

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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Making Conservation
a California Way of Life.

July 9, 2019

Mr. Mike Marshall
Santa Clarita, City of
23290 Valencia Boulevard
Santa Clarita, CA 91355

Governor's Office of Planning & Research
JUL 15 2019
STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

RE: Placerita Meadows Development
Project – Notice of Preparation
(NOP)
SCH # 2019060009
GTS # 07-LA-2019-02556
LA-5/PM: R 49.807

Dear Mr. Mike Marshall:

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the above-mentioned Notice of Preparation (NOP). The proposed project would develop 310 two-story, single-family, detached homes, with related infrastructure, open space, trails, recreation, and landscape elements, on 93.56 acres of land in the Placerita Canyon area of Santa Clarita, CA. The residential lot sizes would range in size from 2,500 to 4,500 square feet. Homes would be clustered in three neighborhoods within a 55-acre rectangular area comprising a majority of the project site, bordered by Railroad Avenue on the west, 12th and 13th Streets on the south, a Metropolitan Water District easement on the east, and Placerita Creek on the north. Several mature oak trees located within the proposed development area would be preserved in place, in accordance with City regulations. Approximately 38 acres of land in the northern portion of the project site would remain open space with the opportunity for hiking and equestrian trail connections in the Placerita Creek area. The project site is located approximately one-half mile from the Jan Heidt Metro link Station and the Newhall Community Center.

After reviewing the Notice of Preparation Caltrans has the following comments:

- Please include traffic analysis with the proposed Environmental Impact Report (EIR). Because of this project's size, location, and potential impact to State facilities, Caltrans suggests the proposed Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) include the following areas of interest:

- Please provide analysis of the project's impact to the State Highway System and address the added traffic volumes to the on/off-ramps of State Route 14 (SR-14) and Interstate 5 (I-5), specifically.

- Caltrans recommends that Highway Capacity Manual (HCM) methodology be used when assessing the impact a project may have on the State Highway System. For a traffic impact study of freeway mainline, weave, merge and diverge segments, the methodologies in Chapter 12, 13, and 14 of the Highway Capacity Manual (HCM) 6th edition are limited to under saturated flow conditions. When a freeway facility has oversaturated conditions, Chapter 10 is recommended to be used to determine a more precise density. It is acknowledged that there are limitations of the HCM methodology and it is recommended to use a traffic simulation model for the analysis.

The impact is considered to be significant, if the traffic generated by the project (a) causes one or more freeway segment's demand to exceed capacity (congested flow); or (b) when the segment is already congested, causes an increase in the demand/capacity ratio of greater than 1%.

Impacts to off-ramps are considered significant if the traffic generated by the project causes queuing that: (a) exceeds 85% of the off-ramp's storage capacity; or (b) when an auxiliary lane is present, exceeds the lesser of one-half the length of auxiliary lane or 1,000 feet.

When analyzing intersections please consider utilizing Synchro 10. Also, for intersection analysis, instead of using signal timing optimization for matching existing field conditions, please use actual traffic signal timing.

Caltrans is moving towards replacing Level of Service (LOS) with Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) when evaluating traffic impact. For any future project we encourage the Lead Agency to integrate transportation and land use in a way that reduces VMT and Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions by facilitating the provision of more proximate goods and services to shorten trip lengths and achieve a high level of non-motorized travel and transit use.

As required by SB 743, Caltrans recommends the Lead Agency develop a verifiable performance-based Vehicle Miles Travelled (VMT) criteria.

Further information included for your consideration;

Caltrans seeks to promote safe, accessible multimodal transportation. Methods to reduce pedestrian and bicyclist exposure to vehicles improve safety by lessening the time that the user is in the likely path of a motor vehicle. These methods include the construction of physically separated facilities such as sidewalks, raised medians, refuge islands, and off-road paths and trails, or a reduction in crossing distances through roadway narrowing.

Caltrans recommends the project to consider the use of methods such as, but not limited to, pedestrian and bicyclist warning signage, flashing beacons, crosswalks, signage and striping, be used to indicate to motorists that they should expect to see and yield to pedestrians and bicyclists. Visual indication from signage can be reinforced by road design features such as lane widths, landscaping, street furniture, and other design elements.

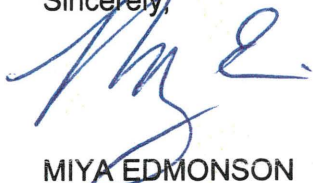
As a reminder, any transportation of heavy construction equipment and/or materials which requires use of oversized-transport vehicles on State highways will need a Caltrans

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transportation permit. We recommend large size truck trips be limited to off-peak commute periods.

We look forward to reviewing this project's future EIR and will provide additional comments at that time, if warranted. If you have any questions, please contact Reece Allen, the project coordinator, at reece.allen@dot.ca.gov, and refer to GTS # 07-LA-2019-02556

Sincerely,



MIYA EDMONSON
IGR/CEQA Branch Chief
cc: Scott Morgan, State Clearinghouse