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Making Conservation a California Way of Life

August 25, 2025

Kiersten Turner
Major Projects Section
Department of City Planning
City of Los Angeles
221 N. Figueroa Street, Suite 1350
Los Angeles, CA 90012

RE: Buena Vista Project
SCH # 2021070577
Vic. LA-110/PM24.44 to 25.08
GTS # LA-2021-04853-DEIR

Dear Kiersten Turner:

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the above-referenced environmental document. The Project is to construct a mixed-use development consisting of 986 residential units, including 200 affordable units; 15,000 square feet of retail; 23,800 square feet of restaurant; and 116,610 square feet of outdoor trellis/overhang areas on an existing approximately 8.08-acre site. In total, the Project would include up to 1,245,536 square feet of floor area, and approximately one acre of publicly accessible open space. All existing structures on the Project Site would be removed.

The mission of Caltrans is to provide a safe and reliable transportation network that serves all people and respects the environment. 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. As a reminder, all environmental document should include Vehicle Miles Traveled. You may reference the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR) for more information:

https://opr.ca.gov/ceqa/#guidelines-updates

As part of the Project Design Features, TR-PDF-1 establishes a Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) to be prepared and approved prior to construction. The CTMP will guide construction activities to minimize traffic, safety, and access impacts on the surrounding community. Measures include designated haul routes and staging areas, detours, bilingual advance notifications, restrictions on worker parking in nearby streets, and temporary traffic controls on North Broadway and Spring Street. The plan also calls for safe pedestrian and bicycle detours, off-peak scheduling of deliveries, coordination with Metro and LADOT for transit and parking adjustments, and a dedicated construction manager with posted contact information for public inquiries.

Also included as a Project Design Feature, TR-PDF-2 requires a Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Program that goes beyond the City's baseline ordinance to reduce long-term vehicle trips. The program caps total parking at 1,477 spaces (fewer than required by code), provides widened sidewalks and landscape corridors along North Broadway, and installs pedestrian enhancements such as new crosswalks and a signalized beacon connecting to the Portola Trail. It further improves transit infrastructure by coordinating upgrades to adjacent bus stops with benches, shelters, lighting, and signage, and includes secure bicycle parking to encourage active transportation.

The Project is expected to generate an increase in pedestrian, bicycle, and transit activity. Given the site's proximity to local bus and rail services, as well as nearby commercial and cultural centers, the location is well suited to encourage non-automobile trips and enhance access to additional public transit routes. The Project also proposes substantial improvements to the surrounding pedestrian network, including wider sidewalks, landscaping along project frontages, and a new signalized pedestrian crosswalk, all of which will contribute to a safer and more comfortable environment for all users. Based on the information provided, the anticipated increase in pedestrian, bicycle, and transit activity would not exceed the capacity of existing or planned facilities serving these modes.

The Project Site is located within the Central Area Planning Commission (Central APC), which has VMT impact threshold of an average household VMT per capita of 6.0 and an average work VMT per employee of 7.6. The total Project would generate an average household VMT per capita of 4.8 and a work VMT per employee of 7.2 which are below the Central APC impact thresholds. Caltrans concurs that the Project would not result in a significant VMT impact and no mitigation measures are required at this time.

The EIR's freeway safety analysis concludes that ramp queues are not expected to exceed available storage or spill back to the mainline under project buildout conditions, and impacts are therefore considered less than significant. Caltrans requests clarification on whether the queuing analysis incorporated actual signal timing for all conditions, and why a freeway off-ramp queuing safety analysis was not performed for existing conditions. This information is necessary to fully understand the baseline against which future impacts were evaluated.

Any transportation of heavy construction equipment and/or materials that require the use of oversized transport vehicles on State highways will need a Caltrans transportation permit. Any large-size truck trips be limited to off-peak commute periods for the construction phase and operation phase. Construction truck loads should be covered with a tarpaulin cover. Storm water run-off is a sensitive issue for Los Angeles County. Please be mindful that projects should be designed to discharge clean run-off water.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Mr. Alan Lin, the project coordinator, at (213) 269-1124 and refer to GTS # LA-2021-04853-DEIR.

Sincerely,

Miya Edmonson

MIYA EDMONSON
LDR/CEQA Branch Chief

email: State Clearinghouse