

California Department of Transportation

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June 16, 2025

11-SD-905
PM 6.700
Southwest Village Specific Plan
DEIR/SCH#2004051076

Ms. Dawna Marshall
Planning Division
City of San Diego
1222 First Avenue, MS 501
San Diego, CA 92101

Dear Ms. Marshall:

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the development review process for the Southwest Village Specific Plan draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) located near State Route 905 (SR-905). Caltrans's mission is to improve lives and communities through transportation. Caltrans reviews land use projects and plans to ensure consistency with our mission and State transportation planning priorities.

Safety

Safety is one of Caltrans' strategic goals. Caltrans strives to make the year 2050 the first year without a single death or serious injury on California's roads. We strive for more equitable outcomes for the transportation network's diverse users. To achieve these ambitious goals, we will pursue meaningful collaboration with our partners. We encourage the implementation of new technologies, innovations, and best practices that will enhance the safety of the transportation network. These pursuits are ambitious and urgent, and their accomplishment involves a focused departure from the status quo as we continue to institutionalize safety in all our work.

Land Use and Smart Growth

Caltrans recognizes a strong link between transportation and land use. Development can significantly impact 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.

Caltrans is committed to prioritizing equitable projects that provide meaningful benefits to historically underserved communities. This will ultimately improve transportation accessibility and the quality of life for people in the communities we serve.

Broadband

Caltrans recognizes that teleworking and remote learning lessen the impacts of traffic on our roadways and surrounding communities. This reduces the amount of Vehicle Miles Travel (VMT) and decreases the amount of GHG and other pollutants. The availability of affordable and reliable, high-speed broadband is a key component in supporting travel demand management and reaching the state's transportation and climate action goals.

Noise

The applicant must be informed that in accordance with 23 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 772, Caltrans is not responsible for existing or future traffic noise impacts associated with the existing configuration of State Route (SR-905), and Interstate (I-805).

Traffic Analysis

In the August 2024 Local Analysis Report, page 7, Executive Summary, *Under Opening Year 2024 plus Project Phase 1a Conditions, findings include,*” Item number 2: The proposed additional general-purpose lane for the SR 905 (WB) westbound entrance ramp must comply with Highway Design Manual (HDM) Topic 504.3(d)(e) to meet merge taper into the main lanes. Please add this information to the mitigation sections on sheet 8, sheet 10, sheet 55 and other sheets that mentioned mention project mitigation. Please see screen shots below.

Add to the paragraph: The additional general-purpose lane for the SR-905 WB entrance must also comply with HDM Topic 504.3(d)(e) to meet merge taper into the main lanes.

at the start of Phase 1b. This is proposed in Phase 1b because it will take a couple of years to obtain permits from Caltrans to improve this intersection. Additionally, providing an interim fix by extending the existing NBL (through a restripe) in Phase 1a may be viewed by Caltrans as a throw away improvement and potentially rejected because the larger improvement will follow in Phase 1b. If both improvements are kept separate, then Phase 1a restripe may take 1-2 years. After the restripe, the Phase 1b NB dual left can take another 1-2 years, which means the dual lefts may require 3-4 years vs. skipping the interim restripe and instead proceeding with the dual lefts within 1-2 years, thus no improvements are proposed in Phase 1a.

Phase 1b improvements with a total of 699 dwelling units within Planning Areas 8-14 of VTM-1.

- 7) Prior to issuance of the first building permit in Phase 1b (201st dwelling unit), the Owner/Permittee shall assure by permit and bond the intersection reconfiguration of Caliente Ave/SR-905 WB Ramps to install a second northbound left turn lane (through re-striping on the bridge over SR-905 of the northbound number one through travel lane with 300 feet of storage to a trap left turn lane that in conjunction with the existing left turn lane will become the dual left turn lanes), widen and construct a second receiving lane to the westbound (WB) on-ramp, and upgrading the traffic controller to provide City current 2070 signal controller including software update and communications equipment, to the satisfaction of the City Engineer and Caltrans. These improvements shall be completed and operational prior to first occupancy of Phase 1b (201st dwelling unit). A concept drawing is included in Appendix N.

and ensure the merge taper to the freeway main lanes from the additional lane comply with HDM Topic 504.3(d)(e).



Otay Mesa Southwest Village VTM-1 PRJ-0614791 LMA

x

August 13, 2024

In the August 2024 Local Mobility Analysis Report, page 7, Executive Summary, *Under Opening Year 2024 plus Project Phase 1a Conditions, findings include,*” Item number 2:

The proposed construction of the northbound (NB) left turn lane and the receiving lane from SR-905 westbound (WB) entrance ramp, can be constructed simultaneously. However, if the construction needs to be phased, the WB entrance ramp general-

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purpose lane will need to be constructed prior to the addition of the northbound (NB) left turn lane for traffic operational purposes.

In the August 2024 Local Mobility Analysis Report, page 7, Executive Summary, *Under Opening Year 2024 plus Project Phase 1a Conditions, findings include,*” Item number 3:

Intersection of Caliente Ave/SR-905 Eastbound (EB) Ramps. The project traffic causes the intersection to degrade to LOS E in the AM peak hour; therefore, the Owner/Permittee proposes to upgrade the traffic control to provide City current 2070 signal controller.” Per Figure 27 (Opening Year 2024 plus Project Phases 1a, 1b & 1c Volumes) a total of 634 right-turn trips will be at the SR-905 EB exit ramp. This represents a high volume of right-turn traffic, resulting in the intersection level of service (LOS) degrading from LOS C to an unacceptable to LOS E, as indicated in the Local Mobility Analysis. Currently, the exit ramp only has a shared lane left/thru/right, which is insufficient to accommodate the over-capacity and increase right-turn demand generated by the project. This over-capacity condition will lead to traffic operational and safety issues and will require right turn-traffic improvements such as a dedicated right turn lane to the SR-905 EB exit ramp.

