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*Making Conservation
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September 23, 2021

Governor's Office of Planning & Research

September 27 2021

Ms. Maia McCurley, Associate Planner
City of Duarte, Community Development Department,
1600 Huntington Drive,
Duarte, CA 91010

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

RE: City of Duarte Housing Element and Safety
Element Updates – Negative Declaration
(ND)
SCH# 2021090184
GTS# 07-LA-2021-03705
Vic. LA Multiple

Dear Maia McCurley,

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the above referenced project. The proposed project involves updates to the Housing Element for 2021-2029, updates to the Safety Element, and incorporation of environmental justice goals, policies, and objectives in Duarte's General Plan. The proposed Housing Element Update establishes programs, policies, and actions to further the goal of meeting the existing and projected housing needs of all family income levels, and provides evidence of the City's ability to meet the 2029 Regional Housing Needs Assessment. The Safety Element Update will ensure consistency with the Housing Element Update and comply with recent State legislation and guidelines.

After reviewing the ND, Caltrans does not expect project approval to result in a direct adverse impact to the existing State transportation facilities. However, to accommodate the additional housing units and not induce demand for excessive Vehicle Miles Travelled (VMT), Caltrans recommends significantly reducing or eliminating car parking requirements. Research looking at the relationship between land-use, parking, and transportation indicates that car parking prioritizes driving above all other travel modes and undermines a community's ability to choose public transit and active modes of transportation. Additionally, rates of car ownership and vehicle miles traveled (VMT) are significantly lower for low-income households than they are for high-income households. Seeing as this Housing Element update provides allocations for affordable housing, this should be taken into serious consideration. There is sufficient justification to eliminate parking requirements City-wide, but especially for affordable housing projects, in order to promote affordability and achieve those projects' goals.

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For any community or city to better support all modes of transportation and reduce vehicle miles traveled, we recommend the implementation of a TDM ordinance, as an alternative to requiring car parking.

If you have any questions, please contact project coordinator Anthony Higgins, at anthony.higgins@dot.ca.gov and refer to GTS# 07-LA-2021-03705.

Sincerely,



Miya Edmonson
IGR/CEQA Branch Chief

cc: State Clearinghouse