

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

DISTRICT 7 – Office of Regional Planning
100 S. MAIN STREET, MS 16
LOS ANGELES, CA 90012
PHONE (213) 266-3562
FAX (213) 897-1337
TTY 711
www.dot.ca.gov



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June 21, 2021

Governor's Office of Planning & Research

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Kimberly Henry
City of Los Angeles
221 N. Figueroa Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

RE: 1235 Vine Street Project – Notice of
Preparation of an Environmental Impact
Report (NOP)
SCH # 2021050548
GTS # 07-LA-2021-03601
Vic. LA-2/PM: 11.567

Dear Kimberly Henry:

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the above referenced NOP. The 1235 Vine Street Project proposes the development of an eight-story, mixed-use commercial building on the 0.9 acre project site. It would include the development of 109,190 square feet of office uses and 7,960 square feet of ground-floor restaurant and/or retail space within a single eight-story building. The project would also include 235 vehicle parking spaces and 41 bicycle parking spaces within four subterranean levels and two above-grade levels. The Project would entail excavations to a depth of 45 feet and the hauling of approximately 57,675 cubic yards of export from the project site. To accommodate the Project, three commercial buildings and five single-family residences totaling 26,484 square feet, along with associated surface parking, would be demolished. Upon completion, the Project would result in 117,150 square feet of floor area with a floor area ratio (FAR) of 3:1. The City of Los Angeles is the Lead Agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

The project is located approximately 1,200 feet from the intersection of State Route 2 (SR-2, which is also known as Santa Monica Boulevard) and Vine Street. It is also located approximately 1 mile from the US-101 and SR-2 interchange. From reviewing the NOP, Caltrans has the following comments.

As mentioned in the Initial Study, Senate Bill 743 (2013) mandates that Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) be used as the primary metric in identifying transportation impacts of all future development projects under CEQA, starting July 1, 2020. Thus, Caltrans looks forward to reviewing the VMT analysis for this project.

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.

Note that the updated TISG states, “Additional future guidance will include the basis for requesting transportation impact analysis that is not based on VMT. This guidance will include a simplified safety analysis approach that reduces risks to all road users and that focuses on multi-modal conflict analysis as well as access management issues.” Since releasing the TISG, Caltrans has released interim safety analysis guidance, dated December 2020 and found here, for the City’s reference: <https://dot.ca.gov/-/media/dot-media/programs/transportation-planning/documents/sb-743/2020-12-22-updated-interim-ldigr-safety-review-guidance-a11y.pdf>. Caltrans encourages lead agencies to complete traffic safety impact analysis in the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review process so that, through partnerships and collaboration, California can reach zero fatalities and serious injuries by 2050.

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 this project’s TDM program as well as its bicycle parking, showers, and lockers. Please consider including the following TDM measures in this project, to further reduce its VMT impact:

- Unbundle parking
- Reduce parking supply to no more than required by the Los Angeles Municipal Code
- Provide transit information and incentives, such as discounted passes
- Offer a carpool or vanpool program

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. Caltrans recommends that the project limit construction traffic to off-peak periods to minimize the potential impact on State facilities. Since construction traffic might cause issues on State facilities such as the US-101, please submit a construction traffic control plan detailing these potential issues for Caltrans’ review.

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-2021-03601.

Sincerely,

Frances Duong

FRANCES DUONG
Acting IGR/CEQA Branch Chief

cc: Scott Morgan, State Clearinghouse