

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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a California Way of Life*

December 20, 2024

Craig Hensley, Community Development Director
City of Duarte
1600 Huntington Drive
Duarte, CA 91010

RE: Andres Duarte School Project–
Notice of Preparation (NOP)
SCH #2024110837
GTS #07-LA-2024-04694
LA-210/PM 36.65

Dear Craig Hensley,

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the above referenced project. The Project proposes the demolition or relocation of the existing school buildings and park structures and the construction of multi-family residential buildings and redevelopment of the public park on the site. The Project site is currently developed with two schools (Andres Duarte Academy and Mount Olive Innovation and Technology High School [MIT]) and Otis Gordon Sports park. Along with new recreational facilities, the redeveloped public park would include 59 parking spaces and two bike racks. The residential portion of the proposed project would involve the construction of 169 townhome residential units within 25 multi-family residential buildings and one leasing office/recreation building. The residential portion of the proposed project would include 377 total parking spaces.

After reviewing the NOP, Caltrans has the following comments:

As the Project is anticipated to induce Vehicles Miles Traveled (VMT), Caltrans requests that the Lead Agency confirm that the trips of personal vehicles will not add queuing to the extent that ramp storage exceeds onto the mainline and creates a speed differential concern. A speed differential concern arises when there is a significant difference in speed between vehicles on the road, thus creating a risk of higher severity collisions.

We would like to see a Transportation Impact Study due to the potential that vehicles queuing on Interstate Route 210 may lead to a safety concern. In this Study, please

address the following locations:

- a) Westbound Route 210 off-ramp to Irwindale Ave
- b) Eastbound Route 210 off-ramp to Buena Vista
- c) Intersection of Huntington Drive/ (Mt. Olive Dr/Roadway from/to Route 605)

Given that the Project generates pedestrians and bicyclists' traffic, the Transportation Impact Study should address Multi-Modal Access and Conflict Analysis, along with Complete Street Access and connectivity elements such as sidewalks, American Disability Act (ADA) curb ramps, bike lanes, high visibility crosswalks, Accessible Pedestrian Signals (APS), and Leading Pedestrian Interval (LPI) traffic signal upgrades where needed. Additionally, the Transportation Impact Study should include an analysis of potential hazards due to geometric design features at the Project Site or in the Project Study area, and an analysis for Inadequate Emergency Access.

Caltrans acknowledges and supports development that ultimately helps California to meet its climate, transportation, and livability goals. However, due to the amount of parking and auto-oriented site plan, the Project is designed in a way that potentially induces demand for additional vehicle trips in the surrounding area. Reducing the amount of excess parking spaces is recommended whenever possible as research examining 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. With the nearest Metro rail station on the A Line located a mile southwest from the Project site, we recommend the implementation of Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategies as an alternative to building an excessive amount of parking. The City is encouraged to consider how the Project can implement measures towards promoting transit options, such as providing active frontage and landscaping against the sidewalk to provide a barrier for pedestrians and engage Californians in shifting towards transit-oriented communities.

Regarding bicycle and pedestrian facilities shown in the site plans and renderings from the NOP, Caltrans recommends upgrading bike lanes to a Class II or Class IV facilities whenever possible to provide the highest level of safety for bicyclists. On the Central Avenue and Crestfield Drive rendering, Caltrans recommends designating a new continental crosswalk perpendicular to the existing one, as the sidewalk on the south side of Central Avenue will remain intact and appears to be an active pedestrian walkway. It is advised that the City consider installing traffic calming features along Central Avenue to reduce travel speeds to below 35 miles per hour. The most effective methods to reduce pedestrian and bicyclist exposure to vehicles is through physical design and geometrics. These methods include the construction of physically separated facilities such as Class IV bike lanes, wide sidewalks, pedestrian refuge islands, landscaping, street furniture, and reductions in crossing distances through roadway narrowing. Given the bike route's proximity to the public park, the City is advised to provide more than two bike racks to

accommodate visitors who choose to travel to the park by bicycle. It is highly recommended that the bike parking facilities be spread around the site to provide maximum convenience.

Any transportation of heavy construction equipment and/or materials that requires the use of oversized transport vehicles on State Highways will require a Caltrans transportation permit. Caltrans recommends limiting construction traffic to off-peak periods to minimize the potential impact on State facilities. Construction truck loads should be covered with a tarpaulin cover. 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. We look forward to the coordination of our efforts to ensure potential impacts to the highway facilities and traveling public are discussed and addressed before work begins.

If you have any questions, please contact project coordinator Frances Duong, at frances.duong@dot.ca.gov and refer to GTS #07-LA-2024-04694.

Sincerely,



Anthony Higgins
Acting LDR/CEQA Branch Chief

Cc: State Clearinghouse