

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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Governor's Office of Planning & Research

Aug 15 2022

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

August 12, 2022

Jill Ann Arabe, AICP
Development Services Manager
12700 Norwalk Boulevard
Norwalk, CA 90650

RE: Norwalk Entertainment District-Civic
Center Specific Plan Project
SCH # 2022020128
Vic. LA-05/PM 4.93, LA-605/PM R7.86,
LA-105/PM R17.95
GTS # LA-2022-03992-DEIR

Dear Jill Ann Arabe:

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the above referenced environmental document. The project site is approximately 13.2 acres located at the southeast corner of the intersection of Imperial Highway and Norwalk Boulevard in Norwalk. The proposed project is the establishment of the Norwalk Entertainment District-Civic Center Specific Plan. The proposed project includes the construction of a mixed-use development with residential, commercial, and open space uses on the location of the current City Hall Lawn and surface parking lot. Up to 350 residential units and associated amenities would be developed. Up to 110,000 square feet of commercial uses would be developed and would include a mix of retail, food and beverage, health and wellness, and/or grocery/market uses.

The mission of Caltrans is to provide a safe and reliable transportation network that serves all people and respects the environment. Senate Bill 743 (2013) has codified into CEQA law and mandated that CEQA review of transportation impacts of proposed development be modified by using Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) as the primary metric in identifying transportation impacts for all future development projects. You may reference the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) for more information:

<http://opr.ca.gov/ceqa/updates/guidelines/>

As a reminder, VMT is the standard transportation analysis metric in CEQA for land use projects after July 1, 2020, which is the statewide implementation date.

We encourage the Lead Agency to evaluate the potential of Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategies and Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) applications in order to better manage the transportation network, as well as transit service and bicycle or pedestrian connectivity improvements. For additional TDM options, please refer to the Federal Highway Administration's *Integrating Demand Management into the Transportation Planning Process: A Desk Reference* (Chapter 8). This reference is available online at:

<http://www.ops.fhwa.dot.gov/publications/fhwahop12035/fhwahop12035.pdf>

You can also refer to the 2010 *Quantifying Greenhouse Gas Mitigation Measures* report by the California Air Pollution Control Officers Association (CAPCOA), which is available online at:

<http://www.capcoa.org/wp-content/uploads/2010/11/CAPCOA-Quantification-Report-9-14-Final.pdf>

Pedestrian

The walkability of existing facilities is based on the availability of pedestrian routes necessary to accomplish daily tasks without the use of an automobile. These attributes are quantified by Walk Score which assigns communities a score between zero and 100 points (100 being best). Based on proximity to other commercial businesses and cultural facilities, the current walkability of the project site and the surrounding area is approximately 79 points.

The sidewalks that serve as routes to the project site provide connectivity to pedestrian crossings at intersections near the project site. The signalized intersections of Norwalk Boulevard and Imperial Highway, Avenida Manuel Salinas and Imperial Highway, Courthouse-AMC Theater and Civic Center Drive, and Avenida Manuel Salinas and Civic Center Drive provide pedestrian facilities including marked pedestrian crossings, pedestrian phasing, and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)-compliant curb ramps to limit mid-block crossings to the project site.

Bicycle

The project site and the surrounding area consists of a limited coverage of bicycle lanes (Class II and IV) and bicycle routes (Class III). Bicycle lanes are a component of street design with dedicated striping, separating vehicular traffic from bicycle traffic. These facilities offer a safer environment for both cyclists and motorists. Bicycle routes are identified as bicycle-friendly streets where motorists and cyclists share the roadway and there is no dedicated striping of a bicycle lane. Bicycle routes are preferably located on collector and lower volume arterial streets.

Bicycle facilities are not currently provided adjacent to the project site. However, within the Study Area, striped bicycle lanes are provided on Bloomfield Avenue north of Imperial Highway and Foster Road west of Pioneer Boulevard within the surrounding area. In addition, Norwalk Boulevard and Pioneer Boulevard north of Lakeland Road and Lakeland Road between Pioneer Boulevard and Norwalk Boulevard are designated bicycle routes. None of the roadways immediately bordering the project site are designated bicycle routes; however, there is a planned Class IV Cycle Track along Norwalk Boulevard between Imperial Highway and Foster Road. The Bicycle Master Plan further recommends a Class IV Cycle Track along Civic Center Drive south of the project site and a Class II (buffered) bicycle route along Norwalk Boulevard north of Imperial Highway (Norwalk 2022).

Transit

The project site and the surrounding area is served by bus routes operated by Metro and Norwalk Transit System (NTS) along Imperial Highway, Norwalk Boulevard, Bloomfield Avenue, and Civic Center Drive. Additionally, the Metrolink Norwalk/Santa Fe Springs Transportation Center is also located approximately 0.61 miles east of the project site, and the Los Angeles County Metro C (Green) Line Norwalk Station is located approximately 1.7 miles west of the project site. A bus stop serving NTS Line 4 is located adjacent to the northern boundary of the project site along Imperial Highway. Additional bus stops in the vicinity of the project site are provided along Imperial Highway at Norwalk Boulevard, which serves NTS Lines 2 and 4, Norwalk Boulevard at Imperial Highway, which serves NTS Lines 1 and 3, Norwalk Boulevard at Civic Center Drive, which serves Metro Line 62, and Civic Center Drive at Norwalk Boulevard, which serves NTS Lines 3 and 7.

VMT

The Project would generate total weekday VMT of 80,291, prior to mitigation. The Project would generate 12.7 residential VMT per capita, which would result in a residential VMT impact, prior to mitigation. The Project would implement a comprehensive TDM program as mitigation, which would reduce the residential VMT impact to 10.1, which would fall below the residential significance thresholds of 10.6 residential VMT per capita. The Project's retail uses are considered local-serving and would not result in an increase in regional VMT. Therefore, the Project would not result in a significant retail VMT impact.

The Project's TDM program mitigation measure would include transportation services, education programs, and incentive programs intended to promote non-automobile travel and the reduction of single occupancy vehicle trips including the following measures:

- Educational Programs/On-Site TDM Coordinator
- Transportation Information Center/Kiosks
- Bicycle amenities
- Promotion and support of carpools and rideshare

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- Incentives for using alternative travel modes
- Parking incentives
- Mobility hub support
- Community-wide transportation management organization

We would recommend the City to consider the following policies for this project:

1. A post-development VMT analysis to validate and justify Project VMT and future VMT threshold setting. Additional mitigation measure should be implemented when the post-development VMT analysis discloses any traffic significant impact.
2. For future project 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. We recommend large size truck trips be limited to off-peak commute periods.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Mr. Alan Lin the project coordinator at (213) 269-1124 and refer to GTS # LA-2022-03992-DEIR.

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Sincerely,

Miya Edmonson

MIYA EDMONSON
LDR/CEQA Branch Chief

email: State Clearinghouse