

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

DISTRICT 7 – Office of Regional Planning
100 S. MAIN STREET, MS 16
LOS ANGELES, CA 90012
PHONE (213) 897-9140
FAX (213) 897-1337
TTY 711
www.dot.ca.gov



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Governor's Office of Planning & Research

Jul 06 2020

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

July 6, 2020

Rachel Kwok
City of Santa Monica
1685 Main Street
Santa Monica, CA 90401

RE: 1633 26th Street Office Project –
Notice of Preparation (NOP)
SCH # 2020050142
GTS # 07-LA-2020-03249
Vic. LA-10/PM: R 3.382

Dear Rachel Kwok:

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the above-mentioned project's Notice of Preparation (NOP). The project would consist of the refurbishment of the project site's existing three story, 45,529 square feet (sf) office building, and replacement of the existing 58,940 sf surface parking lot with two new four-story, creative and/or business professional office buildings. The proposed new buildings (Buildings A and B) would comprise a total of 129,265 sf of new floor area building (Building C) rising to a maximum height of 54 feet. Together, the three buildings would total approximately 174,684 sf and would form a campus-like area leaving open space in the middle as a courtyard. The approximately 10,436 sf courtyard would feature a large mature specimen tree that would be a focal point of the open space. The project would also include a three-level subterranean garage with 399 parking spaces with access provided from Pennsylvania Avenue.

Under Senate Bill 743 (2013), CEQA review of transportation impacts of a proposed development are adapting to eliminate consideration of delay-and capacity-based metrics such as level of service (LOS) and are instead focusing analysis on another metric of impact, "Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT). Effective July 1st, 2020, Caltrans is replacing LOS with VMT when evaluating traffic impacts.

For any future project, like the proposed DEIR, we encourage the Lead Agency to adopt or develop a verifiable performance-based Vehicle Miles Travelled (VMT) criteria as required by SB 743.

After reviewing the project's NOP Caltrans has the following comments:

- The NOP indicates that a potentially significant impact may occur to the transportation/circulation system. In the future DEIR please include a Construction Traffic Management Plan and Truck Haul Route Program for Caltrans approval.
- Please consider scheduling the construction working hours during off peak hours to the maximum extent possible. This may minimize congestion and provide higher levels of safety to the pedestrians and vehicular traffic on the streets and freeway.

- Please consider including a VMT analysis that looks at potential safety concerns to Caltrans facilities as part of proposed DEIR.
- If the project develops VMT analysis please consider utilizing the latest version of the Technical Advisory and Guidelines on Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA by the Governor's Office of Planning and Research, and the latest version of Caltrans' Transportation Impact Study Guide.

Further information included for your consideration:

Please consider integrating transportation and land use in a way that reduces VMT and Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions by facilitating the provision of more proximate goods and services to shorten trip lengths and achieve a high level of non-motorized travel and transit use.

Caltrans seeks to promote safe, accessible multimodal transportation. Methods to reduce pedestrian and bicyclist exposure to vehicles improves safety by lessening the time that the user is in the likely path of a motor vehicle. Caltrans recommends the project consider the use of methods such as, but not limited to, the construction of physically separated facilities such as sidewalks, raised medians, refuge islands, and off-road paths and trails, or a reduction in crossing distances through roadway narrowing.

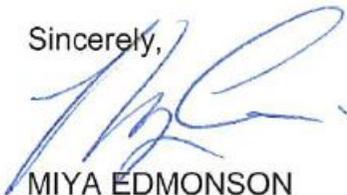
Additionally, pedestrian and bicyclist warning signage, flashing beacons, crosswalks, signage and striping can be used to indicate to motorists that they should expect to see and yield to pedestrians and bicyclists. Visual indication from signage can be reinforced by road design features such as lane widths, landscaping, street furniture, and other design elements.

Also, storm water run-off is a sensitive issue for Los Angeles County. Please be mindful that projects should be designed to discharge clean run-off water. Discharge of storm water run-off is not permitted onto State Highway facilities without a storm water management plan.

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 regarding these comments, please contact project coordinator Reece Allen, at reece.allen@dot.ca.gov and refer to GTS# 07-LA-2020-03249

Sincerely,



MIYA EDMONSON
IGR/CEQA Branch Chief

cc: Scott Morgan, State Clearinghouse