

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

DISTRICT 4

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Governor's Office of Planning & Research

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Thai-Chau Le, Environmental Project Manager
City of San Jose
200 E Santa Clara Street
San Jose, CA 95113

Sunset Mixed Use Complex Project – Notice of Preparation (NOP)

Dear Thai-Chau Le:

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the Sunset Mixed Use Complex Project. 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 project would demolish all existing buildings on-site to construct a mixed-use building complex comprised of four five-story buildings with up to 796 residential units and a combined total of approximately 30,000 square feet (s.f.) of ground floor retail. The project also includes an 21,780 s.f. public parking, other private open space and up to 942 parking spaces with stackers.

This 11.42-gross acre project site located north side of Alum Rock Avenue between Castlecrest Drive and Jose Figueres Avenue in the City of San Jose, approximately 0.4 miles to I-680 and 0.85 miles to US-101. It is located within the Priority Development Area identified in the Plan Bay Area 2040 and within the Transit Priority Areas defined in the California Public Resources Code, Section 21099.

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 VMT as the primary transportation impact metric. For more information on how Caltrans assesses Transportation Impact Studies, please review Caltrans' [Transportation Impact Study Guide](#).

If the project meets the screening criteria established in the City's adopted VMT policy to be presumed to have a less-than-significant VMT impact and exempt from detailed VMT analysis, please provide justification to support the exempt status in align with the City's VMT policy. Projects that do not meet the screening criteria should include a detailed VMT analysis in the DEIR, which should include the following:

- A vicinity map, regional location map, and site plan clearly showing project access in relation to the State Transportation Network (STN). Ingress and egress for all project components should be clearly identified. Clearly identify the State right-of-way (ROW). Project driveways, local roads and intersections, car/bike parking, and transit facilities should be mapped.
- A VMT analysis pursuant to the City's guidelines. Projects that result in automobile VMT per capita above the threshold of significance for existing (i.e. baseline) city-wide or regional values for similar land use types may indicate a significant impact. If necessary, mitigation for increasing VMT should be identified. Mitigation should support the use of transit and active transportation modes. Potential mitigation measures that include the requirements of other agencies such as Caltrans are fully enforceable through permit conditions, agreements, or other legally-binding instruments under the control of the City.
- A schematic illustration of walking, biking and auto conditions at the project site and study area roadways. Potential safety issues for all road users should be identified and fully mitigated.
- The project's primary and secondary effects on pedestrians, bicycles, travelers with disabilities and transit performance should be evaluated, including countermeasures and trade-offs resulting from mitigating VMT increases. Access to pedestrians, bicycle, and transit facilities must be maintained.

- Clarification of the intensity of events/receptions to be held at the location and how the associated travel demand and VMT will be mitigated.

Highway Operations

Due to the project located in close vicinity to I-680 and US-101, a traffic analysis should be prepared to identify any potentially adverse impacts on the State Highway facilities. To determine the potential impact, please provide the following information for the proposed development on the local and regional roadway system: vehicular trip generation, trip distribution, and trip assignment estimates. The traffic analysis should also include freeway segments, ramp intersections and queuing analysis for the ramp terminal intersections adjacent to the project site.

Vehicle queues due to the added traffic generated by the proposed project shall be accommodated within the ramps and the freeway traffic shall not be impacted. If the traffic impacts ramp operations, the impacts shall be mitigated, or a fair share fee shall be allocated for the mitigation.

Lead Agency

As the Lead Agency, the City of San Jose is responsible for all project mitigation, including any needed improvements to the STN. The project's fair share contribution, financing, scheduling, implementation responsibilities and lead agency monitoring should be fully discussed for all proposed mitigation measures.

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. Additionally, for future notifications and requests for review of new projects, please contact LDIGR-D4@dot.ca.gov.

Sincerely,



Mark Leong
District Branch Chief
Local Development - Intergovernmental Review

cc: State Clearinghouse