

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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*Making Conservation
a California Way of Life*

May 9, 2024

Governor's Office of Planning & Research

Gianfranco Laurie, Traffic Engineering Manager
County of Ventura
800 South Victoria Avenue #1620
Ventura, CA 93009

May 10 2024

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

RE: Rose Avenue Bike Lanes Project–
Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND)
SCH #2024040195
GTS #07-VEN-2024-00588
Vic. LA Multiple

Dear Gianfranco Laurie,

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the above referenced project. The proposed project involves pavement widening and restriping of the roadway to accommodate Class II bike lanes on both sides of the road. The southern segment would include installation of concrete sidewalks, curbs, and gutters. At the intersection at Rose Avenue and Walnut Drive, signal poles would be upgraded to improve driver visibility of approaching traffic lights. Additional signal equipment may also be incorporated, such as Lead Pedestrian Intervals to activate an early pedestrian crossing phase.

After reviewing the Draft MND, Caltrans has the following comments:

The initial study states that Right-of-Way (ROW) acquisition would not involve the acquisition of California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) ROW. Caltrans concurs that the Proposed Project would have a less than significant impact related to transportation safety as well as VMT and CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3. However, the project boundary extends north slightly into Caltrans ROW on SR 118 and extends approximately 300 feet south of Central Avenue for the project to tie into existing connections during utility relocation. Caltrans requires an encroachment permit for projects that impact State ROW. It is expected that a maintenance agreement be created

between Caltrans and the Lead Agency to share the burden of costs for the proposed street crossings.

Since the proposed project would not contribute to an increase in population at the project site and would not generate additional trips, trip distribution and assignment of trips to the State highways will remain the same; therefore, it would not generate a significant impact to SR-118 other than additional trucks during construction.

Construction activity may block parking and portions of travel lanes, restrict access to driveways, disrupt access for emergency providers, and result in potential safety issues for vehicular traffic, pedestrians, and bicyclists in the vicinity of the project site. Although it would not generate a significant long-term operational impact to SR-118, construction would temporarily disrupt transportation and circulation patterns in vicinity of the proposed project thus disrupting local vehicle traffic along the haul routes. Additionally, the average daily truck traffic at SR-118 is expected to increase throughout the construction. The volume of trucks would create severe congestion, noise, and safety impacts on the highway. As a result, prior to issuance of building or grading permits for the project site, the applicant is required to prepare a Construction Traffic Management Plan with applicable traffic control plans for review and approval by the Lead Agency to reduce any impacts to less than significant levels with the mitigations incorporated.

Please ensure that the existing signal and traffic operations at the intersection with Rose Avenue and SR-118 and all major intersections in the vicinity of the project can accommodate the additional bicycle trips. For any traffic signals and curb ramps upgraded, the Project would be responsible for payment of applicable fees as required related to the transportation system, and Caltrans is not responsible for any fair-share contribution to the improvement without agreement.

Caltrans supports the purpose of the proposed project, which consists of bikeway improvements on two segments of Rose Avenue. The project is shown to have a less than significant impact conflicting with a program, plan, ordinance, or policy addressing the circulation system which includes bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

Regarding bike and pedestrian infrastructure design, it would be beneficial to share design plans and sections once they are drafted with appropriate Caltrans staff for thorough review. The bicycle facility is described loosely as a Class II bike lane. The northern segment of the project on Rose Avenue has a speed limit of 55 mph, and the southern end of the project has a speed limit of 45 and 55 mph. The design of the bike lanes will be critical to ensure the safest alternative possible on this high-speed road. The safest alternative would be to install a Class I bikeway which can be bidirectional and fully separated from the road, or a Class IV bikeway that will be physically separated from the vehicles. Caltrans understands that the southern segment will include pedestrian facilities, such as the installation of sidewalks, curbs, and gutters.

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The following should also be included as pedestrian complete street and safety elements: upgrading the crosswalks to a high visibility continental design, considering pedestrian-activated traffic signals on the T-intersections near Rio del Valle Junior High School, pedestrian level lighting, and ADA truncated domes on curbs. Furthermore, installing a sidewalk that is wide enough to at least include a street furniture/utility zone and a pedestrian through zone should be considered.

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. For any work that would affect the freeways and its facilities, Caltrans has the jurisdiction for review and approval.

If you have any questions, please contact project coordinator Frances Duong, at frances.duong@dot.ca.gov and refer to GTS #07-VEN-2024-00588.

Sincerely,

Anthony Higgins for

Miya Edmonson
LDR/CEQA Branch Chief

Cc: State Clearinghouse