

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

DISTRICT 7
100 S. MAIN STREET, MS 16
LOS ANGELES, CA 90012
PHONE (213) 266-3562
FAX (213) 897-1337
TTY 711
www.dot.ca.gov



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August 2, 2024

Louis Morales
City of Commerce
Dept. of Economic Development and Planning
2535 Commerce Way
Commerce, CA 90040

RE: City of Commerce 2021-2029 Housing
Element Update (ND)
GTS # 07-LA-2024-04573
SCH # 2024070179
Vic. LA Multiple

Dear Louis Morales:

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the above-referenced project. The project is the adoption of the Commerce 2021-2029 Housing Element which represents an update of the City's certified Housing Element. The Housing Element addresses existing and future housing needs of all types for persons in all economic segment groups within the City and serves as a tool for decision-makers and the public in understanding and meeting housing needs in Commerce. While the law does not require local governments to construct housing to meet identified needs it does require that the community address housing needs in its discretionary planning actions such as creating opportunities for housing in their general plan and facilitating development through policies. State law requires that all housing elements address four key topics: housing needs, constraints to housing development, housing resources, and a housing plan. Analysis of these topics provides the foundation for the preparation of a housing element. Article 10.6, Section 65580 – 65589.8, Chapter 3 of Division 1 of Title 7 of the Government Code sets forth the legal requirements for a housing element and encourages the provision of affordable and decent housing in suitable living environments for all communities to meet statewide goals. The 2021-2029 Housing Element Update is a policy document by the City of Commerce regarding its current and projected future housing needs and the City's goals, policies, and programs to address those identified needs. The City of Commerce Department of Economic Development and Planning is the Lead Agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

After reviewing the project's documents, Caltrans has the following comments:

The Transportation Section indicates that the project will have a less than significant impact on facilities and programmatic VMT. To further reduce VMT impacts, Caltrans recommends the Lead Agency consider potential policies that could best support an integrated network of commercial, office, and new housing that would reduce automobile use, improve equitable access to transit, and employ best practices for environmental sustainability and carbon reduction for residents. Effective methods for reducing pedestrian and cyclist exposure to vehicles include thoughtful physical design and geometrics. These strategies, outlined in the City's 2020 Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan, encompass features like physically separated Class IV bike lanes, wide sidewalks, pedestrian refuge islands, landscaping, street furniture, and narrowing crossing distances.

These updates can help the City to identify strategies to provide housing that supports the existing and projected needs of the community but also align with Caltrans' targets of tripling bicycle trips, doubling walking and public transit trips, and a 15% reduction in statewide VMT. By promoting sustainable transit infrastructure in residential development, this plan encourages Californians to embrace transit-oriented communities and supports the state's efforts to reduce driving-related trips, and greenhouse gas emissions, and enhance multimodal transportation options.

The City of Commerce intersects along I-5 and SR-710. An Encroachment Permit is required for any work performed within the State Right-of-way. Caltrans recommends that the Project limit construction traffic to off-peak periods to minimize the potential impact on State facilities. Caltrans requires a permit for any heavy construction equipment and or materials that require the use of oversized transport vehicles on State highways. 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.

Caltrans supports collaboration with local agencies to work towards a safe, functional, interconnected, multi-modal transportation network integrated through efficient and equitable land use planning and policies. If you have any questions, please contact Jaden Oloresisimo, the project coordinator, at Jaden.Oloresisimo@dot.ca.gov and refer to GTS # 07-LA-2024-04573.

Sincerely,



Anthony Higgins
Acting LDR/CEQA Branch Chief

cc: State Clearinghouse