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Governor's Office of Planning & Research

July 09 2021

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

July 9, 2021

Jivar Afshar
City of Los Angeles, Department of City Planning
221 N. Figueroa Street, Suite 1350
Los Angeles, CA 90012

RE: Wilshire Courtyard Redevelopment Project
– Notice of Preparation (NOP)
SCH# 2021060385
GTS# 07-LA-2021-03623
Vic. LA-10 PM 10.3

Dear Jivar Afshar,

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the above referenced project. The Project includes the renovation of the existing Wilshire Courtyard office campus. The Project Site is currently developed with two, six-story office buildings and three levels of subterranean parking beneath the two buildings. The Project would retain and renovate the southern portion of the existing buildings, demolish the northern portion of the two existing office buildings, and construct approximately 1,923,837 square feet of new floor area consisting of office uses and ground floor commercial space. The proposed uses would be located within two new high-rise towers. A portion of the existing parking would also be removed, and the remaining parking area would be renovated. In addition, the Project would provide 2,901 new vehicular parking spaces for a total of 4,650 vehicular spaces. Proposed parking would be provided within seven above-grade parking levels. The Project would also redesign the existing landscaping and open space within the Project Site to include a podium, courtyards, exterior terraces, streetscapes, and walkways to connect the proposed buildings. Overall, the Project would result in a net increase of 1,337,562 square feet of net new floor area within the Project Site. Upon completion of the Project, the total floor area of the buildings on the Project Site would be approximately 2,340,552 square feet comprised of 2,222,952 square feet of office floor area and 117,600 square feet of commercial floor area with a FAR of 6:1.

The nearest State facility to the proposed project is I-10. After reviewing the NOP, Caltrans has the following comments:

Caltrans acknowledges and supports infill development that prioritizes mixed-uses and proximity to transit, like the proposed Project aims to facilitate. However, due to the amount of car parking, the Wilshire Courtyard Redevelopment Project is still designed in a way that induces demand for additional vehicle trips. Caltrans supports reducing the amount of parking whenever possible.

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.

The Project proposes 4,650 car parking spaces and only 340 bicycle parking spaces. The amount of car parking being created would be a significant barrier to taking advantage of the Project's proximity to both the Fairfax and La Brea D Line stations. For any project to better promote public transit and reduce vehicle miles traveled, we recommend the implementation of Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategies with appropriate design and management principles as an alternative to building an unnecessary amount of parking.

For additional TDM options, please refer to the Federal Highway Administration's Reference Sourcebook for Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions from Transportation Sources (Chapter 5). The reference is available online at:

https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/sustainability/energy/publications/reference_sourcebook/referencesourcebook.pdf.

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 and proposed car parking spaces.

If you have any questions, please contact project coordinator Anthony Higgins, at anthony.higgins@dot.ca.gov and refer to GTS# 07-LA-2021-03623.

Sincerely,

Emily Gibson

Emily Gibson
Acting IGR/CEQA Branch Chief

Cc: State Clearinghouse