

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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July 27, 2021

Governor's Office of Planning & Research

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Ms. Colleen Doan
City of Signal Hill
2175 Cherry Avenue
Signal Hill, CA 90755

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

RE: 2020 Walnut Industrial Park Project
SCH # 2020029097
Vic. LA-01/PM 5.239
GTS # LA-2020-03641-RMND

Dear Ms. Doan:

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the above referenced recirculated MND. The project includes the development of nine 1-story and 1-story-with-mezzanine concrete tilt-up buildings, ranging in height from 30 feet six inches to 34 feet and comprising 151,075 square feet of total building area. The buildings are for occupancy by businesses engaged in a variety of light industrial activities permitted in the City's Light Industrial Zone. No warehouse/distribution businesses based on large truck shipments or any cold storage activities would be permitted.

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.

The preliminary Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) Analysis dated June 21, 2021 discloses the following:

VMT SIGNIFICANT IMPACT THRESHOLDS

Thresholds Recommended by California Office of Planning and Research. The OPR recommends that a significant impact would occur if the project VMT per capita (or employee for employment projects) is greater than 85% of the existing VMT for the region. Therefore, the threshold is essentially 15% below the regional VMT. The VMT per employee for the SCAG region is 18.19 miles. One threshold that the City could adopt is 15% below SCAG region, or 15.46 miles.

Threshold Adopted by the County of Los Angeles. The County of Los Angeles has adopted thresholds wherein the project VMT has to be 16.8% below the existing VMT of the region (North County or South County). For South County, the existing VMT per capita is 18.4 miles/employee which results in a threshold of 15.3 miles per capita.

Threshold Adopted by the City of Long Beach. The City of Long Beach has adopted thresholds wherein the project VMT has to be 15% below the existing average VMT per employee of Los Angeles County, which is 21.2. This results in a threshold of 18.0 miles per capita.

Threshold Adopted by Other Agencies in Southern California. As discussed above local jurisdictions have latitude in choosing their own thresholds. A sample of potential thresholds could be:

- No greater than existing City VMT per employee – Many jurisdictions have adopted a “no greater than existing City VMT” threshold. This has been adopted by most jurisdictions in San Bernardino and Riverside Counties.
- No greater than existing County VMT per employee – Many jurisdictions have adopted a “no greater than existing County VMT” threshold. This has been adopted by several jurisdictions in Southern California.
- The County of San Bernardino (Unincorporated) has adopted a threshold of 4% below existing County VMT.
- Several cities have adopted thresholds based on General Plan Buildout VMT.

The VMT analysis provided is not complete because the City of Signal Hills has not yet adopted VMT analysis guidelines. The City shall determine which thresholds it is going to use for this project or for the entire City.

Caltrans has published the VMT-focused Transportation Impact Study Guide (TISG), dated May 20, 2020 and the Caltrans Interim Land Development and Intergovernmental Review (LD-IGR) Safety Review Practitioners Guidance, prepared on December 18, 2020. You can review these resources at the following links:

<https://dot.ca.gov/-/media/dot-media/programs/transportation-planning/documents/sb-743/2020-05-20-approved-vmt-focused-tisg-a11y.pdf>

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<https://dot.ca.gov/-/media/dot-media/programs/transportation-planning/documents/sb-743/2020-12-22-updated-interim-ldigr-safety-review-guidance-a11y.pdf>

Caltrans encourages lead agencies to prepare traffic safety impact analysis at the State facilities for this development in the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review process so that, through partnerships and collaboration, California can reach zero fatalities and serious injuries by 2050.

As a reminder, any transportation of heavy construction equipment and/or materials which requires use of oversized-transport vehicles on 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 feel free to contact Mr. Alan Lin the project coordinator at (213) 269-1124 and refer to GTS # LA-2020-03641AL-RMND.

Sincerely,

Emily Gibson

EMILY GIBSON
Acting IGR/CEQA Branch Chief

email: State Clearinghouse