

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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January 3, 2024

Marie Pavlovic
LA County Planning
Subdivisions Section
320 W. Temple Street, Room #160
Los Angeles, CA 90012

RE: Royal Vista Residential Project
SCH # 2022100204
Vic. LA-60/PM R21.477
GTS # LA-2022-04356-DEIR

Dear Marie Pavlovic:

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the above-referenced environmental document. The Project would redevelop six parcels of the existing golf course into four residential planning areas (1, 2, 3, 5) and two open space planning areas (4 and 6), for a total of 360 dwelling units and includes a private trail system that will be open to the public. Planning Areas 1, 2, and 5 would include 200 detached single-family residential (SFR) units on individual lots; 88 duplex or triplex units on 34 lots; and 10 open space lots. Planning Area 3 would include Seventy-two (72) townhouse units and 10 additional units scattered among the triplex units (equaling 82 [22.7%] of the total units), which will be dedicated for sale to moderate- or middle-income households, consistent with the County's inclusionary affordable housing ordinance.

Caltrans is aware of the challenges that the region faces in identifying viable solutions to alleviating congestion on State and Local facilities. With limited room to expand vehicular capacity, all future developments should incorporate multi-modal and complete street transportation elements that will actively promote alternatives to car use and better manage existing parking assets. Prioritizing and allocating space to efficient modes of travel such as bicycling and public transit can allow streets to transport more people in a fixed amount of right-of-way.

Caltrans supports the implementation of complete streets and pedestrian safety measures such as road diets and other traffic calming measures. Please note the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) recognizes the road diet treatment as a proven safety countermeasure, and the cost of a road diet can be significantly reduced if implemented

in tandem with routine street resurfacing. Overall, the environmental report should ensure all modes are served well by planning and development activities. This includes reducing single occupancy vehicle trips, ensuring safety, reducing vehicle miles traveled, supporting accessibility, and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

SCAG’s 2020-2045 RTP/SCS, the County of Los Angeles General Plan, and the Rowland Heights Community General Plan

The project would be consistent with the 2020-2045 RTP/SCS goals to improve mobility, accessibility, reliability, and travel safety for people and goods; reduce GHG emissions and improve air quality; support healthy and equitable communities; and encourage the development of diverse housing types in areas that are supported by multiple transportation options.

For the County of Los Angeles General Plan, the Project would be consistent with the Mobility Element and would ensure that safety, street design, and circulation are maintained for the duration of the Project. The Project’s trail system would provide a unique opportunity to accommodate pedestrians and bicycles in a safe manner by avoiding walking/riding on public streets. The recreational trails would also provide connectivity to the existing sidewalk and bike lane systems adjacent to the Project Site. Streets within the Project Site will be private and have been designed consistent with County roadway design criteria for private drives, which would create a low-speed environment with reduced trips by discouraging cut-through traffic.

The Project would be consistent with the Rowland Heights Community Plan. The Project would construct two new driveways along Colima Road and one along East Walnut Drive South. Streets within the Project Site will be private, which will create a low-speed environment with reduced trips by discouraging cut-through traffic. This will result in reduced motor vehicle accidents and improved function of existing roadways.

Transit

The existing transit service is within approximately 0.5-miles of the project site. Public bus stops located at the northwest and southeast corners of the Fairway Drive-Brea Canyon Cutoff Road/Colima Road intersection serve Foothill Transit Lines 482 and 493. It is also noted that the Heights Hopper Shuttle, operated by Los Angeles County Public Works, provides service in the Hacienda Heights and Rowland Heights communities. The nearest stops along the Heights Hopper shuttle route are located on Banida Avenue north of Colima Road, which is an approximately one-mile walk from the proposed project site.

Pedestrian

Pedestrian access throughout the Project Site would be accommodated by ADA-compliant sidewalks as well as a proposed recreational multi-use trail network. Public sidewalks are provided along most roadways within the vicinity of the project site, including along Fairway Drive, Brea Canyon Cutoff Road, Lake Canyon Drive, Walnut Leaf Drive, Tierra Luna, and Colima Road. It is noted that the proposed project site

frontage along East Walnut Drive South does not currently provide public sidewalks separated from the roadway by curb and gutter, although public sidewalks are provided elsewhere along the roadway. The proposed project will construct new sidewalk, curb, and gutter to comply with Los Angeles County Public Works standards.

Project Supporting Design Measures

The following supporting measures are expected to enhance the ability to achieve the qualified VMT reductions as project design features:

T-1 Increase Residential Density

This measure accounts for the VMT reduction achieved by a project that is designed with a higher density of dwelling units (DU) compared to the average residential density in the country. When reductions are calculated from a baseline derived from a travel demand model, the residential density of the relevant TAZ is used for the comparison instead. Increased densities affect the distance people travel and provide greater options for the mode of travel they choose. Increasing residential density results in shorter and fewer trips by single-occupancy vehicles and thus a reduction in VMT.

T-32 Locate Project near Bike Path/Bike Lane

The proposed project site is located within a 0.5-mile distance of the existing bicycle lanes along Fairway Drive and Golden Springs Road. Future bicycle lanes are planned for Colima Road and Brea Canyon Cutoff Road in the immediate vicinity of the project site, which would provide connections to the existing bicycle lanes west and south of the site. Upon installation of the planned bicycle lanes, the project site would be served by regional-serving bicycle facilities that connect to work/retail destinations and facilitate bicycle commuting.

