

California Department of Transportation

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November 17, 2023

FRE-180-64.104
Southeast Development Area
Re-circulated Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR)
SCH #2022020486
GTS #: <https://ld-igr-gts.dot.ca.gov/district/6/report/28801>

SENT VIA EMAIL

Mx. Adrienne Asadoorian, Planner
City of Fresno
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Governor's Office of Planning & Research

Nov 17 2023

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

Dear Mx. Asadoorian:

Caltrans has completed our review of the Re-circulated Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the Southeast Development Area (SEDA) in the City of Fresno.

The proposed development area covers nearly 9,000 acres. It is bounded on the north by the Gould Canal, on the east by McCall and Highland Avenues, on the south by Jensen and North Avenues, and on the West by Locan, Temperance, and Minnewawa Avenues.

The mission of Caltrans is to provide a safe and reliable transportation network that serves all people and respects the environment. The Local Development Review (LDR) process reviews land use projects and plans through the lenses of our mission and state planning priorities of infill, conservation, and travel-efficient development. To ensure a safe and efficient transportation system, we encourage early consultation and coordination with local jurisdictions and project proponents on all development projects that utilize the multimodal transportation network.

Caltrans provides the following comments consistent with the State's smart mobility goals that support a vibrant economy and sustainable communities:

All comments from our previous letter dated August 25th, 2023, regarding the VMT Analysis Comments, still apply.

SR 180 Interchange Queuing Analysis

1. This document provided a peak hour ramp queue analysis at the following State Route 180 interchanges: Clovis Avenue, Fowler Avenue, and Temperance Avenue. It also provided a peak hour queue analysis at the De Wolf Avenue, Highland Avenue, and McCall Avenue intersections along State Route (SR) 180.

The results of this analysis are listed in Table 3-8: 2035 Project and No Project Queue Analyses Results within the document. A substantial amount of the data in Table 3-8 needs to be more accurate. The following irregularities were observed:

- A. Odd lane utilization on adjacent turn lanes (e.g., PM Peak Eastbound Clovis Avenue off-ramp, Left (pocket) versus Left (full lane) and PM Peak Eastbound Temperance Avenue off-ramp, Left (pocket) versus Left (full lane)).
 - B. Low queue lengths are listed at the Eastbound Fowler Avenue off-ramp left-turn lanes. Given the location of this development area, this off-ramp would be expected to receive many project-generated trips with the resulting vehicle queues.
 - C. Heavy reductions in queue lengths from “No Project Conditions” to “Proposed Project Conditions” at the Clovis Avenue interchange off-ramps.
 - D. Change values at the McCall Avenue intersection do not show the correct difference between “No Project Conditions” and “Proposed Project Conditions” queue lengths.
2. Given the irregularities, **it is recommended that the values in Table 3-8 be re-examined and updated where required.** Since the Project Specific Mitigation Measures were primarily based on Table 3-8 data, mitigation measures should also be re-examined.
 3. Table 3-8 also utilized the full length of the off-ramp as available vehicle storage. This practice neglects the deceleration length needed by high-speed vehicles to come to a stop. The deceleration length should be accounted for on each off-ramp as provided in the Caltrans Highway Design Manual Figure 504.2B (single-lane exit) and Figure 504.3K (two-lane exit).
 4. This document's Project Specific Mitigation Measures MM TRANS-3a and MM TRANS-3c propose the restripe of the eastbound State Route (SR) 180 off-ramp lane configurations at Clovis Avenue and Temperance Avenue. The alteration proposes to replace the existing two left-turn lanes and two right-turn lanes configuration with one left-turn lane and three right-turn lanes. The need for dual left turn lanes at each off-ramp was established during the development of those improvements. The additional capacity needed for right-turns at each ramp should be made through widening, not reducing left-turn capacity.

A cost estimate to be included in a traffic impact fee program should be prepared once the values in Table 3-8 are reevaluated and updated and the mitigation strategies are revised.

Funding for Developer-Driven Impacts to State Facilities

1. The Interregional Transportation Strategic Plan does not designate SR 180 as a High Emphasis Focus Route, so the State's portion of the State Transportation Improvement Program cannot be used to fund improvements to the SR 180 interchanges. Possible funding sources include Measure C, the Traffic Signal Mitigation Impact Fee (TSMIF) of the City of Fresno, the Regional Transportation

Mitigation Fee (RTMF) of Fresno County, the Regional Improvement Program, developer mitigation, etc. To deliver "needed" projects, infrastructure improvements in today's funding environment frequently require a variety of funding sources. The City of Fresno should mitigate since the SEDA creates the need for improvements.

2. Caltrans should be involved in reviewing any proposed new developments within the SEDA that would impact SR 180. **It is recommended that any proposed new developments that would impact SR 180 mitigate their impacts by including them in the next updates to Measure C, Fresno County's RTMF, and the City of Fresno TSMIF.** This would ensure the maintenance and improvement of the State facilities due to the absence of an all-inclusive fee program.

If you have any other questions, please call or email Keyomi Jones, Transportation Planner, at (559) 981-7284 or keyomi.jones@dot.ca.gov.

Sincerely,



Mr. Dave Padilla, Branch Chief,
Transportation Planning – North

C: Sophia Pagoulatos, Planning Manager, City of Fresno