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Governor's Office of Planning & Research

APR 27 2020

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

April 24, 2020

Ms. Jocelyn Swain
City of Lancaster
44933 Fern Avenue
Lancaster, CA 93534

RE: Lancaster Health District Master Plan
NOP (Revised)
Vic. LA-14/PM R67.98-R66.75
SCH # 2017051076
GTS # LA-2017-03223AL-NOP

Dear Ms. Swain:

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the above referenced project. The City of Lancaster is proposing to develop the Lancaster Health District Master Plan. The Master Plan would allow for the development of 1,600 residential units; 259,000 sf of hotel uses (180 rooms) and a 70,000 sf conference center; 740,000 sf of commercial/office space; 480,000 sf of continuum of care facilities; 791,000 sf of acute care facilities including replacing the existing hospital with a new 700,000 sf facility (380 beds) and 12,000 sf plant facility; 249,800 sf of subacute care facilities and a 385,000 sf parking car garage with 1,100 parking spaces.

The mission of Caltrans is to provide a safe, sustainable, integrated and efficient transportation system to enhance California's economy and livability. Senate Bill 743 (2013) has codified into CEQA law and mandated that CEQA review of transportation impacts of proposed development be modified by using Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) as the primary metric in identifying transportation impacts for all future development projects. You may reference to The Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) for more information.

<http://opr.ca.gov/ceqa/updates/guidelines/>

Caltrans is aware of challenges that the region faces in identifying viable solutions to alleviating congestion on State and Local facilities. With limited room to expand vehicular capacity, this development should incorporate multi-modal and complete streets transportation elements that will actively promote alternatives to car use and better manage existing parking assets. Prioritizing and allocating space to efficient

modes of travel such as bicycling and public transit can allow streets to transport more people in a fixed amount of right-of-way.

As a reminder, Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) will be the standard transportation analysis metric in CEQA for land use projects after the July 1, 2020 statewide implementation date. Agencies may opt-in prior to that date.

Caltrans supports the implementation of complete streets and pedestrian safety measures such as road diets and other traffic calming measures. Please note the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) recognizes the road diet treatment as a proven safety countermeasure, and the cost of a road diet can be significantly reduced if implemented in tandem with routine street resurfacing.

Overall, the EIR should include Transportation Impact Study (TIS) to ensure all modes are served well by planning and development activities. This includes reducing single occupancy vehicle trips, ensuring safety, reducing vehicle miles traveled, supporting accessibility, and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

We encourage the Lead Agency to evaluate the potential of Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategies and Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) applications in order to better manage the transportation network, as well as transit service and bicycle or pedestrian connectivity improvements.

For additional TDM options, please refer to the Federal Highway Administration's *Integrating Demand Management into the Transportation Planning Process: A Desk Reference* (Chapter 8). The reference is available online at:

<http://www.ops.fhwa.dot.gov/publications/fhwahop12035/fhwahop12035.pdf>

One of Caltrans' safety concerns is the potential traffic conflict on the State facilities such that Avenue K has the potential for queuing vehicles upstream on SR-14 which can create a significant speed differential and increase the conflicts at that intersection. Currently, the state facilities are operating at or near capacity during the peak hours. Any additional trips may cause potential rear-end accident. When this large project is at built-out condition, many project traffic and cumulative trips would assign to the state facilities, traffic analysis should include queuing analysis to address safety issues to comply with CEQA. We recommend following to be included in the traffic analysis.

1. Caltrans requests information regarding the assignment of direct and cumulative trips to state facilities in the project vicinity.

2. The impact study should include the potential traffic conflict impact of the added traffic volumes to SR-14 and the on- and off-ramps from Avenue J to Avenue K.
3. The project proponent may use a 95 percentile to obtain queue length for a queuing analysis. To calculate the baseline condition for total queue length on off-ramps, measure the distance from the intersection to the gore point. Caltrans recommends that any queuing on an off-ramp beyond 85% of this total length be considered a significant impact for direct or cumulative impacts. If Synchro software is used to calculate queue length, then actual signal timing must be used for existing condition as a based condition.
4. In the event that the project proponent finds a significant impact to an intersection, an Intersection Control Evaluation (ICE) should be prepared as an initial step of an intersection-improvement project.
5. If an impact is identified, Caltrans recommends consideration of the following potential traffic conflict improvement measures:
 - a. Safety sign/Yield Sign, delineation
 - b. Pavement markings
 - c. ADA ramps, pedestrian sidewalk
 - d. Ramp metering
 - e. Intersection control, signal optimization
 - f. Ramp/lane widening. While ramp or lane widening is a potential improvement measure, this measure should be considered as a last resort after first considering measures (a) through (e) above.
 - g. Please note that the above is a non-exclusive list of potential improvement measures. The project proponent should consider additional feasible measures.
6. The project proponent may pay 100% of the direct impact and/or fair-share contribution (i.e., a fee program) with cumulative impacts.

A discussion of mitigation measures appropriate to alleviate anticipated traffic impacts should be presented in the traffic study. Any mitigation involving transit or Transportation Demand Management (TDM) is encouraged and should be justified to reduce VMT and greenhouse gas emissions. Such measures are critical to facilitating efficient site access. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Mr. Alan Lin the project coordinator at (213) 897-8391 and refer to GTS # LA-2017-03223AL-NOP.

Sincerely,



MIYA EDMONSON
IGR/CEQA Branch Chief

cc: Scott Morgan, State Clearinghouse