The proposed project is planned to provide recreational multi-use trails within the project site which are expected to accommodate pedestrians, bicycles, and other non-motorized modes of travel. The multi-use trail system will connect to the internal project roadways as well as public sidewalks and roadways at various places, including along Colima Road. Therefore, the proposed project site is planned to provide convenient connections to the future bicycle lanes for residents of the project site as well as the general public. It is expected that providing connections throughout the project site to regional bicycle facilities will result in greater substitution of bicycle trips for vehicle trips.

Telecommuting

The proposed project is designed to accommodate the teleworking needs of future residents through features, technology, finishes, and filters that help contribute to improved working conditions, increased convenience, healthier indoor air quality, and energy efficiency. The proposed residential units are planned and sized appropriately to provide dedicated home office spaces (e.g., through the inclusion of home office rooms, home office lofts, and home office nooks), and the proposed development is planned to provide high-speed internet connections to each residential unit as well as high speed

internet and wi-fi network infrastructure within each unit. The residential units will also feature additional data connections, power outlets, and USB charging outlets which will facilitate the use of teleworking equipment, along with smart home technology such as smart thermostats, locks, and video doorbells. Therefore, the proposed project is well designed to accommodate the space, technology, indoor environmental conditions, and energy demands of telework.

VMT

The project proposes to incorporate the above supporting design measures to reduce VMT. After the application of the VMT reductions due to project design features, the proposed project is expected to result in a significant residential VMT impact. The summary of the project-level VMT impact analysis is presented in Table 4-1 of the Appendix M Traffic Impact Assessment.

CEQA Transportation Mitigation Measures

1. T-9 Implement Subsidized or Discounted Transit Program
2. Electric Bicycles

The mitigation measures (i.e., provision of transit subsidies and electric bicycles) are expected to result in a quantifiable VMT reduction of 0.45%. Application of the 0.45% VMT reduction would therefore result in a project VMT of 16.2 residential VMT per capita for Planning Areas 1, 2, and 3 (i.e., $16.3 \text{ VMT/Capita} * [1.00 - 0.0045] = 16.2 \text{ VMT/Capita}$), and a project VMT of 21.0 residential VMT per capita for Planning Area 5 (i.e., $21.1 \text{ VMT/Capita} * [1.00 - 0.0045] = 21.0 \text{ VMT/Capita}$). The VMT reductions due to mitigation measures and the resulting project level VMT per capita are summarized in *Table 4-1*. The proposed project's VMT would continue to exceed the threshold of 10.0 residential VMT per capita after mitigation, therefore the project-level VMT impacts will remain significant and unavoidable.

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://ops.fhwa.dot.gov/publications/fhwahop12035/fhwahop12035.pdf>

Caltrans Safety Analysis

Referenced to Caltrans' November 21, 2022 letter, Caltrans requested queuing analysis with actual signal timing at the northbound/southbound off-ramps on SR-57 to Pathfinder Rd. and Brea Canyon Road/S Diamond Bar Blvd. and westbound/eastbound off-ramps on SR-60 to Fairway Dr. and to S Lemon Ave. Nevertheless, only SR-60 to Fairway Dr. off-ramps queuing analysis was prepared. Currently, with the potential project traffic from Lemon Avenue to WB SR-60 on-ramp, there are some safety concerns at this location as potential safety improvement may be needed. We would like the opportunity to discuss any possible improvement with the Lead Agency.

The addition of project traffic at the Fairway Drive/SR-60 Freeway WB Ramps will result in additional vehicle queuing for the northbound left-turn movement. While the queue currently exceeds the available turn-lane storage capacity, the project is forecast to result in additional queuing under the existing with project and future cumulative with project conditions which is expected to continue to spill back into the adjacent through travel lane. The current dual left-turn lanes provide a total of 400 feet of queue storage space, however under future cumulative with project conditions, the total queue is expected to require up to 616 feet of queue storage space.

In order to adequately accommodate the forecast queues without blocking other traffic movements at the intersection, it is proposed that the northbound approach along Fairway Drive be restriped to provide additional left-turn queue storage. The exclusive northbound right-turn lane at the SR-60 Freeway EB on-ramp would be restriped to accommodate a shared through/right-turn lane, and the other northbound lanes would be restriped to accommodate the full extent of the forecast northbound left-turn queue. The proposed improvement would be reviewed in detail and approved in the encroachment permit process.

Please be reminded that any work performed within the State Right-of-way will require an Encroachment Permit from Caltrans. Any modifications to State facilities must meet all mandatory design standards and specifications.

Others

Any transportation of heavy construction equipment and/or materials that requires the use of oversized transport vehicles on State highways will need a Caltrans transportation permit. We recommend that large-size truck trips be limited to off-peak commute periods. Any debris on the construction truck must be covered by a tarpaulin cover.

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-2022-04356-DEIR.

Sincerely,

Frances Duong

FRANCES DUONG
Acting LDR/CEQA Branch Chief

email: State Clearinghouse