

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

DIVISION OF TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

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Governor's Office of Planning & Research



*Making Conservation
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MAY 13 2020**STATE CLEARINGHOUSE**

May 13, 2020

RE: Draft Environmental
Impact Report for the Valley Rail
Sacramento Extension Project
SCH # 2019090306

Mr. Kevin Sheridan
Director of Capital Projects
San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission
949 East Channel Street
Stockton, CA 95202

Valley Rail Sacramento Extension Project – Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR)

Dear Mr. Sheridan:

We thank you for providing California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) the opportunity to review and comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the Valley Rail Sacramento Extension Project (Project) proposed by the San Joaquin Regional Rail Commission (SJRRRC). Under the Project, SJRRRC and San Joaquin Joint Powers Authority (SJJPA) are jointly proposing to implement Altamont Commuter Express (ACE) and Amtrak San Joaquins passenger rail service between Stockton and Sacramento with further connections to San Jose, Ceres, and Bakersfield. The proposed Project spans San Joaquin and Sacramento Counties. SJRRRC and SJJPA propose to upgrade tracks within the existing Union Pacific Railroad (UPRR) Sacramento Subdivision right-of-way (R/W) and construct six new stations along the alignment.

Specific Comments

1. The Midtown Sacramento Station is proposed to be constructed near Q Street between 19th Street and 20th Street in Sacramento. W and X Streets are parallel arterials and provide supplemental capacity to US-50. Caltrans anticipates the increase in frequency of rail service may introduce additional vehicle trips to the intersections of W St./20th St. and X St./19th St. Caltrans recommends a queuing analysis for W St./20th St. and X St./19th St. intersections to identify potential queue length concerns.
2. Page 3.16-11: "Sidewalks are provided along both sides of the Arden Garden Connector/Arden Way, but are missing in many locations along local streets closer to

the station (e.g., Acoma Street, Colfax Street) because of the largely industrial nature of the area. Marked crosswalks are generally provided across all roads at major signalized intersections, but may be missing at some locations (e.g., west leg at Arden Way/Colfax Street). Crosswalks are generally unmarked at other locations, including intersections closer to the station.”

Based on the words we have bolded above from Page 3.16-11, we offer the following concerns:

- Please ensure there is a continuity of sidewalks for pedestrians. The continuity of the sidewalks is important for pedestrians, especially disabled and elderly pedestrians.
 - Please ensure major crosswalks are marked and ADA compliant.
3. Caltrans highly recommends a transportation impact study (TIS) to include specific analysis for State Route (SR) 12 at the two proposed Lodi Station alternatives. The following are specifics to include in the analysis:
- The intersection of SR-12 with the proposed new driveway east of the railroad tracks and the existing intersection of SR-12 and N. Devries Road must be analyzed for the existing traffic volumes and existing plus the proposed Project traffic volumes. Please provide recommended mitigation to accommodate traffic turning into and out of the two driveways that the proposed Project will generate.
 - The TIS must calculate the storage lengths for all left-turns and right-turns into and out of the two intersections mentioned in Comment 3, the previous bullet.
 - The TIS must include AM and PM peak-hour trip generation for both proposed Lodi Station alternatives.
 - Due to the proximity of the proposed full-access driveway on SR-12 east of the railroad tracks, this proposed Project must mitigate the Project's impact by providing coordination between the proposed traffic signal timing and the railroad pre-emptions activity.
 - The TIS must evaluate and establish the need for a traffic signal at the intersection of SR-12 and N. Devries Road.

