

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
DISTRICT 7- OFFICE OF REGIONAL PLANNING
100 S. MAIN STREET, SUITE 100
LOS ANGELES, CA 90012
PHONE (213) 266-3574
FAX (213) 897-1337
TTY 711
www.dot.ca.gov



*Making Conservation
a California Way of Life.*

Governor's Office of Planning & Research

JUL 29 2022

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

July 29, 2022

James Harris
City of Los Angeles, Department of City Planning
221 N. Figueroa Street, Suite 1350
Los Angeles, CA 90012

RE: Sunset + Wilcox Project - Draft
Environmental Impact Report (DEIR)
SCH# 2020120005
GTS# 07-LA-2020-03982
Vic. LA-2 PM 11.321

Dear James Harris,

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the above referenced project. The Project includes the construction of a 15-story commercial building with 431,032 square feet of office space and 14,186 square feet of ground floor restaurant space. As part of the Project, the existing office and retail uses, and associated surface parking would be removed. Upon completion, the Project would result in a FAR of 6:1 and include 1,291 vehicular parking spaces.

The nearest State facility to the proposed project is SR 2. After reviewing the DEIR, Caltrans has the following comments:

The Project would develop new office and commercial restaurant uses on an infill location with convenient access to public transit and opportunities for walking and biking, which would result in a reduction of vehicle trips, VMT, and GHG emissions. Specifically, the Project Site is located in a transit-rich neighborhood serviced by Metro local and rapid bus lines and LADOT regional lines. In addition, the Project Site's proximity to a variety of commercial uses and services would encourage employees of the Project Site to walk to nearby destinations to meet their needs, thereby reducing VMT and GHG emissions.

As provided in the Transportation Assessment on page IV.H-43-44 under Environmental Impact Analysis (IV) in the DEIR, the queue length of the US-101 NB Off-ramp to Sunset Boulevard is projected to exceed ramp capacity in the A.M. peak hour in the Future Base scenario and the Future plus Project scenario. The off-ramp consists of three lanes, with lanes #1 and #2 exiting to N. Wilton Place and lane #3 exiting to westbound Sunset Boulevard. The off-ramp intersects at westbound Sunset Boulevard is unsignalized. The Project is projected to add 15 car lengths

to the queue in the A.M. peak hour. Since the Project is projected to increase the overflow onto the mainline lanes by more than two car lengths, this location required further analysis. The PeMS data showed that the average mainline speed on the US-101 NB near the Sunset Boulevard off-ramp during the A.M. peak hour is approximately 59 mph. Assuming the traffic queued on the ramp is traveling at 0 mph since the vehicles extend past the ramp length, this constitutes a potential safety issue at the US-101 NB Off-ramp to Sunset Boulevard. Therefore, the Project would result in a potentially significant impact due to additional freeway off-ramp queueing. Per LADOT's interim Guidance for Freeway Safety Analysis, operational changes have been explored to mitigate the potential safety issue at the US-101 NB Off-ramp to Sunset Boulevard.

Caltrans concurs with Mitigation Measure TR-MM-1, which would add a protected/permitted left-turn phase with reoptimized signal timing to westbound Sunset Boulevard at Van Ness Avenue. This would address the identified safety issue by partially alleviating congestion on Sunset Boulevard, that would in turn reduce the off-ramp queue onto the freeway mainline to less than what would occur under Future without Project conditions.

In reference to Page IV.H-44 of Transportation Assessment under Environmental Impact Analysis (IV) in the DEIR. It is noted that a related project in the vicinity of the off-ramp also proposes this same mitigation measure. Subject to City approval, the two projects could, therefore, share the mitigation. If for any reason one project were to not go forward, the other project would be fully responsible for the mitigation. Caltrans is not responsible for any fair-share contribution to the mitigation.

With the incorporation of Mitigation Measure TR-MM-1, potential impacts related to the freeway ramp safety issue would be reduced to less than significant. Furthermore, the Project's design and TDM program is estimated to generate lower VMT per capita for employees than the average for the area, resulting in a less than significant VMT impact.

Finally, any transportation of heavy construction equipment and/or materials which requires use of oversized-transport vehicles of 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 contact project coordinator Anthony Higgins, at anthony.higgins@dot.ca.gov and refer to GTS# 07-LA-2020-03982.

Sincerely,



MIYA EDMONSON
LDR Branch Chief

cc: State Clearinghouse