Region (33.9) and less than the Citywide 2016 Baseline (23.21) for the Boyle Heights CPA. Since the Proposed Plan meets the City adopted threshold of not exceeding baseline conditions and is not more than 15% below the SCAG region, Caltrans concurs that the Proposed Plan would have less than significant impact with respect to VMT.

Bicycle Facilities and Pedestrian Facilities

The CPA includes of a network of bicycle facilities; pedestrian facilities primarily consist of sidewalks adjacent to roadways. Pedestrian access to transit in the CPA ranks above average for major transit stops/stations in Los Angeles County, with an average rating of 81 out of 100, as reported by WalkScore.com. Walk Score is a company that provides walk scores, transit scores, and bike scores for neighborhoods ranging from 0-100. A walk score is created by assessing the walkability of an area dependent upon how many errands can be completed by foot. Walking routes available in the area are assessed. Amenities with a five-minute walk proximity are scored the highest. Bike scores are created by evaluating available bicycle infrastructure available in an area, frequency of hills, the number of bicycle commuters, and road connectivity. All four components are weighted equally to create a bike score. Bicycle access to major transit stops in the area

is less robust, receiving an average score of 54 out of 100, as reported by WalkScore.com. Most roadways are aligned on a grid system providing multiple route options for traveling throughout the Project Area. Bicycle facilities are defined as off-street bicycle paths (Class I), on-street signed and striped bicycle lanes (Class II), on-street signed bicycle routes (Class III), and protected bicycle lanes or cycle tracks (Class IV). Cesar Chavez Avenue between Evergreen Avenue and St. Louis Street in Boyle Heights was one of the 15 corridors identified as part Great Streets Plan. Great Streets seeks to strengthen the linkages between Cesar Chavez and the nearby Metro L Line by improving the pedestrian and bicycle facilities in the area.

Transit

Metro's L Line provides high-speed local and regional transit connections both with the San Gabriel Valley and downtown Los Angeles, including a direct connection to Union Station. Other public transit service within the CPA consists primarily of local bus services linking riders to localized businesses and destinations. A relatively dense network of buses provides local access as well as first/last-mile connections to the Metro L Line stations. Services are provided by multiple transit operators, including Metro Rail, Rapid buses, Express buses, Local buses, LADOT Commuter Express buses, Downtown Area Short Hop (DASH) buses, and other local operators. The above mentioned Metro lines are for Existing year 2016. After December 2020, Metro began service changes as part of NextGen Bus Plan.

Freeway Safety

"Significant and unavoidable impacts have been identified in relation to the potential for project-specific ramp queuing safety impacts as growth occurs pursuant to the Proposed Plan. Potential mitigation may include transportation demand management strategies to reduce a project's trip generation, investments to active transportation infrastructure, or transit system amenities, and/or operational changes to the ramp terminal such as lane reassignment, traffic signalization, signal phasing or timing modifications, etc." To reduce any future traffic safety impact on the State facilities, Caltrans recommends the City implement a fee program on the State facilities. We would like to have the opportunity to assist the City to identify any potential safety improvement locations.

Other

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

Please be reminded that any work performed within the State Right-of-way will require an Encroachment Permit from Caltrans. Any modifications to State facilities must meet all mandatory design standards and specifications.

Ernesto Gonzalez
September 15, 2022
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If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Mr. Alan Lin the project coordinator at (213) 269-1124 and refer to GTS # LA-2016-04013-DEIR.

Sincerely,



MIYA EDMONSON
LDR/CEQA Branch Chief

email: State Clearinghouse