

**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION****DISTRICT 6 OFFICE**

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**Governor's Office of Planning & Research****Aug 17 2020****STATE CLEARINGHOUSE**

*Making Conservation  
a California Way of Life*

August 14, 2020

06-KIN-5-12.325

DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT  
JACKSON RANCH TRUCK STOP

Chuck Kinney  
Kings County Planning  
1400 W. Lacey Boulevard  
Hanford, CA 93230

Dear Mr. Kinney:

Thank you for the opportunity to review the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the proposal to develop 425 acres for commercial development, such as truck stops, hotels, restaurants, employment centers, and distribution/logistics centers in Phase 1, and in Phase 2 to develop a business center and a freeway incubator. The project site is located southwest of Interstate 5 (I-5) and Utica Avenue, in the County of Kings.

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) provides the following comments consistent with the State's smart mobility goals that support a vibrant economy and sustainable communities:

1. The analysis shows that Phase 1 would be operational in 2023. The Project shows that it would cause a significant impact at the I-5 northbound off-ramp intersection with Utica Avenue during the Friday peak hour period in the opening year. The ramp's 95th percentile queue (the queue length that has a 5% probability of being exceeded) would be approximately 200 feet in length. The ramp is currently a one-way stop control intersection, which requires the traffic on the off-ramp to stop and yield to the traffic on Utica Avenue. The analysis indicates converting the existing intersection control type to an all-way stop control intersection. It is also indicated that the facility is under the jurisdiction of Caltrans; implementation and timing of the mitigation measure is under Caltrans control and not the County. Therefore, this impact would remain significant and unavoidable. However, with the addition of the project, the I-5 northbound off-ramp queue length will increase significantly. The

Friday peak hour traffic volumes on Utica Avenue are projected to be approximately three times higher (507 vehicle/hour) than the northbound off-ramp volumes (169 vehicle/hour). Long queues could have an adverse effect on the safety of the intersection, the ramp, and the I-5 mainline. Therefore, opening day intersection control needs to occur prior to Phase 1 opening day. **An Intersection Control Evaluation (ICE) needs to be prepared to determine the appropriate control type in accordance with Caltrans Traffic Operations Policy Directive No. 13-02, dated: August 30, 2013.** The additional analysis needed for the State facilities is based on the Caltrans' *Safety Guidelines Safety Review Practitioners Guidance*, dated July 2020, and not be based on Level-of-Service (LOS). Caltrans analysis is an attempt to help the lead agency avoid any potential delays to the Projects' encroachment permit process. The DEIR should identify, evaluate and propose mitigation for potential impacts to the State Highway System (SHS) that includes the entire width of the State right-of-way. To avoid delays to the encroachment permit process a thorough environmental analysis will be required for the proposed mitigation of impacts to the SHS and should be included in the environmental document.

2. Under the Project's 2040 Traffic Conditions, the I-5 off-ramps at Utica Avenue will experience a significant increase in the queue length. The 95th percentile queue length for the southbound off-ramp during the morning peak hour is approximately 275 feet. The 95th percentile queue lengths for the northbound off-ramp during the morning, evening, and Friday peak hours are approximately 285 feet, 350 feet, and 598 feet respectively. The analysis recommends converting the traffic control at the two ramp intersections to roundabouts. **It is recommended that these improvements should be implemented in the future prior to year 2040,** particularly if other corners of this interchange would be developed soon. Therefore, the traffic consultant should prepare a fair share percentage, cost estimate of the recommended improvements, and the fair share responsibility for our review. **Upon Caltrans approval, the Project developer will need to enter into a Traffic Mitigation Agreement with Caltrans prior to building permit.**
3. Table 8, Table 21: Freeway Mainline and Merge/Diverge:
  - a) The following freeway segments should have been included in the analysis:
    - Utica Avenue Northbound Off-Ramp – Diverge Segment
    - Between Utica Avenue Northbound Off-Ramp and Utica Avenue Northbound On-Ramp – Basic Segment

