

California Department of Transportation

DISTRICT 11
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December 5, 2024

11-IMP-111
Project ATLiS
EA/SCH #2024110237

Ms. Molly Cobbs
NEPA Document Manager
United States Department of Energy
1000 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20585

Dear Ms. Cobbs:

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process of the Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Project ATLiS located near State Routes 111 (SR-111) near Calipatria, California. The mission of Caltrans is to provide a safe and reliable transportation network that serves all people and respects the environment. The Local Development Review (LDR) Program reviews land use projects and plans to ensure consistency with our mission and state planning priorities.

Safety is one of Caltrans' strategic goals. Caltrans strives to make the year 2050 the first year without a single death or serious injury on California's roads. We are striving for more equitable outcomes for the transportation network's diverse users. To achieve these ambitious goals, we will pursue meaningful collaboration with our partners. We encourage the implementation of new technologies, innovations, and best practices that will enhance the safety on the transportation network. These pursuits are both ambitious and urgent, and their accomplishment involves a focused departure from the status quo as we continue to institutionalize safety in all our work.

Caltrans is committed to prioritizing projects that are equitable and provide meaningful benefits to historically underserved communities, to ultimately improve transportation accessibility and quality of life for people in the communities we serve.

We look forward to working with the U.S. Department of Energy in areas where the agency and Caltrans have joint jurisdiction to improve the transportation network and connections between various modes of travel, with the goal of improving the experience of those who use the transportation system.

Caltrans has the following comments:

Traffic Impact Analysis

- Please provide a Vehicle Miles of Traveled (VMT) analysis, if available.
- Please provide the referenced 2021 traffic study.
- Provide additional details and schedule for the new turn lane improvements at SR-111 and McDonald Road and the paving of McDonald Road.

Hauling/Traffic Control Plan

Caltrans has discretionary authority with respect to highways under its jurisdiction and may, upon application and if good cause appears, issue a special permit to operate or move a vehicle or combination of vehicles or special mobile equipment of a size or weight of vehicle or load exceeding the maximum limitations specified in the California Vehicle Code. The Caltrans Transportation Permits Issuance Branch is responsible for the issuance of these special transportation permits for oversize/overweight vehicles on the State Highway network.

Additional information is provided online at:

<http://www.dot.ca.gov/trafficops/permits/index.html>

A Traffic Control Plan is to be submitted to Caltrans District 11, including the interchanges at SR-111/McDonald Road, at least 30 days prior to the start of any construction. Traffic shall not be unreasonably delayed. The plan shall also outline suggested detours to use during closures, including routes and signage.

Potential impacts to the highway facilities (SR-111) and traveling public from the detour, demolition and other construction activities should be discussed and addressed before work begins.

Environmental

We recommend that this project specifically identifies and assesses potential impacts caused by the project or impacts from mitigation efforts that occur within Caltrans Right-of-Way that includes impacts to the natural environment, infrastructure (highways/roadways/on- and off-ramps) and appurtenant features (lighting/signs/guardrail/slopes). Caltrans is interested in the analysis for any work identified in Caltrans' Right-of-Way (R/W) and any additional mitigation measures identified for the Final Environmental Document.

We would appreciate meeting with you to discuss the elements of the Environmental Document that Caltrans will use for our subsequent environmental compliance.

Please coordinate with Caltrans regarding the weight of the trucks on the route. Should the trucks be heavy, additional pavement may be required.

Design

Caltrans project PID Number 1118000099 EA 11-43030 has a project footprint that runs past the proposed project on SR-111. This project involves guardrail and rumble strip replacement, in addition to Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) upgrades.

Freight Planning

Once paved, McDonald Road will provide main access to this facility. We need to address any necessary improvements at the intersection of SR-111 and McDonald Road. The project proponent must coordinate with Caltrans to implement any necessary traffic controls or temporary detours during the paving of McDonald Road. Please clarify if there are any proposed Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategies during the construction of the site or when the site is in operation. Please clarify how the project will meet the goals of the Imperial County Air Pollution Control District Community Air Monitoring Plan (CAMP) and Community Emissions Reduction Program (CERP) for this area.

Right-of-Way

Per Business and Profession Code 8771, perpetuation of survey monuments by a licensed land surveyor is required, if they are being destroyed by any construction.

Any work performed within Caltrans' R/W will require discretionary review and approval by Caltrans and an encroachment permit will be required for any work within the Caltrans' R/W prior to construction.

Additional information regarding encroachment permits may be obtained by visiting the website at <https://dot.ca.gov/programs/traffic-operations/ep>. Projects with the following:

- require a Caltrans Encroachment Permit.
- have completed the Caltrans Local Development Review process.
- have an approved environmental document.

are to submit documents for QMAP process via email to D11.QMAP.Permits@dot.ca.gov. Early coordination with Caltrans is strongly advised for all encroachment permits.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Mark McCumsey, LDR Coordinator, at (619) 985-4957 or by e-mail sent to mark.mccumsey@dot.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Kimberly D. Dodson

KIMBERLY D. DODSON, GISP
Branch Chief
Local Development Review