California Department of Transportation

DISTRICT 12
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January 12, 2026

Mr. Arlen Beck
Senior Planner
City of Orange
300 E. Chapman Ave
Orange, CA. 92866

File: LDR/CEQA
SCH: 2025120089
12-ORA-2025-03002
I-5; PM: 34.595

Dear Mr. Beck,

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the review of the Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND) for the Orange Westside Linear Park Project for the City of Orange. The proposed park project will be developed along the west bank of the Santa Ana River and its adjacent Santa Ana River Trail (SART). The park is designed as an interface between park goers and bikers passing by on the SART. The park will provide a combination of educational, or passive uses with proposed amenities that include furnishings integrated into the landscape, educational/interpretative signage, and public art on display. Planned amenities will include a monument sign, trash cans, tables and benches, drinking fountains and water bottle stations, shade canopies, a fitness area, and a skate plaza. No onsite parking will be provided so users would mainly be pedestrians and bicyclists using the SART. The proposed project is a small linear park proposed along the Santa Ana River trail along the west bank of the river. It will require limited or minimal grading or earthwork to prepare the site for installation of the various recreational facilities planned for the park. In addition, once installed, use of the park will be of relatively low intensity since it has no onsite parking or restrooms, and park users can only access it as pedestrians or bicyclists from Chapman Avenue and the Santa Ana River trail. There will be no associated daily vehicular traffic and maintenance activities will only generate 1-2 trips per month.

The project site is located in the City of Orange along the west side of the Santa Ana River on County of Orange Flood Control property in the southwestern portion of the City. The City is located in northern Orange County, north of the county seat of Santa Ana, and just southeast of Anaheim. An existing bike trail defines the eastern boundary of the project site and follows the Santa Ana River

Channel in a north-south direction. The site is bounded to the north by Chapman Avenue, to the south by the Interstate 5 Freeway (I-5), to the east by the Santa Ana River Trail (SART), and vacant land to the west.
Interstate 5 is owned and operated by Caltrans. Therefore, Caltrans is a commenting agency on this project, and has the following comments:

1. Caltrans recognizes there is a strong link between transportation and land use. Development can have a significant impact on traffic and congestion on State transportation facilities. In particular, the pattern of land use can affect both local vehicle miles traveled and the number of trips. Caltrans supports collaboration with local agencies to work towards a safe, functional, interconnected, multi-modal transportation network integrated through applicable "smart growth" type land use planning and policies.

2. Any work performed within Caltrans right-of-way (R/W) will require discretionary review and approval by Caltrans and an encroachment permit will be required for any work within the Caltrans R/W prior to construction. Prior to submitting to Caltrans Permit's branch, applicant should fill out Applicant's Checklist to Determine Applicable Review Process (QMAP List) Form TR-0416 to determine if project oversight/coordination with Caltrans Project Manager is needed. Applicant must submit a signed Standard Encroachment Permit application form TR-0100 along with a deposit payable to Caltrans. Deposit amount will be dependent on when the application is submitted. Public corporations are legally exempt from encroachment permit fees. However, contractors working for public corporations are not exempt from fees. Please note that all utility work should be disclosed prior to permit submittal, and utility companies are to apply for separate permits for their corresponding work.

3. Project plans and traffic control plans must be stamped and signed by a licensed engineer. For all plans, including traffic control plans, Caltrans R/W lines should be clearly labeled, which include existing and proposed (if there are any changes to Caltrans R/W), the north arrow, the edge of pavement, and edge of the sidewalk, if applicable. When submitting the application, please include final Environmental Clearance Documentation, relevant design details including design exception approvals and construction and drainage plans, traffic control plans, traffic management plan and traffic impact study if proposed traffic delay of 30 minutes above normal recurring traffic delay is anticipated,

any Caltrans R/W certifications if needed, maintenance agreement as needed, shoring plans for any excavation 5-feet or more, ADA certification, and any letter of authorizations.

4. Please submit all applications and associated documents/plans via email to D12.Permits@dot.ca.gov until further notice. Caltrans Encroachment Permits will be transitioning to an online web portal base for all applications in Fall 2023. Further details to be announced on the Caltrans Encroachment Permits homepage. Additional information regarding encroachment permits may be obtained by contacting the Caltrans Permits Office at (657) 328-6246. For specific details on Caltrans Encroachment Permits procedure and any future updates regarding the application process and permit rates, please visit the Caltrans Encroachment Permits homepage at https://dot.ca.gov/programs/traffic-operations/ep.

Caltrans' mission is to improve lives and communities through transportation. Please continue to coordinate with Caltrans for any future developments that could potentially impact State transportation facilities. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Julie Lugaro at julie.lugaro@dot.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

for Julie Lugaro

Scott Shelley
Branch Chief,
Local Development Review - Climate Change - Transit Grants
Caltrans, District 12