

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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May 20, 2022

Melissa Soto
Program Planner
California State University, Long Beach
1331 Palo Verde, Avenue
Long Beach CA, 90815

RE: California State University, Long
Beach Master Plan Update – Notice of
Preparation of an Environmental Impact
Report (NOP)
SCH # 2022040460
GTS # 07-LA-2022-03920

Dear Melissa Soto:

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the above referenced NOP. California State University, Long Beach (CSULB) is proposing a comprehensive update of the current campus Master Plan, last updated in 2008, to accommodate enrollment growth and a future campus population and physical development of the campus through the horizon year 2035. The Master Plan Update focuses on optimizing the existing physical assets of the campus, enhancing the efficiency of operational uses throughout the campus, and evolving the existing buildings and programs to accommodate future campus needs, thereby minimizing the need for net new developed square footage. The goal of the Master Plan Update is to support and advance the CSULB mission, strategic vision, and values by guiding the physical development of the campus and to accommodate changes in enrollment through the horizon year 2035. The California State University Office of the Chancellor is the Lead Agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

The main campus, located at 1250 Bellflower Boulevard, encompasses 322 acres and is generally bounded by East Atherton Street on the north, East 7th Street (State Route 22) on the south, Palo Verde Avenue on the east, and Bellflower Boulevard on the west. The Master Plan Update also encompasses Beachside Village, which is a California State University (CSU)-owned student residential complex located at 4835 Pacific Coast Highway, approximately 0.6 miles west of the main CSULB campus. The initial study identifies the following as potentially significant impacts to Transportation:

- Whether the proposed improvements conflict with a program plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system.
- Conflict or be inconsistent with CEQA Guidelines section 15064.3, subdivision (b); potential to generate vehicle miles traveled (VMT) and its impact on VMT.
- Potential for increased hazards due to a geometric design feature.
- Emergency access.

Therefore, a transportation impact assessment technical report will be prepared for further analysis in the Environmental Impact Report (EIR). Due to the potential for significant impacts, Caltrans concurs with the preparation of a transportation impact assessment. It is also recommended that the following on and off-ramps and intersections be included in the analysis: Interstate 405 (I-405) Northbound (NB) and Southbound (SB) at Bellflower Boulevard, I-405 NB and SB at Palo Verde Avenue, I-405 NB and SB at Studebaker Road, and State Route 22 (SR-22) and West Campus Drive intersection to the SR-22 and E. Campus Drive/Margo Avenue intersection. We look forward to reviewing the transportation impact assessment.

If any potential safety impacts are identified during the EIR, the following preferred traffic safety impact mitigation may be recommended as mitigation:

- Transportation demand management program(s) to reduce the traffic safety impacts, which may include increased transit access, commute trip reductions such as rideshare programs, shared mobility facilities (bicycle or vehicular), increased bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure.
- Investments to existing active transportation infrastructure, or transit system amenities (or expansion) to reduce the project's traffic safety impacts.
- Potential change(s) to the intersection and ramp operations including, but not limited to lane reassignment, traffic signalization, signal phasing or timing modifications, turn lane extensions to mitigate safety impacts from project traffic.

As a reminder, Senate Bill 743 (2013) mandates that VMT be used as the primary metric in identifying transportation impacts of all future projects under CEQA, starting July 1, 2020. For information on determining transportation impacts in terms of VMT on the State Highway System, see the Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA by the California Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR), dated December 2018. Caltrans has published the VMT-focused Transportation Impact Study Guide (TISG), dated May 20, 2020, and the Caltrans Interim Local Development and Intergovernmental Review (LD-IGR) Safety Review Practitioners Guidance, prepared on December 18, 2020. Caltrans' new TISG is largely based on the OPR 2018 Technical Advisory. You can review these resources online at:

- http://opr.ca.gov/docs/20190122-743_Technical_Advisory.pdf
- <https://dot.ca.gov/-/media/dot-media/programs/transportation-planning/documents/sb743/2020-05-20-approved-vmt-focused-tisg-a11y.pdf>
- <https://dot.ca.gov/-/media/dot-media/programs/transportation-planning/documents/sb743/2020-12-22-updated-interim-ldigr-safety-review-guidance-a11y.pdf>

We encourage the Lead Agency to evaluate the potential of additional 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 Lead Agencies 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>

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-2022-03920.

Sincerely,



MIYA EDMONSON
LDR/CEQA Branch Chief

cc: State Clearinghouse