

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
DISTRICT 7- OFFICE OF REGIONAL PLANNING
100 S. MAIN STREET, SUITE 100
LOS ANGELES, CA 90012
PHONE (213) 266-3574
FAX (213) 897-1337
TTY 711
www.dot.ca.gov



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Governor's Office of Planning & Research

March 6 2023

STATE CLEARING HOUSE

March 6, 2022

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

RE: Tentative Tract Map No. 82777 – Mitigated
Negative Declaration (MND)
SCH# 2023020156
GTS# 07-LA-2023-04163
Vic. SR 14 PM R66.79

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 consists of the subdivision of approximately 10 acres into 36 single family residential lots, ranging in size from 7,000 to 16,844 square feet. A meandering sidewalk with landscaping would be provided on both 65th Street West and Avenue J-8.

The nearest State facility to the proposed project is State Route 14. After reviewing the MND, Caltrans has the following comments:

As stated in the Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) Analysis Technical Memorandum, the project will result in a significant environmental impact due to the home-based VMT per capita exceeding the City's adopted thresholds by 46%. While this impact has been technically mitigated through the City's VMT Impact Fee Mitigation Program, these funds should not be collected in place of resilient planning principles. This development continues the exurban sprawl into the undeveloped desert, with no accommodations for non-car transportation or possibility of adaptive reuse in the future.

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 creates 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-2023-04163.

Sincerely,

Miya Edmonson

Miya Edmonson

LDR Branch Chief

cc: State Clearinghouse