- A Traffic Signal Warrant Study must be completed to verify if a traffic signal is needed on SR-12 at the new intersection with the train station driveway.
 - Please see California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) [Part 4, Highway Traffic Signals](https://dot.ca.gov/-/media/dot-media/programs/traffic-operations/documents/ca-mutcd/rev-5/camutcd2014-part4-rev5.pdf) for more information regarding signal warrants. Refer to the following at <https://dot.ca.gov/-/media/dot-media/programs/traffic-operations/documents/ca-mutcd/rev-5/camutcd2014-part4-rev5.pdf>
 - The Traffic Signal Warrants Form can be found on Page 841 in Part 4, Highway Traffic Signals.
- 4. SJRRC should coordinate and collaborate with local agencies and transit operators to ensure Stockton and Lodi have adequate bus connectivity to the Lodi Station.
- 5. SJRRC should coordinate and collaborate with San Joaquin County and Caltrans in identifying possible routes to the Lodi Station with the appropriate amenities to encourage the use of bicycles and alternative modes of transportation.
- 6. Caltrans suggests the inclusion of secure bicycle parking facilities at the Lodi Station.

Hydraulics

1. The proposed Project may potentially result in an increase in peak surface water runoff due to construction and an increase in impermeable surface area. Peak runoff discharge for the 10- and 100-year storm events to the State's highway R/W and to Caltrans' highway drainage facilities must be reduced to current or below the pre-construction levels. This may be accomplished through the implementation of storm water management Best Management Practices (i.e. detention/retention ponds or basins, sub-surface galleries, on-site storage and/or infiltration ditches, etc.). Please refer to Caltrans' [Hydraulics and Stormwater](https://dot.ca.gov/programs/design/hydraulics-stormwater) website for additional guidance for Best Management Practices at <https://dot.ca.gov/programs/design/hydraulics-stormwater>.
2. Once installed, the property owner must properly maintain these systems. The proponent/developer may be held liable for future damages due to impacts for which adequate mitigation was not undertaken or sustained.

In addition, runoff from the proposed Project that will enter the State's highway R/W and/or Caltrans drainage facilities must meet all regional water quality control board water quality standards prior to entering the State's highway R/W or Caltrans drainage facilities.

3. Appropriate storm water quality Best Management Practices may be applied to ensure that runoff from the site meets the regional water quality control board's standards (i.e., water is free of oils, greases, metals, sands, sediment, etc.). Once installed, the property owner must properly maintain these systems in perpetuity.
4. For the encroachment permit application, provide drainage plans and calculations for the pre and post 10- and 100-year peak runoff for both quantities and velocities, and water quality treatment for all discharge to the State's highway R/W and to Caltrans' highway drainage facilities.

Biology

There are several occurrences of State [Threatened Swainson's Hawk](#) protected under the California Endangered Species Act (CESA) near the site of Lodi Station Northern Alternative.

For more information please refer to the following website:

<https://wildlife.ca.gov/Conservation/Birds/Swainson-Hawks>

CESA falls under Fish and Game Code 2050 – 2089.26. Special habitat requirements for Swainson's Hawks include large trees and agricultural fields which may be used for foraging. Specific impacts to these habitats and any proposed mitigation will need to be coordinated with California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW). Any large construction impacts in this area will need to take this species into consideration.

This species is not a federally listed species so federal laws under the Federal Endangered Species Act (FESA) do not apply. However, raptors are also protected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act, which is a federal law. If this action has a federal nexus, which are typically tied to federal dollars or a federal permit then federal laws will apply.

Encroachment Permit

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 Caltrans R/W prior to construction. As part of the encroachment permit process, the applicant must provide an approved final environmental document including California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) determination addressing any environmental impacts within the Caltrans R/W, and any corresponding technical studies. To apply for an encroachment permit, a completed encroachment permit application, environmental documentation, and five sets of plans clearly indicating Caltrans R/W must be submitted. Please refer to Caltrans Encroachment Permit website at <https://dot.ca.gov/programs/traffic-operations/ep/applications>.

Mr. Kevin Sheridan
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Please continue to keep Caltrans informed of the proposed Valley Rail Sacramento Extension and any future developments. Should you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact Bo Wu at bo.wu@dot.ca.gov.

Sincerely,



CHRISTIAN BUSHONG, Branch Chief
Headquarters, Local Development-Intergovernmental Review

c: Scott Morgan, State Clearinghouse
Doug Adams, Caltrans District 3 LD-IGR Coordinator
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Carie Battistone, California Department of Fish and Wildlife