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*Making Conservation
a California Way of Life*

May 1, 2024

Scott Nash, Associate Planner
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City of Duarte
1600 Huntington Drive
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Governor's Office of Planning & Research

May 02 2024

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

RE: Westminster Gardens SP Update
SCH # 2024040196
Vic. LA-210/PM R36.53, LA-605/PM 25.8
GTS # LA-2024-04494-NOP-AL

Dear Scott Nash,

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the above-referenced NOP. The proposed project will update the Westminster Gardens Specific Plan (WGSP) through a comprehensive update, repealing in its entirety the existing Specific Plan, and replacing it with a new Specific Plan to facilitate redevelopment of the existing Life Plan Community (LPC). The updated WGSP identifies the long-term vision and objectives for private redevelopment, new residential and non-residential development capacity, and associated public and private improvements within the WGSP area over a 15-to-20-year span. The WGSP update establishes the general type, parameters, and character of the development aimed at transforming the current Westminster Gardens LPC campus into a vibrant and dynamic environment with senior-centric amenities, services, and multiple housing and continuum of care options at various price points, providing aging Duarte residents a destination to continue to reside within the City.

Redevelopment under the updated WGSP is intended to address the unmet demand for senior housing and services within Duarte and the surrounding communities. Implementation of this amendment allows for redevelopment of the Westminster Gardens LPC campus to allow an increase in build-out capacity from 149 to 550 residential units/beds and from 27,663 to 112,000 square feet of non-residential floor area. Another major goal of updating the WGSP is to achieve a coordinated, cohesive environment and character within the Westminster Gardens LPC by updating development and design standards.

The mission of Caltrans is to provide a safe and reliable transportation network that serves all people and respects the environment. Senate Bill 743 (2013) has codified into 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. You may reference the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) for more information:

<https://opr.ca.gov/ceqa/#guidelines-updates>

As a reminder, VMT is the standard transportation analysis metric in CEQA for land use projects after July 1, 2020, which is the statewide implementation date.

Caltrans is aware of challenges that the region faces in identifying viable solutions to alleviating congestion on State and Local facilities. With limited room to expand vehicular capacity, all developments in the General Plan should incorporate multi-modal and complete streets transportation elements that will actively promote alternatives to car use and better manage existing parking assets. Prioritizing and allocating space to efficient modes of travel such as bicycling and public transit can allow streets to transport more people in a fixed amount of right-of-way.

Caltrans supports the implementation of complete streets and pedestrian safety measures such as road diets and other traffic calming measures. Please note the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) recognizes the road diet treatment as a proven safety countermeasure, and the cost of a road diet can be significantly reduced if implemented in tandem with routine street resurfacing. Overall, the environmental report should ensure all modes are served well by planning and development activities. This includes reducing single occupancy vehicle trips, ensuring safety, reducing vehicle miles traveled, supporting accessibility, and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

We encourage the Lead Agency to evaluate the potential of Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategies and Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) applications in order to better manage the transportation network, as well as transit service and bicycle or pedestrian connectivity improvements. For any TDM options, please refer to the Federal Highway Administration's *Integrating Demand Management into the Transportation Planning Process: A Desk Reference* (Chapter 8). This reference is available online at:

<http://ops.fhwa.dot.gov/publications/fhwahop12035/fhwahop12035.pdf>

Also, Caltrans has published the VMT-focused Transportation Impact Study Guide (TISG), dated May 20, 2020 and the Caltrans Interim Land Development and Intergovernmental Review (LD-IGR) Safety Review Practitioners Guidance, prepared on December 18, 2020. You can review those document at the following link:

<https://dot.ca.gov/-/media/dot-media/programs/transportation-planning/documents/sb-743/2020-05-20-approved-vmt-focused-tisg-a11y.pdf>

<https://dot.ca.gov/-/media/dot-media/programs/transportation-planning/documents/sb-743/2020-12-22-updated-interim-ldigr-safety-review-guidance-a11y.pdf>

This development is near I-210 and I-605. It is anticipated that I-210 and Buena Vista Street Interchange, and I-210/I-605 and Huntington Drive intersections will be impacted by the project trips of the development. We recommend including the following in the traffic impact analysis.

- A) Potential environmental effects of the Project should include the Transportation section with VMT analysis in the Draft Environmental Impact Report.
- B) To address development traffic safety concerns on the State facilities, Caltrans recommends the Lead Agency include queuing analysis with actual signal timing for existing traffic conditions plus project trips at the impacted off-ramps on Freeway 210/605 on the State facilities. Perform Queuing Analysis at the following off-ramp intersections to make sure that the traffic on the off-ramp does not back up onto the freeway mainline, and for turn lane storage to be adequate and for this traffic not to cause through traffic blockage:
 - a) WB/EB Route 210/NB Route 605 off-ramps to Huntington Dr.
 - b) WB Route 210 off-ramp to Buena Vista St.
 - c) EB Route 210 off-ramp to Buena Vista St.
- C) For Potential Mitigation Measures the following may be included:
 - a) Transportation Demand Management.
 - b) Transportation System Management.

Caltrans encourages lead agencies to prepare traffic safety impact analysis for this Specific Plan in the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) review process using Caltrans guidelines above on the State facilities so that, through partnerships and collaboration, California can reach zero fatalities and serious injuries by 2050.

Scott Nash, Associate Planner

May 1, 2024

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If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Mr. Alan Lin the project coordinator at (213) 269-1124 and refer to GTS # LA-2024-04494-NOP-AL.

Sincerely,

Anthony Higgins for

MIYA EDMONSON
LDR/CEQA Branch Chief

email: State Clearinghouse