

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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Governor's Office of Planning & Research

May 27 2021

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

May 26, 2021

Dirk Lovett
City of Hidden Hills
6165 Spring Valley Road
Hidden Hills, CA 91302

RE: Long Valley Road/Valley Circle/U.S. 101
On-Ramp Improvement Project – Mitigated
Negative Declaration (MND)
SCH # 2021050005
GTS # 07-LA-2021-03572
Vic. LA-101/PM: 27.494

Dear Dirk Lovett:

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the above referenced MND. The proposed project is located in the City of Hidden Hills and the City of Los Angeles, in Los Angeles County, and bounded on the south by the Ventura Freeway (US-101). The project will include improvements on a triangular parcel near the City of Hidden Hills' gated entry at Long Valley Road that will provide parking and space for vehicle queuing from commercial and non-resident vehicles seeking access into the Hidden Hills community. Other project components include roadway and sidewalk improvements along Long Valley Road and Valley Circle Road. The roadway improvements entail constructing a new westbound right-turn lane at the Long Valley Road and the US-101 on-ramp intersection. In addition, a retaining wall, storm water improvements, and landscaping, among other amenities and safety improvements, will be implemented. The purposes of the project are to ease traffic congestion at the Long Valley Road and Valley Circle Boulevard/U.S. 101 on-ramp intersection, enhance pedestrian access on Long Valley Road and Valley Circle Boulevard, and improve vehicle access and queuing at the gated entry. The City of Hidden Hills is the Lead Agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Since the project involves improvements to the Long Valley Road and Valley Circle Boulevard/U.S. 101 on-ramp intersection, Caltrans has reviewed the MND and has the following comments.

Senate Bill 743 (2013) mandates that Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT), as opposed to Level of Service, be used as the primary metric in identifying transportation impacts of all future development projects under CEQA, starting July 1, 2020. Thus, please provide a VMT analysis for this project for Caltrans' review.

For information on determining transportation impacts in terms of VMT on the State Highway System, see the *Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA* by the California Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR), dated December 2018: http://opr.ca.gov/docs/20190122-743_Technical_Advisory.pdf. The City can also refer to Caltrans' updated *Vehicle Miles Traveled-Focused Transportation Impact Study Guide* (TISG), dated May 2020 and released on Caltrans' website in July 2020: <https://dot.ca.gov/-/media/dot-media/programs/transportation-planning/documents/sb-743/2020-05-20-approved-vmt-focused-tisg-a11y.pdf>. Caltrans' new TISG is largely based on the OPR 2018 Technical Advisory. Also, Caltrans now evaluates projects based on its new TISG, rather than the

Congestion Management Plan guidelines referenced in the MND.

Also, Caltrans supports the addition of a new westbound right-turn lane at the Long Valley Road and the US-101 on-ramp intersection to reduce queueing. Please clarify which entity is expected to pay for this improvement (e.g. the developer or the City of Hidden Hills).

In addition, the MND states that permits from Caltrans will be needed. Specifically, encroachment permits will likely be needed for any work completed on or near Caltrans' right of way, such as the parking lot, roadway, and sidewalk improvements. The final determination on this will be made by Caltrans' Office of Permits after the environmental review process for this project is complete. For more information on encroachment permits, see: <https://dot.ca.gov/programs/traffic-operations/ep>. Also, any transportation of heavy construction equipment and/or materials which requires use of oversized-transport vehicles on State highways will need a Caltrans transportation permit.

Finally, Caltrans recommends that the project limit construction traffic to off-peak periods to minimize the potential impact on State facilities, including the US-101. Since construction truck traffic will occur near the US-101 ramps and may result in queueing as well as sight distance issues, please submit a construction traffic control plan for Caltrans' review. Within this plan, please provide details on the construction site design and how access to the site will be managed.

The following information is included for your consideration. The mission of Caltrans is to provide a safe and reliable transportation network that serves all people and respects the environment. Furthermore, Caltrans encourages Lead Agencies to implement Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategies that reduce VMT and Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions. Thus, Caltrans supports the ADA accessible sidewalk improvements this project includes. For more TDM options to consider integrating into this project, please refer to:

- The 2010 *Quantifying Greenhouse Gas Mitigation Measures* report by the California Air Pollution Control Officers Association (CAPCOA), available at <http://www.capcoa.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/11/CAPCOA-Quantification-Report-9-14-Final.pdf>, or
- *Integrating Demand Management into the Transportation Planning Process: A Desk Reference* (Chapter 8) by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), available at <https://ops.fhwa.dot.gov/publications/fhwahop12035/index.htm>.

If you have any questions about these comments, please contact Emily Gibson, the project coordinator, at Emily.Gibson@dot.ca.gov, and refer to GTS # 07-LA-2021-03572.

Sincerely,

Frances Duong

FRANCES DUONG
Acting IGR/CEQA Branch Chief
cc: Scott Morgan, State Clearinghouse