

California Department of Transportation

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Governor's Office of Planning & Research

August 16, 2021

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STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

11-SD-VAR
Blueprint San Diego
NOP/SCH# 2021070359

Ms. Rebecca Malone
Senior Environmental Planner
City of San Diego
9485 Aero Drive
San Diego, CA 92123

Dear Ms. Malone:

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the Notice of Preparation for the Blueprint San Diego Plan located near various State Routes. The mission of Caltrans is to provide a safe and reliable transportation network that serves all people and respects the environment. The Local Development-Intergovernmental Review (LD-IGR) Program reviews land use projects and plans to ensure consistency with our mission and state planning priorities.

Safety is one of Caltrans' strategic goals. Caltrans strives to make the year 2050 the first year without a single death or serious injury on California's roads. We are striving for more equitable outcomes for the transportation network's diverse users. To achieve these ambitious goals, we will pursue meaningful collaboration with our partners. We encourage the implementation of new technologies, innovations, and best practices that will enhance the safety on the transportation network. These pursuits are both ambitious and urgent, and their accomplishment involves a focused departure from the status quo as we continue to institutionalize safety in all our work.

Caltrans is committed to prioritizing projects that are equitable and provide meaningful benefits to historically underserved communities, to ultimately improve transportation accessibility and quality of life for people in the communities we serve.

Caltrans has the following comments:

Traffic Impact Study

- New development resulting from the Blueprint San Diego Plan should provide a Vehicle Miles of Travel (VMT) based Traffic Impact Study (TIS). Please use the Governor's Office of Planning and Research Guidance to identify VMT related impacts.¹
- The TIS may also need to identify the proposed project's near-term and long-term safety or operational issues, on or adjacent to any existing or proposed State facilities.

Complete Streets and Mobility Network

Caltrans views all transportation improvements as opportunities to improve safety, access, and mobility for all travelers in California and recognizes bicycle, pedestrian, and transit modes as integral elements of the transportation network. Caltrans supports improved transit accommodation through the provision of Park and Ride facilities, improved bicycle and pedestrian access and safety improvements, signal prioritization for transit, bus on shoulders, ramp improvements, or other enhancements that promotes a complete and integrated transportation network. Early coordination with Caltrans, in locations that may affect both Caltrans and the City of San Diego is encouraged.

To reduce greenhouse gas emissions and achieve California's Climate Change target, Caltrans is implementing Complete Streets and Climate Change policies into State Highway Operations and Protection Program (SHOPP) projects to meet multi-modal mobility needs. Caltrans looks forward to working with the City to evaluate potential Complete Streets projects.

Land Use and Smart Growth

Caltrans recognizes there is a strong link between transportation and land use. Development can have a significant impact on traffic and congestion on State transportation facilities. In particular, the pattern of land use can affect both local vehicle miles traveled and the number of trips. Caltrans supports collaboration with local agencies to work towards a safe, functional, interconnected, multi-modal transportation network integrated through applicable "smart growth" type land use planning and policies.

The City should continue to coordinate with Caltrans to implement necessary improvements at intersections and interchanges where the agencies have joint jurisdiction.

¹ California Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) 2018. "Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA." http://opr.ca.gov/docs/20190122-743_Technical_Advisory.pdf

Noise

The applicant must be informed that in accordance with 23 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 772, the Department of Transportation (Caltrans) is not responsible for existing or future traffic noise impacts associated with the existing configuration of various State Routes near the proposed project area.

Environmental

Should future projects based upon the changes enacted from the Blueprint San Diego Plan have elements and/or mitigation measures that affect Caltrans' Right-of-Way (R/W), Caltrans would welcome the opportunity to be a Responsible Agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

Broadband

Caltrans recognizes that teleworking and remote learning lessen the impacts of traffic on our roadways and surrounding communities. This reduces the amount of VMT and decreases the amount of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and other pollutants. The availability of affordable and reliable, high speed broadband is a key component in supporting travel demand management and reaching the state's transportation and climate action goals.

Right-of-Way

Any work performed within Caltrans' R/W will require discretionary review and approval by Caltrans and an encroachment permit will be required for any work within the Caltrans' R/W prior to construction. As part of the encroachment permit process, the applicant must provide approved final environmental documents for projects identified in the Blueprint San Diego Plan, corresponding technical studies, and necessary regulatory and resource agency permits, specifically, CEQA determination or exemption.

Early coordination with Caltrans is strongly advised for all encroachment permits.

If you have any questions, please contact Roger Sanchez at (619) 987-1043 or by email at roger.sanchez-rangel@dot.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Kimberly Dodson for

MAURICE A. EATON
Branch Chief
Local Development and Intergovernmental Review