

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
DISTRICT 7- OFFICE OF REGIONAL PLANNING
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*Making Conservation
a California Way of Life.*

November 9, 2022

Jocelyn Swain, Senior Planner
City of Lancaster
44933 Fern Avenue
Lancaster, CA 93534



RE: Pacific Topaz Housing Tract Project –
Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND)
SCH# 2022100369
GTS# 07-LA-2022-04100
Vic. SR 14 and SR 138

Dear Jocelyn Swain,

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the above referenced project. The Proposed Project includes the subdivision of approximately 37 gross acres for the construction and occupancy of 207 single-family residential lots. The minimum lot size would be 4,250square feet and the development would also provide approximately 5.89 acres of open space including paseos, recreational areas and green belts.

The nearest State facilities to the proposed project are State Route 14 and State Route 138. After reviewing the MND, Caltrans has the following comments:

Currently the project is designed in a way that induces a high number of vehicle trips per household due to being an exclusively residential, car-oriented development. The Lead Agency is encouraged to integrate transportation and land uses in a way that reduces VMT and Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions by facilitating the provision of more proximate goods and services to shorten trip lengths and achieve a high level of non-motorized travel and transit use. Caltrans recommends the following to more effectively address the significant VMT that this project may create as currently proposed:

- 1) Provide for a mixture of land use types within the Project's new zoning area to allow for adaptive reuse. This can allow goods, services, and jobs to be created closer to where the project's residents live.
- 2) Reduce the amount of parking whenever possible, as abundant car parking enables and encourages driving. Research looking at the relationship between land-use, parking, and transportation indicates that the amount of car parking supplied can undermine a project's ability to encourage public transit and active modes of transportation. For any project to

better promote public transit and reduce vehicle miles traveled, we recommend the implementation of Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategies as an alternative to building too much parking.

- 3) Improve connections to existing active transportation and transit infrastructure. This can be done with robust signage, wayfinding, safety improvements, and human scale amenities. Additionally, the most effective methods to reduce pedestrian and bicyclist exposure to vehicles is through physical design and geometrics. These methods include the construction of physically separated facilities such as Class IV bike lanes, wide sidewalks, pedestrian refuge islands, landscaping, street furniture, and reductions in crossing distances through roadway narrowing.

Finally, 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. We recommend large size truck trips be limited to off-peak commute periods.

If you have any questions, please contact project coordinator Anthony Higgins, at anthony.higgins@dot.ca.gov and refer to GTS# 07-LA-2022-04100.

Sincerely,

Miya Edmonson

Miya Edmonson

LDR Branch Chief

cc: State Clearinghouse