

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
DISTRICT 7- OFFICE OF REGIONAL PLANNING
100 S. MAIN STREET, SUITE 100
LOS ANGELES, CA 90012
PHONE (213) 266-3574
FAX (213) 897-1337
TTY 711
www.dot.ca.gov



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Governor's Office of Planning & Research

June 1, 2021

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Leila Carver, City of El Segundo
Development Services Department, Planning Division,
350 Main Street, El Segundo, CA 90245

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

RE: Catalyst Project – Notice of Preparation
(NOP)
SCH# 2021050256
GTS# 07-LA-2021-03587
Vic. LA-1 PM 25.2

Dear Leila Carver,

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the above referenced project. The Catalyst Project ("proposed project" or "project") includes the development of an office complex including three office buildings, two aboveground parking garages, and an outdoor café in the City of El Segundo, California. The project site consists of two adjacent sites, the North Site and South Site, that are 3.24 and 1.96 acres in size, respectively.

The proposed project would include the following activities on the North Site:

- Construction of a 38,101-sf addition to the Grand Building that would be structurally preserved in place. The two-story (with one subterranean level) Grand Building would have a maximum height of approximately 34 feet from grade to the top of the parapet.
- Demolition of an existing three-story, tilt-up concrete building, and a one-story concrete building, and replacement with a new four-story office building ("Holly Building").
- Construction of a new six-story, aboveground parking structure with 474 parking spaces.

The project would also include the following changes to the South Site:

- Demolition of all existing structures onsite.
- Construction of a new three-story office building.
- Construction of a new six-story parking structure with 384 parking spaces.
- Construction of an 886-sf café on the ground floor of the proposed parking garage (located at the northwest corner of Franklin Avenue and Kansas Street) with approximately 16 outdoor dining seats on the east side of the café.

The nearest State facility to the proposed project is SR 1. After reviewing the NOP, Caltrans has the following comments:

Except for one small outdoor café, the project is currently designed with a single land-use type (office) and an excessive amount of car parking, which has been shown to induce a high number of vehicle trips. 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 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 housing, 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.

If the car parking must be built, it should:

- a. Be unbundled from the cost to rent or buy any residential unit to reduce car dependency and lower Vehicle Miles Travelled (VMT).
 - b. Be designed in a way that is conducive to adaptive reuse. They should contain flat floors with ramps on the exterior edge, so that they can be more easily converted to beneficial uses in the future.
- 3) Caltrans recommends that long-term bicycle parking spaces be provided in addition to any short-term spaces, allowing residents to take advantage of the Project'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.
 - 4) Improve connections to existing active transportation and transit infrastructure, such as taking advantage of this project's location being less than one mile from both the Mariposa and El Segundo C Line (Green Line) stations. 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.

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-2021-03587.

Sincerely,

Frances Duong

FRANCES DUONG
Acting IGR/CEQA Branch Chief

Cc: State Clearinghouse