

**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

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*Making Conservation  
a California Way of Life*

April 2, 2024

Christina Nguyen, Regional Planner  
Los Angeles County Regional Planning Department  
320 W. Temple Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90012



RE: Extera Charter School Project–  
Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND)  
SCH #2024021233  
GTS #07-LA-2024-04469  
LA-5/PM 14.57

Dear Christina Nguyen,

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the above referenced project. The County of Los Angeles proposes a Charter School, consisting of a transitional kindergarten (TK) to 8th grade charter school serving a maximum enrollment of 525 students. The project would include 22 classrooms, offices, outdoor eating areas and play areas, a multi-purpose room, and 38 vehicular surface parking spaces with 90 bicycle spaces. Staff would occupy the majority of vehicular parking spaces. The Initial Study reports that the Santa Ana Freeway (I-5) is 150 feet south of the Site.

After reviewing the MND, Caltrans has the following comments:

The MND finds that the project will have a less than significant impact with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system which includes bicycle and pedestrian facilities. Caltrans recommends the proposed project follow the local and regional guidance on bike and pedestrian infrastructure. However, Caltrans does suggest extending the existing bike boulevard on Rowan Ave to reach south of Whittier Blvd, creating a bike facility on Whittier Blvd, and upgrading the nearest crosswalks to continental ladder. Although it is not in the project area, additional design elements like Leading Pedestrian Interval (LPI) signals at the nearest intersections would improve

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safety conditions for all road users. Enhancing the safety elements of the nearby roadways will greatly benefit prospective students who walk or bike to school.

If surface parking must be built, it is recommended that it not face the street directly. By shifting the parking to the rear or interior of the project site, a more inviting streetscape can be created. A more active frontage against the sidewalk, can encourage both recreational and transportation walking. These urban design principles can affect mode choice and help the State of California achieve its goals to improve health and reduce Greenhouse Gases (GHG).

As a reminder, Senate Bill 743 (2013) has codified into California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) law and mandated that CEQA review of transportation impacts of proposed development be modified by using Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) as the primary metric in identifying transportation impacts for all future development projects. 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.

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 engineers are available for consultation of a designated truck route for construction trucks to transport construction equipment to and from the project sites. It is recommended that large size truck trips be limited to off-peak commute periods, and that construction trucks are covered with tarpaulin to avoid debris spillage onto State Highways.

If you have any questions, please contact project coordinator Frances Duong, at frances.duong@dot.ca.gov and refer to GTS #07-LA-2024-04469.

Sincerely,



Miya Edmonson  
LDR/CEQA Branch Chief

Cc: State Clearinghouse