

California Department of Transportation

DISTRICT 12
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November 15, 2024

Ms. Ann Wu
Principal Planner
City of Irvine
1 Civic Center Place
Irvine, CA 92606

File: LDR/CEQA
SCH: 2024100742
12-ORA-2024-02670
SR 133, PM 13.294

Dear Ms. Wu,

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the review of the Notice of Preparation for the Gateway Village Project for the City of Irvine. The mission of Caltrans is to provide a safe and reliable transportation network that serves all people and respects the environment.

The project proposes the development of approximately 1,360 two- to three-story homes, including both attached and detached configurations, with an average site density between 10 and 35 units per acre. Regional access to the site is provided by State Route 241 (SR 241), State Route 133 (SR 133), State Route 261 (SR 261), and Interstate 5 (I-5). Caltrans is a commenting agency on this project and has the following comments:

1. Potential impacts to traffic safety and operations on State Highway System Facilities (mainline, on/off ramps, intersections) are anticipated. Please provide a Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) based Traffic Impact Study (TIS) for this project in the Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

Caltrans' primary review focus for a land use project's impact is now VMT. Please refer to OPR's Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation Impacts in CEQA and Caltrans' Transportation Impact Study Guide for VMT assessment. Pursuant to SB 743, VMT is a required metric for transportation impact analysis per CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.3

For more information please review the following guidance:

Caltrans' Transportation Impact Study Guide:

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

OPR's Technical Advisory on Evaluating Transportation impacts in CEQA:

https://opr.ca.gov/docs/20190122-743_Technical_Advisory.pdf

2. Caltrans supports local developments that are consistent with State planning priorities intended to promote equity, strengthen the economy, protect the environment, and promote public and health safety. This can be achieved by promoting smart growth principles in projects which provide a diversity of housing choices and destinations accessible by active transportation (i.e. bicycle and pedestrian) and transit users.

New residential land use construction provides an opportunity to encourage a variety of travel choices. Please consider opportunities to increase active transportation and transit use through active transportation infrastructure to/from the project site (such as Complete Streets designs) and wayfinding directional signage to transit stops within the project vicinity and local roadways to encourage non-motorized modes and transit use. This may include safety measures such as physically separated sidewalks and bike lanes, pedestrian-oriented LED lighting, high-visibility continental crosswalk striping, raised crosswalks, refuge islands, wayfinding signage, and safe connections to existing and proposed bicycle facilities.

3. Caltrans encourages the design of Complete Streets that include high-quality pedestrian, bicycle, and transit facilities that are safe and comfortable for users of all ages and abilities. Complete Streets improvements promote regional connectivity, improve air quality, reduce congestion, promote improved first-/last-mile connections, and increase safety for all modes of transportation.

For more information, please review Caltrans DIB 89-02 (<https://dot.ca.gov/-/media/dot-media/programs/design/documents/dib-89-02-final-a11y.pdf>) when designing and implementing Class IV bikeways; consider HDM 1003.1 (CHAPTER 1000 (ca.gov)) when designing Class I bikeways.

4. For additional guidance on providing functional bike parking, see the attached "Essentials of Bike Parking" guidance created by the Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals (like to online PDF: <https://www.apbp.org/Publications>).

5. In preparation of the EIR, please include a discussion of any existing transit services including the connectivity to regional rail services from the nearest train stations provided by Metrolink and/or Amtrak Pacific Surfliner.
6. Caltrans encourages the City to continue coordination with the Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA) for opportunities to enhance multimodal transit strategies.
7. Please consider the opportunity to enhance Class II bikeway along Portola Parkway and Jeffrey Road.
8. Should any existing bike lanes need to be closed during construction, Caltrans recommends the use of "May Use Full Lane" (MUTCD R4-11) signage rather than "Share the Road" (W16-IP) signage to more clearly indicate to both drivers and bicyclists that bicyclists may ride in the center of the travel lane while the bike lane is closed.
9. Caltrans recognizes our responsibility to assist communities of color and underserved communities by removing barriers to provide a more equitable transportation system for all.

The Department firmly embraces racial equity, inclusion, and diversity. These values are foundational to achieving our vision of a cleaner, safer, and more accessible and more connected transportation system.

Please consider providing a discussion on equity and efforts to meet the City's Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) allocation per the California Department of Housing & Community Development (HCD).

Please continue to coordinate with Caltrans for any future developments that could potentially impact State transportation facilities. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Joseph Jamoralin at Joseph.Jamoralin@dot.ca.gov.

Sincerely,



Scott Shelley
Branch Chief, Local Development Review-Climate Change
Caltrans, District 12