California Department of Transportation

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October 15, 2026

Alfonso Hernandez
Acting Community Development Director
Community Development Department
City of Bell Gardens
7100 Garfield Avenue
Bell Gardens, CA 90201

RE: Land Use Element Amendment, Focused Zoning Code Amendment, Zone Change, and Objective Design Standards
SCH # 2026090977
Vic. LA-05, LA-710 Citywide
GTS # LA-2026-05143-MND

Dear Alfonso Hernandez:

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the above-referenced MND. The Project consists of targeted updates to several interrelated plans and land use regulations including: a General Plan Land Use Element Amendment; a General Plan Land Use Map Amendment; a Focused Zoning Code Amendment; Zone Change; and new Objective Design Standards. The Project proposes no new General Plan Land Use categories nor any changes to densities or intensities of any existing Land Use category, other than clarifications. The Project (adoption of policy documents and zoning amendments) does not specifically authorize the construction of any development nor indicate where or when specific development would occur.

The Project is a program-level update to existing plans and regulations and does not identify land uses, development intensities, or site-specific development potential. Accordingly, no plan-wide transportation impacts, including vehicle miles traveled (VMT) or transportation safety impacts, are anticipated at this time. If a future plan update such as a Housing Element, Circulation Element, or other component establishes land uses or development capacities, the City should evaluate and disclose the associated transportation and safety impacts at a program-level on the State facilities and may consult with Caltrans for additional guidance.

Future development would be subject to site plan review and approval during entitlement review and/or building permit applications. Caltrans promotes a safe, reliable, and environmentally responsible transportation network. Under Senate Bill 743, CEQA uses Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) as the primary metric for evaluating transportation impacts. When preparing environmental document for a specific project, please refer to the Governor's Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation (LCI).

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

As a reminder, VMT is the standard transportation analysis metric in CEQA for land use projects after July 1, 2020, which is the statewide implementation date.

Caltrans supports complete streets and pedestrian safety measures, including road diets and other traffic-calming strategies. The future environmental document should ensure that planning and development activities serve all travel modes, reduce single-occupancy vehicle trips and VMT, improve safety and accessibility, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Also, Caltrans has published the VMT-focused Transportation Impact Study Guide (TISG), dated May 20, 2020 and the Local Development Review (LDR) Safety Review Practitioner's Guidance, prepared in February 2024. You can review the SB 743 Implementation Resource at the following link:

https://dot.ca.gov/programs/sustainability/sb-743/resources

If you have any questions regarding program-level or project-specific transportation analyses involving State facilities, please contact Mr. Alan Lin, the project coordinator, at (213) 269-1124 and reference GTS # LA-2026-05143-MND.

Sincerely,

Alan Lin for

FRANCES DUONG
LDR Branch Chief

email: Governor's Office of Land Use and Climate Innovation (LCI)