

**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

DISTRICT 4

OFFICE OF TRANSIT AND COMMUNITY PLANNING Governor's Office of Planning &amp; Research

P.O. BOX 23660, MS-10D

OAKLAND, CA 94623-0660

PHONE (510) 286-5528

TTY 711

www.dot.ca.gov

8/10/2020

**Aug 07 2020****STATE CLEARINGHOUSE***Making Conservation  
a California Way of Life.*

August 7, 2020

SCH # 2020070175

GTS # 04-SCL-2020-00771

GTS ID: 20062

PM: SCL/VAR/VAR

Jennifer Armer, AICP  
Town of Los Gatos  
110 E. Main Street  
Los Gatos, CA 95030

**Town of Los Gatos 2040 General Plan Update – Notice of Preparation (NOP)**

Dear Jennifer Armer:

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the Town of Los Gatos 2040 General Plan Update. We are committed to ensuring that impacts to the State's multimodal transportation system and to our natural environment are identified and mitigated to support a safe, sustainable, integrated and efficient transportation system. The following comments are based on our review of the July 2020 NOP.

***Project Understanding***

The Town's existing General Plan was completed in 2010 and has guided land use policy decisions in Los Gatos for the last 10 years. The 2040 General Plan update will provide the context to effectively plan and manage Los Gatos into the future based on an updated set of goals, policies, and implementation programs that reflect the current values and aspirations expressed by the community. The General Plan Planning Area encompasses approximately 11.46 square miles of land within the current Town limits plus approximately 18.26 square miles of land south of the Town's corporate limits within the adopted Sphere of influence.

The alternative process for the General Plan update includes the following eight Opportunity Areas targeted for change in land use type and development intensity that may result in environmental impacts: Los Gatos Boulevard, Lark Avenue, North Santa Cruz Avenue, Harwood Road, Union Avenue, Winchester Boulevard, Pollard Road and Downtown Los Gatos. State Route (SR)-9, SR-17,

and SR-85 run through the town of Los Gatos and some of the Opportunities Areas are located along the highway corridors.

### **Highway Operations**

The project has Opportunity Areas along SR-17, SR-9, and SR-85. Future development could increase traffic demand along the State Routes, and therefore, a transportation analysis is required to determine the impact(s) along the related State highway system.

The impacts of turning movement queues at these intersections and increase of travel demand at the connector ramps may spill back onto the freeway mainline. The project should provide the intersection analyses and the 95<sup>th</sup> percentile queuing analyses for the intersections listed below for all scenarios considered in the project. The intersections should be analyzed as a system to determine the impacts of queues spilling back from one intersection into an upstream intersection and not as isolated intersection analyses. The ramp analyses should include the following locations:

- NB SR-17 off-ramp to S Santa Cruz Avenue
- SB SR-17 on-ramp from S Santa Cruz Avenue
- ALL on-ramps and off-ramps at the SR-17/SR-9 Interchange
- NB SR-17 off-ramp to Lark Avenue
- NB SR-17 on-ramp from Lark Avenue
- SB SR-17 off-ramp to Lark Avenue
- SB SR-17 on-ramp from Lark Avenue
- ALL on-ramps and off-ramps at the SR-17/SR-85 Interchange
- NB SR-17 off-ramp to Camden Avenue
- NB SR-17 on-ramps from Camden Avenue
- SB SR-17 off-ramp to Camden Avenue
- SB SR-17 on-ramp from Camden Avenue
- NB SR-85 off-ramp to S Bascom Avenue
- NB SR-85 on-ramp from S Bascom Avenue
- SB SR-85 off-ramp to S Bascom Avenue
- SB SR-85 on-ramp from S Bascom Avenue
- NB SR-85 on-ramp from Winchester Boulevard
- SB SR-85 off-ramp to Winchester Boulevard

### **Landscape Architecture**

SR-9 is an officially designated scenic highway from the Santa Cruz/Santa Clara County line to the Los Gatos town limits, and is eligible for scenic designation within the Town of Los Gatos. SR-17 is eligible for scenic designation from SR-1 in Santa Cruz County to SR-9 within the Town of Los Gatos. The North Santa Cruz Avenue and Downtown Opportunity Areas abut SR-9, and the Downtown Opportunity Area encompasses a segment of SR-17 that is eligible for scenic designation. Please include discussion of potential visual impacts to these scenic corridors in the EIR.

If the Town of Los Gatos is interested in applying for official designation for the eligible segments of SR-9 and SR-17 within the town limits, more information is available at <https://dot.ca.gov/programs/design/lap-landscape-architecture-and-community-livability/lap-liv-i-scenic-highways>.

### **Travel Demand Analysis**

With the enactment of Senate Bill (SB) 743, Caltrans is focusing on transportation infrastructure that supports smart growth and efficient development to ensure alignment with State policies using efficient development patterns, innovative travel demand reduction strategies, multimodal improvements, and vehicle miles traveled (VMT) as the primary transportation impact metric. When available, Caltrans encourages the Town of Los Gatos to share the VMT policies and thresholds.

### **Lead Agency**

As the Lead Agency, the Town of Los Gatos is responsible for all project mitigation, including any needed improvements to the State Transportation Network (STN). The project's fair share contribution, financing, scheduling, implementation responsibilities and lead agency monitoring should be fully discussed for all proposed mitigation measures.

Jennifer Armer, AICP  
August 7, 2020  
Page 4

Thank you again for including Caltrans in the environmental review process. Should you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact Yunsheng Luo at [Yunsheng.Luo@dot.ca.gov](mailto:Yunsheng.Luo@dot.ca.gov). Additionally, for future notifications and requests for review of new projects, please contact [LDIGR-D4@dot.ca.gov](mailto:LDIGR-D4@dot.ca.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark Leong". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.

Mark Leong  
District Branch Chief  
Local Development - Intergovernmental Review

cc: State Clearinghouse