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Governor's Office of Planning & Research

Jan 19 2021

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

January 15, 2021

City of Santa Clarita Planning Division
Attn: Erika Iverson, Associate Planner
23920 Valencia Boulevard, Suite 302
Santa Clarita, CA 91355

RE: MetroWalk Specific Plan Project –
Sustainable Communities Environmental
Assessment (SCEA)
SCH# 2020120433
GTS# 07-LA-2020-03461
Vic. LA-14 PM R32.027

Dear Erika Iverson,

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the above referenced project. The MetroWalk Specific Plan Project would include development of up to 498 residential units that would comprise a mix of housing types, including market-rate apartments and townhomes, age-qualified apartments, and affordable senior apartments. A multi-use path would link the Project Site with the future Metrolink Vista Canyon Station to the east and the Vista Canyon Specific Plan Project to the north while connecting various private amenities throughout the Project Site, including park nodes, open space, a central clubhouse, and a playground. The multi-use path would terminate at a plaza at the far eastern area of the Project Site, which would provide a publicly accessible outdoor amenity adjacent to the future Metrolink station and a connection to commercial uses, trails, and other amenities within the Vista Canyon Specific Plan area. Given the Project's density and proximity to transit, it is considered a Transit Priority Project (TPP), eligible for CEQA streamlining pursuant to California Public Resources Code (PRC) Section 21155.

The nearest State facility to the proposed project is State Route 14. After reviewing the SCEA, Caltrans has the following comments:

Caltrans acknowledges and supports infill development that prioritizes nearby transit service, like the proposed Project aims to facilitate. However, due to the amount of car parking, the MetroWalk Specific Plan Project is still designed in a way that induces demand for additional vehicle trips. This demand should be addressed with appropriate design and management principles. Caltrans supports reducing the amount of parking whenever possible. Research looking at the relationship between land-use, parking, and transportation indicates that car parking prioritizes driving above all other travel modes and undermines a community's ability to choose public transit and active

modes of transportation. For any community or city to better support all modes of transportation and reduce vehicle miles traveled, we recommend the implementation of Transportation Demand Management (TDM) measures as an alternative to requiring car parking.

Additionally, any transportation of heavy construction equipment and/or materials which requires use of oversized-transport vehicles on State highways will require a Caltrans transportation permit. Any work that would affect the freeways and its facilities, Caltrans has the jurisdiction for review and approval. 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-2020-03461.

Sincerely,



MIYA EDMONSON

IGR/CEQA Branch Chief

cc: Scott Morgan, State Clearinghouse