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Governor's Office of Planning & Research



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**Apr 23 2021**

## STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

April 22, 2021

City of Los Angeles, Department of City Planning  
ATTN: Clare Kelley, City Planner  
Case Numbers: CPC-2021-2642-SP; ENV-2021-2643-EIR  
200 N. Spring Street, Room 667,  
Los Angeles, CA 90012

RE: Cornfield Arroyo Seco Specific Plan (CASP)  
Update – Notice of Preparation (NOP)  
SCH# 2021040206  
GTS# 07-LA-2021-03543  
Vic. LA-Multiple

Dear Clare Kelley,

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the above referenced project. The Proposed Project is an update of the CASP. The primary objective of the Proposed Project is to encourage affordable and mixed-income housing production in the Project Area by expanding the residential Urban Village zoning designation to more parcels within the CASP and allowing 100% affordable housing developments in the Urban Innovation and Urban Center zones where they are not currently permitted. The changes would result in a more even split between Urban Village and Urban Innovation zoning compared to the existing CASP. Additionally, the existing 10% non-residential use requirement for projects in the Urban Village zone would be removed. At the same time, the CASP's affordable housing zoning incentives would be recalibrated and updated for those development projects seeking additional FAR rights. The Proposed Project would also update the building form, urban design, open space, parking, conservation, performance, and sign standards of the CASP as necessary to support housing production, and amend the CASP text with technical revisions that ensure consistency, clarity, and ease of implementation and reflect current and future demographic, regulatory, environmental, and economic conditions. The CASP boundaries would be revised to exclude parcels that currently do not contain CASP zoning, such as RD zones. The Project would retain the existing ministerial review process for subsequent development projects.

The nearest State facilities to the proposed project are SR 110 and I-5. After reviewing the NOP, Caltrans has the following comments:

Caltrans acknowledges and supports mixed-use, infill development that prioritizes affordable housing, like the proposed Specific Plan aims to facilitate. The primary goals of the updated CASP are in direct alignment with State-level sustainable transportation policy goals which seek to

reduce the number of trips made by driving, reduce Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions, and encourage alternative modes of travel. Caltrans' Strategic Management Plan has set targets of tripling trips made by bicycle and doubling trips made by walking and public transit, as well as achieving a reduction in statewide, per capita, vehicle miles traveled (VMT). Similar goals are embedded in the California Transportation Plan 2040, California Transportation Plan 2050, and Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) Connect SoCal (2020-2045 Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Communities Strategy). Statewide legislation such as AB 32 and SB 375, as well as Executive Order S-3-05 and N-19-19, echo the need to pursue more sustainable development. Projects, like the one proposed, can help California meet these goals.

Caltrans has the following recommendations for two of the Specific Plan sections outlined in the NOP that should be addressed while developing the Draft Environmental Impact Report:

1. Street Designations and Standards:

Caltrans recommends creating the safest streetscape possible for pedestrians and people on bikes. Wide roadways with numerous travel lanes are associated with higher vehicle speeds and less safe conditions for people walking and biking. Elements should be considered to create the most comfortable environment possible for all the people who will be walking and biking within the specific plan area. 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, curb extensions or bulb-outs, sidewalks, pedestrian refuge islands, landscaping, street furniture, and reductions in crossing distances through roadway narrowing. Visual indicators such as, pedestrian and bicyclist warning signage, flashing beacons, crosswalks, signage, and striping should be used in addition to physical design improvements to indicate to motorists that they can expect to see and yield to pedestrians and people on bikes.

2. Circulation and Parking Standards:

Caltrans encourages the lead agency to seriously consider eliminating car parking requirements altogether. 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. Additionally, Rates of car ownership and vehicle miles traveled (VMT) are significantly lower for low-income households than they are for high-income households. Seeing as one of the primary objectives of this specific plan update is to encourage affordable housing, including developments with 100% affordable housing, this should be taken into serious consideration. There is sufficient justification to consider eliminating parking requirements to promote affordability and achieve the project's goals.

Caltrans also recommends that at least one long-term bicycle parking space be provided per residential unit, allowing residents to take advantage of the Specific Plan's central location and choose the bicycle as their mode of travel more easily. Long-term bicycle parking should be located onsite, indoors, on the ground floor, and within 200 feet of primary pedestrian entrances.

While Caltrans does not expect project approval to result in a direct adverse impact to the existing State transportation facilities, the Cornfield Arroyo Seco Specific Plan area is immediately adjacent to SR 110 and I-5, so an encroachment permit will be required for any project work proposed on or in the vicinity of the Caltrans right-of-way and all environmental concerns must be adequately addressed. Please note that any modifications to State facilities will be subject to additional review by the Office of Permits prior to issuance of the permit.

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](mailto:anthony.higgins@dot.ca.gov) and refer to GTS# 07-LA-2021-03543.

Sincerely,



MIYA EDMONSON

IGR/CEQA Branch Chief

cc: Scott Morgan, State Clearinghouse