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January 2, 2022

Christina Tran, Senior Regional Planner
County of Los Angeles
Department of Regional Planning
320 West Temple Street, G10
Los Angeles, California 90012

RE: LA County Metro Area Plan – Draft
Environmental Impact Report (DEIR)
SCH# 2022020274
GTS# 07-LA-2022-04123
Vic. LA Multiple

Dear Christina Tran,

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the above referenced project. The Los Angeles County Metro Area Plan assesses the foreseeable environmental impact of changes to existing land uses and the associated effects of the Metro Area Plan to the buildout year 2035. It outlines shared goals and policies across all seven community areas, and community-specific goals in relation to challenges and opportunities regarding land-use, mobility, and the local economy.

The Metro Area Plan proposes the following focus areas for policies, programs, and strategic changes to the General Plan and/or Los Angeles County Code:

- Implementing land use and zoning changes for prioritizing housing stability.
- Allowing for ACUs to support amenity-rich neighborhoods.
- Considering impacts of residential-industrial adjacency to attract “cleaner” industrial partners in select industrially-zoned parcels.
- Supporting well-regulated measures of accessibility and safety with mobile vendors.
- Setting framework for analyses of potential freeway cap parks to establish community-serving open space amenities.

After reviewing the DEIR, Caltrans has the following comments:

Caltrans concurs that the project strategies support the implementation of the SCAG 2020–2045 RTP/SCS which targets per-capita GHG reduction from passenger vehicles and light trucks in the southern California region. The proposed project would facilitate development of residences near transit centers, and reduce VMT by encouraging use of alternative commuter methods such as transit, walking, or biking, or would result in shorter vehicle trips. The proposed Project would be consistent with the County’s General Plan Policies to encourage a variety of transportation options

“Provide a safe and reliable transportation network that serves all people and respects the environment”

within dense multi-use urban areas and improve pedestrian infrastructure through sidewalk continuity and street connectivity. The Metro Area Plan would also facilitate the transition to clean industrial and small manufacturing facilities in these areas, which would lead to an increase in jobs and services near residential uses, allowing them to be reached via active transportation modes more easily. This would also reduce commute distances and vehicle emissions from community members who do choose to drive.

Caltrans also concurs with the facilitation of “complete streets” for mobility to community amenities, jobs, and neighborhoods in all modes of transportation. Community-specific policies for this goal are established within the project area for East Rancho Dominguez, Walnut Park, West-Athens Westmont, West Rancho Dominguez, and Willowbrook. The project proposes prioritization of complete street enhancements to reconfigure bicycle and pedestrian routes for safe access to parks or commercial areas, and connections from residential neighborhoods to the local and regional bus system.

These policies align with the Caltrans 2022-2023 Complete Streets Action Plan, which includes plans for statewide Caltrans districts to prioritize location-based needs and incorporate transit-supportive design elements as identified within each district’s Caltrans Active Transportation (CAT) Plans.

It is noted that project-specific development evaluations for transportation impacts are not available since future project development remains speculative at this time. Rather, the project anticipates levels of impact after the implementation of the feasible programmatic mitigation measures. Caltrans looks forward to reviewing future measures under the CEQA process as they are proposed.

Finally, the size and scope of the proposed LA County Metro Area Plan provides a unique opportunity for the seven community areas covered by the Plan to identify their needs and provide feedback for the type of public realm they want when making their daily trips. Caltrans requests that the LA County Metro Area Plan clearly identify all locations where improvements can be made for people walking, biking, rolling, or taking transit along, across, or adjacent to State facilities within the Plan area. Please be specific on the locations within Caltrans right-of-way where improvements are desired and what type of infrastructure is preferred. Some examples include protected Class IV bikeways, wider sidewalks, curb extensions, pedestrian refuge islands, landscaping, street furniture, reduced crossing distances, roadway narrowing, pedestrian and bicycle signage, flashing beacons, and refreshed or new crosswalks. Plans that cover regionally connectable areas, like the one proposed, are used to identify and develop future State transportation projects.

Caltrans planners and engineers are available to partner on implementing design elements that improve safety and mobility for people walking, riding bikes, or taking transit throughout the Plan area. By removing barriers and improving safety, this Plan can make transportation mode shift

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easier for Californians and help the State meet its policy goals to reduce the number of trips made by driving, limit Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions, and encourage active modes of travel.

If you have any questions, please contact project coordinator Anthony Higgins, at anthony.higgins@dot.ca.gov and refer to GTS# 07-LA-2022-04123.

Sincerely,



MIYA EDMONSON
LDR Branch Chief

cc: State Clearinghouse