

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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a California Way of Life*

February 3, 2025

Douglas Henning
Facilities and Construction Manager
Santa Paula Unified School District Office
201 S. Steckel Dr.
Santa Paula, CA 93060

RE: Isbell Middle School Modernization
Project: Draft EIR
GTS # 07-VEN-2023-00622
SCH # 2023010299
Vic. SR 126 PM R11.641

Dear Douglas Henning:

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the above-referenced project. The project is proposing to develop new facilities on the campus consisting of three or four single story buildings, with outward facing doors and exterior hallways, arranged around a Student Courtyard area designed to promote student safety and provide a central location for student activities. Development of the new facilities would require demolition of the main school building, Manual Arts building and other existing structures on the campus. The Santa Paula Unified School District (SPUSD) is the Lead Agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

The closest state facility is SR 126. After reviewing the project's documents, Caltrans has the following comments:

Caltrans encourages the Lead Agency to incorporate further multi-modal infrastructure to better support pedestrian and transit mobility. This infrastructure should include ADA-compliant design, protected bike lanes, adequate sidewalks, high visibility crosswalks, reducing vehicle parking, and implementing bike parking to best create a fully accessible Complete Street. Caltrans recommends the following multimodal improvements:

- Establish a Class 4 Bike Lane and traffic calming measures on 4th Street to

keep students and staff safe when they bike or walk to school. These safety enhancements, in combination with an improved crossing at 4th & Main Street, would create a robust connection to the Santa Paula Bike Trail, further promoting local active transportation.

- Improvements including visual indicators such as pedestrian and bicyclist warning signage, flashing beacons, crosswalks, signage, and striping should be used in addition to physical design improvements to indicate to motorists that they can expect to see and yield to people walking or riding bikes.
- Reducing the amount of car parking whenever possible. Research shows that abundant car parking enables and encourages driving, ultimately undermining a project's ability to encourage public transit and active modes of transportation. This project aims to increase its capacity to 110 parking spaces however, to better promote public transit and reduce vehicle miles traveled, it is recommended to implement bike parking and further multi-modal infrastructure as an alternative to building an unnecessary amount of parking.

Due to the project's proximity to SR 126, please provide the Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) to Caltrans once it is prepared. Caltrans also recommends limiting large truck travel and construction traffic to off-peak commute hours. A permit for any heavy construction equipment and or materials that require the use of oversized transport vehicles on State highways. If construction traffic is expected to cause issues on any State facilities, please submit a construction traffic control plan detailing potential impacts for Caltrans for review.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Jaden Oloresisimo, the project coordinator, at Jaden.Oloresisimo@dot.ca.gov and refer to GTS # 07-VEN-2025-00622.

Sincerely,



Anthony Higgins
Acting LDR Branch Chief
cc: State Clearinghouse