

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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Governor's Office of Planning & Research

Mar 16 2021

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

March 16, 2021

Ms. Bailey Hunter
Chicken Ranch Rancheria
Me-Wuk Indians of California
P.O. Box 1159
Jamestown, CA 95327

TUO-49-PM 12.132
Revised Caltrans Letter
Chicken Ranch Casino-Hotel
of the Chicken Rancheria
Me Wuk Indians
NOP
SCH# 2021010299

Dear Ms. Hunter,

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) appreciates the opportunity to review and comment on the Notice of Preparation (NOP) for a Tribal Environmental Impact Report (TEIR) for Chicken Ranch Casino and Hotel of the Chicken Rancheria Me Wuk Indians of California. The proposed project will include approximately 900 slot machines and 12-14 table games, the facility will have two attached 900 – 970 space four-story parking structures, and an attached hotel. The proposed project will replace the existing Chicken Ranch Casino, which will be shut down and converted to other uses once the proposed project begins operations. The proposed project will be directly visible and accessible from State Route (SR) 49/108, which is held in trust by the federal government. The project will be located adjacent to SR 49/108 in Jamestown, CA. Access to the project facility will be at Mackey Ranch Road and SR 49/108. This letter supersedes the Caltrans comment letter dated February 26, 2021.

The following comments are based on our review of the NOP:

Highway Operations:

The draft TEIR should include a transportation impact analysis, including analysis of Vehicle Miles Travelled (VMT), and evaluate operations at the major access points to/from the proposed project, including turn pocket at SR 49/108 intersection. This should include the traffic analysis for the opening year and the cumulative year, A.M., P.M. peak periods.

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Please also include a site plan indicating any existing and proposed driveways, and circulation patterns. We would appreciate the opportunity to review the scope of work for the transportation analysis report upon its availability, to minimize the potential of additional analysis after the environmental document has been circulated.

Please note there is a proposed Capital Project on TUO-108 / Mackey Road Intersection to install a single-lane roundabout. The Revised Traffic Operations Analysis Report (TOAR) will be provided by the Capital Project representative. Please consult with Charlie Do, Caltrans Project Manager, for further assistance.

Travel Forecasting and Modeling:

This project could have a significant impact on the State Highway System (SHS). Please provide trip generation from the project, VMT analysis according to Senate Bill (SB) 743 guidelines, and VMT mitigation measures if it is determined that the VMT will be significant.

- Potential safety issues and concerns for all road users should be identified and fully mitigated. The project's primary and secondary effects on pedestrians, bicycles, disabled travelers and transit performance should also be evaluated, including countermeasures and trade-offs resulting from mitigating VMT increases. Access to pedestrians, bicycle, and transit facilities must be maintained.
- Use the latest travel demand model that conforms with the air quality conformity standards stipulated by Tuolumne County Transportation Council.
- Analyze future year forecast at a minimum for the Project Opening Year, and 20 Year Design Year and if requested for any other Interim Scenario Year with "Build" and "No Build" alternatives for each forecast year.

Vehicle Trip Reduction:

With the enactment of Senate Bill (SB) 743, Caltrans is focusing on and supports transportation infrastructure that supports smart growth and efficient development. Recently approved guidance for incorporating SB 743 intends to ensure that development projects align with State policies through the use of efficient development patterns, innovative travel demand reduction strategies, necessary multimodal roadway improvements, and VMT as the primary transportation impact metric.

Traffic Impact Fees:

Please identify project-generated travel demand and estimate the costs of public transportation improvements necessitated by the proposed project; viable funding sources such as development and/or transportation impact fees should also be identified. We encourage a sufficient allocation of fair share contributions toward multi-modal and regional transit improvements to fully mitigate cumulative impacts to regional transportation. We also strongly support measures to increase sustainable mode shares, thereby reducing VMT.

Outdoor Advertising:

It is important to note that any advertising structure visible to the National Highway System (NHS) is subject to the provisions of the California Outdoor Advertising Act outlined in Business and Professions Code Section 5200 et seq. Any advertising structure that displays off-premise commercial copy visible from the NHS will require a permit from the Office of Outdoor Advertising (ODA). Any advertising structure that only advertises goods and services available on-premise will not require a permit from ODA, provided it adheres to the provisions of Business and Professions Code Section 5272 and 5274 and California Code of Regulations 2243 and 2246. Each of the proposed advertising structures should refrain from operating in any of the conditions outlined in Business and Professions Code Section 5403. For questions related to the ODA permit application process please contact Kenneth Parmelee at (916) 651-9327 or visit our website at: <http://www.dot.ca.gov/trafficops/oda/>.

Lead Agency:

As the Lead Agency, the Chicken Ranch Rancheria of Me Wuk Indians of California is responsible for all project mitigation, including any needed improvements to the State Transportation Network (STN). The project's financing, scheduling, implementation responsibilities and monitoring should be fully discussed for all proposed mitigation measures, prior to the submittal of an encroachment permit.

Encroachment Permit:

If any project construction activities encroach into Caltrans Right-of-Way (ROW), the project proponent must submit an application for an Encroachment Permit to the Caltrans District 10 Permit Office. Appropriate environmental studies must be submitted with this application. These studies will include an analysis of potential impacts to any cultural sites, biological resources, hazardous waste locations, and/or other resources within Caltrans ROW at the project site(s). Please include

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California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) documentation with supporting technical studies when submitting the Encroachment Permit. For more information please visit the Caltrans Website at:
<https://dot.ca.gov/programs/traffic-operations/ep/applications>

If you have any questions or would like to discuss these comments, please contact Michael Casas at (209) 986-9830 (email: Michael.Casas@dot.ca.gov) or me at (209) 483-7234 (email: Gregoria.Ponce@dot.ca.gov).

Sincerely,

Gregoria Ponce'

Gregoria Ponce, Chief
Office of Rural Planning

c: State Clearinghouse
Quincy Yaley, Director, Tuolumne County Planning Department
Kim MacFarlane, Director, Tuolumne County Public Works Department