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Governor's Office of Planning & Research



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JAN 26 2023

STATE CLEARING HOUSE

January 25, 2023

Christy Wong, CEQA Project Manager
Los Angeles Unified School District
333 South Beaudry Avenue
Los Angeles, California 90017

RE: District-Wide Redevelopment Program –
Notice of Preparation (NOP)
SCH# 2023010013
GTS# 07-LA-2023-04144
Vic. LA Multiple

Dear Christy Wong,

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the above referenced project. The Los Angeles Unified School District (District or LA Unified) is proposing to upgrade and modernize District school facilities in accordance with Measure RR, which seeks to address the significant and unfunded needs of Los Angeles public school facilities. The following updates and related policy changes are included as part of the proposed project and dependent on priority, as determined by the Strategic Execution Plan adopted by the LAUSD Board of Education.

- Major modernizations, upgrades, and reconfigurations to school campuses.
- Critical replacements and upgrades of school building/site systems and components.
- School upgrades and reconfigurations to support wellness, health, athletics, learning, and efficiency.
- Specialized facilities upgrades such as Early Childhood Education Centers, Adult and Career Education facilities, and school cafeterias.
- Transition Plan implementation.
- Districtwide Charter School facilities upgrades and expansions.

After reviewing the NOP, Caltrans has the following comments:

The Lead Agency is encouraged to integrate transportation in a way that reduces VMT and Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions by facilitating the provision of more transit-oriented and pedestrian-friendly projects to achieve a high level of non-motorized travel near schools. Caltrans recommends the following to more effectively approach developing physically and environmentally safe commutes to District facilities.

1. Reducing the amount of car parking supplied acts against enabling driving over other methods of transit. Research indicates that removing car parking is a proven method of reducing trip demand, improving housing affordability, and encouraging active modes of transportation. If surface parking must be built, it is recommended that it does not face the street directly. With

active frontage against the sidewalk and parking shifted to the rear or interior of the site, a streetscape that encourages recreational walking and transit can be produced.

2. Improve connections from schools to existing active transportation and transit infrastructure. This can be done with robust signage near school crosswalks, safety improvements, and human scale amenities. Examples of effective physical design include the construction of physically separated facilities such as Class IV bike lanes, wide sidewalks, pedestrian refuge islands, and reductions in crossing distances through roadway narrowing.

3. Implement Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategies to reduce school traffic congestion at peak periods as alternatives to requiring car drop-off and pick-up. Infrastructure like frequent stops for school shuttles, skateboard and scooter storage, bicycle parking, and sufficient pedestrian level lighting should be included to encourage these uses. To support a community's ability to choose public transit and active modes of transportation, the plan should consider accessibility options for all impacted by vehicular traffic caused during school hours.

Caltrans looks forward to reviewing the forthcoming Draft Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) to confirm that the Project will contribute towards widespread transit-centered street design in California schools.

If you have any questions, please contact project coordinator Anthony Higgins, at anthony.higgins@dot.ca.gov and refer to GTS# 07-LA-2023-04144.

Sincerely,



MIYA EDMONSON
LDR Branch Chief

cc: State Clearinghouse