

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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a California Way of Life.*

October 15, 2024

Brenda Magana
City of Palmdale
Economic and Community Development Department - Planning Division
38250 Sierra Highway
Palmdale, CA 93550

RE: Tentative Tract Map 82364 Time Tract
Extension – Mitigated Negative
Declaration
SCH# 2024090712
GTS# 07-LA-2024-04630
Vic. LA 138 PM 37.225
LA 14 PM R58.184

Dear Brenda Magana,

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the above referenced project. The Project would subdivide approximately five acres into 16 lots for the purpose of constructing 15 single-family lots, and one detention basin lot. Four existing structures would be demolished, and 15 single-family residential homes and associated infrastructure would be constructed, including road improvements along Avenue R-8 and Avenue R-9. The project would also install sidewalks, curbs, and utilities.

After reviewing the MND, Caltrans has the following comments:

Currently the project is designed in a way that induces a high number of trips per household due to being exclusively single-family residential. The Lead Agency is encouraged to integrate transportation and land use in a way that reduces Vehicle Miles Travelled (VMT) by facilitating the provision of more proximate goods and services to shorten trip lengths and achieve a higher level of non-motorized travel and transit use. Caltrans recommends the following to more effectively address the VMT that this project will create as currently proposed:

- Provide for a mixture of land use types within the Project's new zoning area. This can allow goods, services, and jobs to be created closer to where the project's residents live.

"Provide a safe and reliable transportation network that serves all people and respects the environment."

- Provide affordable housing units. These units not only improve affordability, they also reduce the demand for ever increasing amounts of car infrastructure, as rates of car ownership and vehicle miles traveled (VMT) are significantly lower for low-income households than they are for high-income households. If the project includes affordable housing, there is an even greater justification for reducing car parking to promote affordability and achieve a more diverse and sustainable land-use pattern.
- Reduce the amount of parking whenever possible. Research looking at the relationship between land-use, parking, and transportation indicates that the amount of car parking supplied can undermine a project's ability to encourage public transit and active modes of transportation.
- Improve connections to existing active transportation infrastructure. While Caltrans commends the project's closure of a sidewalk gap to support pedestrian and ADA accessibility, similar improvements to bicycle safety should be considered for future residents of the subdivision. As the Palmdale Sustainable Transportation Plan highlights protected bike lanes within the city, such improvements should be considered between the project area, Palm Tree Elementary and the IB World School to diversify travel options for project residents and mitigate anticipated passenger vehicle travel.
- Improved continental (striped) crosswalks and addition of curb extensions/bulb-outs at the following intersections:
 - Division St and Ave R-8
 - Division St and 5th St
 - Kimberly Ln and Avenue R-5
 - 3rd St and Avenue R-5
 - 3rd St and Avenue R-4
 - 3rd St and Avenue R-2
- Inclusion of pedestrian access/cut-throughs between Avenue R-8 and the new cul-de-sacs of Sumac Ave and 3rd St. Such access will better facilitate walking and biking connections to Palm Tree Elementary and the IB World School.

Finally, The Project area is located approximately 1 mile south of SR 138 at Division St and 1 mile northeast of SR 14 at Avenue S. Caltrans has the jurisdiction for review and approval of any work that would affect the freeways and its facilities. Any transportation of heavy construction equipment and/or materials which requires use of oversized-transport vehicles on State highways will require a Caltrans transportation permit. We recommend large size truck trips be limited to off-peak commute periods.

If you have any questions, please contact project coordinator Jan Yonan, at jan.yonan@dot.ca.gov and refer to GTS# 07-LA-2024-04630.

Sincerely,

Anthony Higgins

Anthony Higgins
Acting LDR/CEQA Branch Chief

Cc: State Clearinghouse