

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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*Making Conservation
a California Way of Life.*

May 16, 2022

Knarik Vizcarra
City of Commerce
Economic Development and Planning Department
2535 Commerce Way
Commerce, CA 90040

RE: Commerce Energy Storage
Project – Mitigated Negative
Declaration (MND)
SCH # 2022040355
GTS # 07-LA-2022-03918
Vic. LA-5/PM: 10.728

Dear Knarik Vizcarra:

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the above referenced Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND). The Project proposes the construction and operation of a utility scale battery energy storage system comprised of lithium-ion batteries and control equipment housed in either a single-story building or a series of purpose-built free-standing enclosures. It includes construction of a new approximately 40,000 square foot (sf) battery energy storage system on a vacant approximate 2.6-acre site. The project would connect to the existing Southern California Edison (SCE) Laguna Bell substation via a new approximately 0.4-mile-long underground electric tie-line to be installed on Garfield Avenue. The City of Commerce is the Lead Agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

The Project Site is located at 6904 E. Slauson Avenue in the city of Commerce. The underground electric tie-line would be in the Garfield Avenue right-of-way between the Site and the existing Southern California Edison Laguna Bell Substation located on the southwest corner of Garfield Avenue and Randolph Street. The MND states that the proposed Project does not include any new construction or realignment of existing road facilities. The Project would not require new or modified streets or intersections. The Site would be accessed by an existing paved easement from Slauson Avenue that can accommodate anticipated construction trip generation. The Project would not conflict with guidance in CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3 Subdivision (b). Project trips generated and associated Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) would be below the 110 trips per day that can be assumed to cause a less than significant trip generation impact. Therefore, there would be no conflict with CEQA Guidelines.

We encourage the City of Commerce to evaluate the potential of Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategies and Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) applications to better manage the transportation network, as well as transit service and bicycle or pedestrian connectivity improvements. For TDM strategies, 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>

Caltrans also encourages the Lead Agency to promote alternative transportation. This will increase accessibility and decrease Greenhouse Gas Emissions, which supports Caltrans' mission to provide a safe and reliable transportation network that serves all people and respects the environment. For additional strategies that will promote equity and environmental preservation, please 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>

As a reminder, 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. Caltrans recommends that the Project limit construction traffic to off-peak periods to minimize the potential impact on State facilities. If construction traffic is expected to cause issues on any State facilities, including Interstate 5 (I-5) and Interstate 710 (I-710), please submit a construction traffic control plan detailing these issues for Caltrans' review.

Finally, any work completed on or near Caltrans' right of way may require an encroachment permit. However, the final determination on this will be made by Caltrans' Office of Permits. This work would require additional review and may be subject to additional requirements to ensure current design standards and access management elements are addressed. For more information on encroachment permits, see: <https://dot.ca.gov/programs/traffic-operations/ep>.

If you have any questions regarding these comments, please contact Ronnie Escobar, the project coordinator, at Ronnie.Escobar@dot.ca.gov, and refer to GTS # 07-LA-2022-03918.

Sincerely,



MIYA EDMONSON
LDR/CEQA Branch Chief

cc: State Clearinghouse