- Between Utica Avenue Southbound Off-Ramp and Utica Avenue Southbound On-Ramp – Basic Segment
  - Utica Avenue Southbound On-Ramp – Merge Segment
- b) There are two mainline lanes on the northbound and southbound direction of Interstate 5, including the mainline within the merge and diverge segments. **Please have these segments included in the Merge/Diverge Analysis and resubmit to Caltrans for review.**
4. Table 11, Table 13: Weekday Project Trips:
- a) The document should explain that the rates used to calculate weekday project trips are based on ITE Trip Generation Manual 10<sup>th</sup> Edition rates reduced by a factor of 3.06 for the morning peak hour and a factor of 2.4 for the evening peak hour. These adjustments were done based on the findings that the freeway commercial trip rates were less compared to similar type of developments published in the ITE Trip Generation rates. The commercial developments studied included the following sites:
- Panoche Site
  - Stockdale Site
  - Westley Site
5. Figure 13: Project-Only Trip Assignment (Phase 1, AM Peak Hour):
- a) Turning movement diagrams for intersections 5, 6, and 7 are missing. **These diagrams need to be included and submitted to Caltrans for additional review.**
6. Figure 13, Figure 15, Figure 16, Figure 17, and Figure 18: Project-Only Trip Assignment:
- a) A considerable number of project trips are shown to generate the following patterns, which appear to be atypical. Therefore, these patterns should be checked and corrected accordingly.
- b) **A description of the process involved in forecasting them should be provided to Caltrans for additional review:**
- I-5 Southbound Off-Ramp/State Route 41 - All Southbound off-ramp turning movements, and northbound/southbound through movements.
  - I-5 Northbound Off-Ramp/State Route 41 – Northbound through and left, and southbound right turning movement.
  - State Route 41/Bernard Drive.
  - State Route 41/25<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

7. Figure 15: Project-Only Trip Assignment:
  - a) These traffic turning movements appear to be Near Term (2023) plus Phase 1 traffic volumes. However, they are labeled as Project-Only Trip Assignment (Phase 1). **The Project-Only Trip Assignment should be corrected and resubmitted to Caltrans for review.**
  
8. Vistro Files, Near Term:
  - a) Speed for the eastbound and westbound approaches at the NB I-5 Off-Ramp intersection with Utica Avenue is coded as 30 mph. However, it should be noted that the posted speed limit on Utica Avenue within this area is 55 mph.
  
9. HCS7 Files, Merge/Diverge Report:
  - a) Project description inputs are identified as I-5 SB On/Off-Ramp. This description is incomplete. The on/off-ramp being studied should be identified on the description. **Please make these corrections and resubmit to Caltrans for review.**
  
10. An encroachment permit must be obtained for all proposed activities for placement of encroachments within, under or over the State highway rights-of-way. Activity and work planned in the State right-of-way shall be performed to State standards and specifications, at no cost to the State. Engineering plans, calculations, specifications, and reports (documents) shall be stamped and signed by a licensed Engineer or Architect. Engineering documents for encroachment permit activity and work in the State right-of-way may be submitted using English Units. The Permit Department and the Environmental Planning Branch will review and approve the activity and work in the State right-of-way before an encroachment permit is issued. The Streets and Highways Code Section 670 provides Caltrans discretionary approval authority for projects that encroach on the State Highway System. Encroachment permits will be issued in accordance with Streets and Highway Codes, Section 671.5, "Time Limitations." Encroachment permits do not run with the land. A change of ownership requires a new permit application. Only the legal property owner or his/her authorized agent can pursue obtaining an encroachment permit. Please call the **Caltrans Encroachment Permit Office - District 6: 1352 W. Olive, Fresno, CA 93778, at (559) 488-4058.**
  
11. Based on Caltrans *VMT-Focused Transportation Impact Study Guide*, dated May 20, 2020 and effective as of July 1, 2020, Caltrans seeks to reduce single occupancy vehicle trips, provide a safe transportation system, reduce per capita Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT), increase

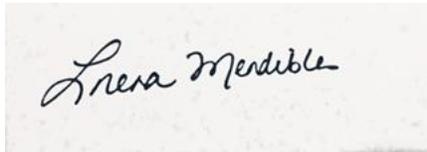
accessibility to destinations via cycling, walking, carpooling, transit and reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. Caltrans recommends that the project proponent continue to work with the County of Kings to further implement improvements to reduce vehicles miles traveled and offer a variety of transportation modes for its employees.

12. Caltrans recommends the project provide charging stations for electric vehicles as part of the statewide efforts to reduce greenhouse emissions.

13. Based on the comments provided herein, it is recommended that the traffic impact study be revised and resubmitted to Caltrans for review.

If you have any further questions, contact Scott Lau at (559) 445-5763 or [scott.lau@dot.ca.gov](mailto:scott.lau@dot.ca.gov).

Sincerely,

A rectangular box containing a handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Lorena Mendibles".

LORENA MENDIBLES, Chief  
Transportation Planning - South