

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

DISTRICT 7

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a California Way of Life*

October 25, 2023

Jonathan Iniesta
City of Long Beach
411 W. Ocean Blvd, 3rd Floor
Long Beach, CA 90802

RE: 4501 Orange Ave Residential Project
Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND)
SCH # 2023090574
Vic. I-710, I-405, SR-71/PM LA 10.828,
5.397, 12.593
GTS # 07-LA-2023-04320

Dear Jonathan Iniesta:

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the above-referenced project. The proposed project would include the demolition of all existing structures on the project site including two commercial buildings, a surface parking lot, and a privately owned open space area, to construct six three-story buildings containing 32 townhome units with attached garages. The townhomes would feature three-bedroom floorplans and one or two car garages. Additional site improvements would include landscaping improvements, eight additional guest parking spaces, and amenities including a children's play structure, an open fireplace, and lounging amenities. The City of Long Beach is the Lead Agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

The closest state facilities are the I-710, I-405, and the SR-91 (N Lakewood Blvd). After reviewing the project's MND, Caltrans has the following comments:

- In accordance with the Long Beach 2040 Land Use Map, the site is zoned as a Transit-Oriented Development Low Density (TOD-L). To encourage TOD-L components, Caltrans recommends revising/enhancing the design elements along Orange Ave to encourage residents to utilize Long Beach Transit Route 71.
- Caltrans encourages the Lead Agency to consider any reduction in vehicle speeds to benefit pedestrian and bicyclist safety, as there is a direct link between impact speeds and the likelihood of fatality or serious injury. 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 bikeways, wide sidewalks, curb extensions, pedestrian refuge islands, landscaping, street furniture, and reductions in crossing distances

through roadway narrowing. 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.

- Caltrans recommends the following multimodal improvements for this project:
 - Incorporate bicycle infrastructure along Orange Ave and E San Antonio Dr., such as protected Class IV bikeways, to improve safety and comfort for all road users.
 - Be sure to include canopy trees, bioswales, bicycle parking facilities, and street furniture to provide a comfortable and sustainable environment to encourage active transportation modes and improve community health.
 - In addition to bioswales, incorporate permeable paving surfaces wherever possible to manage stormwater, replenish groundwater, and prevent pollution runoff.
 - Provide high quality bus shelters and bus bulb-outs for Long Beach Transit Route 71 along Orange Ave.
 - Use high-visibility continental crosswalks, curb extensions, count-down signal heads, pedestrian refuge islands, and pedestrian scrambles at all 4 crossings at the intersection of Orange Ave and E San Antonio Dr.
 - Leading pedestrian intervals can give pedestrians a 7-second head start in crosswalks; this provides additional crossing time and reduces the amount of time that pedestrians are exposed to high-speed vehicle traffic.
- Caltrans acknowledges and supports infill development that ultimately helps California to meet its climate, transportation, and livability goals. However, due to the amount of parking and lack of mixed land uses, the 4501 Orange Avenue Residential Project is designed in a way that induces demand for unnecessary vehicle trips. This demand should be addressed with appropriate design and management principles. Caltrans recommends the following:
 - Reducing the amount of car parking. Research looking at the relationship between land-use, parking, and transportation indicates that the amount of car parking supplied encourages driving and 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 car parking.

- Provide a mixture of uses. The project's location creates an opportunity to incorporate additional land-use types, as the essential component of sustainable communities is mixed-use zoning. Residential, Commercial, and Office uses should be intertwined to increase accessibility and bring destinations closer to where people live. This allows residents to utilize both transit and active modes to meet their everyday transportation needs.
- Caltrans recommends the following during the construction period:
 - Work with Caltrans Office of Permits, Multi-Modal Unit, for a designated truck route for construction trucks to transport construction equipment to and from the construction sites
 - Construction vehicles/equipment should use alternative routes to avoid congested state facilities, especially during peak hours.
 - Cover construction trucks with tarpaulin to avoid debris spillage onto State facilities.

As a reminder, any transportation of heavy construction equipment and/or materials that requires the use of oversized transport vehicles on State Highways will need a Caltrans transportation permit. Caltrans recommends that the Project limit construction traffic to off-peak periods to minimize the potential impact on State facilities. If construction traffic is expected to cause issues on any State facilities, please submit a construction traffic control plan detailing these issues for Caltrans' 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-LA-2023-04320.

Sincerely,

Anthony Higgins for

MIYA EDMONSON
LDR/CEQA Branch Chief

cc: State Clearinghouse