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a California Way of Life*

December 26, 2023

Governor's Office of Planning & Research

Ashley Rogers, Assistant Director, Environmental Planning
University of California, Los Angeles
UCLA Capital Programs
1060 Veteran Avenue Box 951365
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Dec 27 2023

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

RE: Sunset Canyon Recreation
Replacement Building –
Supplemental EIR (SEIR)
SCH #2023070306
GTS #07-LA-2023-04363
Vic. LA-405/PM 32.59

Dear Ashley Rogers,

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the above referenced project. The Proposed Project would consist of the development of a new two-story (plus rooftop deck), student-oriented, multi-purpose building at Sunset Canyon Recreation Center (Sunset Rec) within the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) campus. The new building would replace a series of seven existing buildings set for demolition at Sunset Rec, which is located in an area with hillside topography, undeveloped open space areas, and numerous mature trees within and surrounding the area. In 2014 and 2021, structural evaluations were conducted to provide seismic ratings for the buildings at the Sunset Rec complex. Results identified several structural features with severe distress and loss of structural integrity, and a further study indicated that the buildings do not meet current requirements for energy efficiency, accessibility, or general safety.

Vehicular access to the proposed building would remain the same as under existing conditions from Easton Drive. The existing vehicular turnaround adjacent to the main entrance to Sunset Rec would also remain unchanged. Parking would continue to be provided at the three-story Sunset Rec (SR) parking structure, and the Proposed Project does not include the addition or removal of parking spaces. During construction, the SR parking structure would remain available for Sunset Rec users.

After reviewing the SEIR, Caltrans has the following comments:

Regarding active transportation, the previous comments from Caltrans are included in Section 3.0 of the SEIR and Section V.17 of the Initial Study. They are still relevant and address the concerns regarding active transportation. Implementation of Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategies can promote safe and convenient multimodal travel options for students, faculty, and visitors. Existing bicycle facilities at Sunset Rec should be preserved; at least one pedestrian path should be maintained through the construction phase; and pedestrian and bicyclist exposure to vehicles should be reduced. Furthermore, it is critical to include ADA elements in all new pedestrian facilities, such as curb ramps, and use high visibility elements for both bike and pedestrian facilities. High visibility elements may include usage of green paint for bicycle markings on the street, installing light posts, or incorporating continental striping.

As the SEIR does not state any additions to parking spaces provided, the Proposed Project would likely not result in a significant increase in Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT). However, the project does retain an auto-oriented use. Wherever possible, adding electrical car charging spaces would encourage the usage of plug-in hybrid vehicles (PHEVs) or fully electric vehicles (BEVs), which can help to reduce tailpipe emissions, minimize reliance on fuel, and direct resources towards alternative forms of transportation. Caltrans' targets of tripling trips made by bicycle, doubling trips made by walking and public transit, and a 15% reduction in statewide VMT can be achieved through collaborative improvements to the state-wide transportation network.

Additionally, 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. Caltrans recommends 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-2023-04363.

Sincerely,

Karen Herrera for

Frances Duong
Acting LDR/CEQA Branch Chief

cc: State Clearinghouse