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Governor's Office of Planning & Research

Mar 26 2021

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

March 26, 2021

Amy L. Harbin, AICP
City of Long Beach Development Services
411 W. Ocean Boulevard
Long Beach, CA 90802

RE: Long Beach RiverPark Residential Project –
Notice of Preparation (NOP)
SCH# 2021020492
GTS# 07-LA-2021-03507
Vic. LA-405 PM 7.302
Vic. LA-710 PM 9.052

Dear Amy Harbin,

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the above referenced project. The Project proposes a residential development on 20 acres of vacant land in the neighborhood of Wrigley Heights in the City of Long Beach. The gated residential development will include 226 single-family detached and attached homes, with 11 affordable housing units. The residential project will include a mix of single-family detached homes, carriage townhouses, row townhouses, streets, open space, and 510 parking spaces for both residents and guests. Five acres of the site will be used for open space with recreational facilities. The site will be remediated prior to construction according to a Remediation Action Plan approved by RWQCB.

The nearest State facilities to the proposed project are I-405 and I-710. After reviewing the NOP, Caltrans has the following comments:

Currently the project is designed with a single land-use type (residential) and an excessive amount of car parking, both of which have been shown to induce a higher number of vehicle trips per household. The Lead Agency is encouraged to integrate transportation and land use in a way that reduces Vehicle Miles Travelled (VMT) and Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions by facilitating the provision of more proximate goods and services to shorten trip lengths and achieve a high level of non-motorized travel and transit use. Caltrans recommends the following to more effectively address the significant VMT that this project will create as currently proposed:

- 1) Provide for a mixture of land use types within the Project's new zoning area to allow for adaptive reuse in the future. This can allow goods, services, and jobs to be created closer to where the project's residents live.

- 2) Reduce the amount of parking whenever possible, as abundant car parking enables and encourages driving. Research looking at the relationship between land-use, parking, and transportation indicates that the amount of car parking supplied can undermine a project's ability to encourage public transit and active modes of transportation. For any project to better promote public transit and reduce vehicle miles traveled, we recommend the implementation of Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategies as an alternative to building too much parking.
- 3) Improve connections to existing active transportation and transit infrastructure, such as the LA River Trail to the west and the Metro A (Blue) Line Wardlow station to the east. This can be done with robust signage, wayfinding, safety improvements, and human scale amenities. Additionally, the most effective methods to reduce pedestrian and bicyclist exposure to vehicles is through physical design and geometrics. These methods include the construction of physically separated facilities such as Class IV bike lanes, wide sidewalks, pedestrian refuge islands, landscaping, street furniture, and reductions in crossing distances through roadway narrowing.
- 4) Gated developments divide communities, limit transportation choices, and increase VMT. For these reasons they should be avoided. If walls are still to be allowed, numerous gates and access points should be provided for people walking or riding bicycles to be able to reach their homes and other destinations.

The five acres of active open space located at the north end of the Project area is abutting Caltrans right-of-way. Please be aware that any work on or adjacent to Caltrans Right-of-Way will require an Encroachment Permit and that transportation of heavy construction equipment and/or materials which requires use of oversized-transport vehicles on State highways will need a Caltrans transportation permit. We recommend large size truck trips be limited to off-peak commute periods.

Caltrans looks forward to the forthcoming Draft Environmental Impact Report to confirm that the Project will result in a net reduction in Vehicle Miles Traveled.

If you have any questions, please contact project coordinator Anthony Higgins, at anthony.higgins@dot.ca.gov and refer to GTS# 07-LA-2021-03507.

Sincerely,



MIYA EDMONSON

IGR/CEQA Branch Chief

cc: Scott Morgan, State Clearinghouse