This will also be consistent with Section 7.2.5 “Project Traffic Effects”, Table 7 of the submitted traffic study for signalized intersection facility with no existing right turn-lane, which calls for the addition of a right-turn lane when project-generated traffic causes the total number of peak-hour right turn for a movement to exceed 500.

The synchro files - Intersection 3 at Caliente Ave & SR-905 EB Ramp: Queue results from the “PM + project phase 1a,1b,1c +Mitigation” scenario indicate a 1479-foot queue from the ramp limit line to the main lanes for 95th percentile queue. This exceeds the existing ramp storage of 1,200 feet and would potentially create safety issues at the ramp. Therefore, the addition of a right-turn lane is required.

Please update section 9, Mitigation Improvements, with Caltrans’ recent comments.

Construction of all project mitigations within the Caltrans Right-of-Way (R/W) will need to be completed prior to the start of Phase 1C.

Due to the complexity of the proposed mitigation on SR-905 Caliente Ave ramps, Caltrans strongly recommends early coordination.

It is recommended that the project provide a safety review that follows the Caltrans “Local Development Review (LDR) Safety Review Practitioner’s Guidance”

<https://dot.ca.gov/-/media/dot-media/programs/safety-programs/documents/202402-ldr-safety-review-practitioners-guidance-a11y.pdf>.

Intersection Safety and Operational Assessment Process (ISOAP) applies to new intersections or the major modification of existing intersections and local street interchanges (including to State conventional highways and expressways) on the State Highway System, including but not limited to the following:

- Connecting a new public road, private road, or high-volume (average daily traffic volumes of 1,000 or greater) driveway to a State highway or a new interchange to a freeway.
- Making major physical changes to intersection approaches, including at ramp terminals, such as adding a leg to an intersection or widening to provide an additional through or turn lane.
- For additional information, please reference the ISOAP Guide: <https://dot.ca.gov/-/media/dot-media/programs/traffic-operations/documents/isoap/20240910-isoap-process-info-guide--a11y.pdf>

Multimodal System Planning

Chapter 5.12 Traffic/Circulation, page 752 of Southwest Village Specific Plan Subsequent EIR document, *Table 5.12-4*

Project-level VMT Impact Findings (Series 14 ABM2+), states that the Southwest project will have a VMT significant impact to the region at the program and project level.

Caltrans recommends the following to reduce regional VMT impacts:

Please coordinate with Caltrans, SANDAG, and MTS to help connect the Southwest Village Specific Plan area to the regional transportation network, particularly transit.

The proposed Rapid 688 connects the San Ysidro Transit Center to Kearny Mesa and is a precursor to the planned [Purple Line](#) transit corridor. Please consider whether a bus stop for the route may be incorporated within the specific plan area.

Please review the Purple Line project that has potential alignments through the project area and may support transportation connectivity for the future increase in population, housing, and land development. The [Purple Line Conceptual Planning Study Executive Summary](#) is now available for review.

The [South Bay to Sorrento Comprehensive Multimodal Corridor Plan \(CMCP\)](#) outlines potential strategies to enhance travel choices, safety, and connectivity throughout the planned corridor. The CMCP's study area incorporates the Southwest Village

Specific Plan project area. Please review this resource for information that may benefit future development.

Please also see the CMCP's [Attachment A: Recommended Transportation Solution Set](#) for proposed projects that may align with the Southwest Village Specific Plan, and opportunities for mitigation for this project:

- 1310: San Ysidro Mobility Hub
- 817: Otay Mesa East Port of Entry Improvements
- 3: Purple Line
- 43/54: Rapid Route 638 (Iris Trolley to Otay Mesa via Otay, Airway Dr, SR 905 Corridor)/Rapid Route 950 (Otay Mesa POE to Imperial Beach via 905)

The SANDAG Regional Plan, formally known as the [San Diego Forward: The 2021 Regional Plan](#), is listed within the Draft SEIR for the Southwest Village Specific Plan. Please review for reference and consistency the SANDAG Regional Plan's following sections:

- a. [Appendix A: Transportation Projects, Programs, and Phasing](#)
- b. [Appendix D: Sustainable Communities Strategy Documentation and Related Information](#)
- c. [Appendix F: Regional Growth Forecast and Sustainable Communities Strategy Land Use Pattern](#)
- d. [Appendix K: Regional Housing Needs Assessment Plan](#)
- e. [Appendix L: Active Transportation](#)

Caltrans encourages the City of San Diego as the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) lead agency to utilize strategies that will help the City achieve conformance with State Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emission and VMT reduction goals.

Potential measures to reduce VMT include, but are not limited to:

- Improve or increase access to transit.
- Increase access to common goods and services, such as groceries, schools, and daycare.
- Incorporate affordable housing into the project.
- Incorporate neighborhood electric vehicle network.
- Orient the project toward transit, bicycle, and pedestrian facilities.
- Improve pedestrian or bicycle networks, or transit service.
- Provide traffic calming measures and strategies.
- Provide bicycle parking.
- Limit or eliminate parking supply.
- Implement or provide access to a commute reduction program.
- Provide car-sharing, bike sharing, and ride-sharing programs.
- Provide transit passes.

- Shifting single occupancy vehicle trips to carpooling or vanpooling, for example providing ride-matching services.
- Providing telework options.
- Providing incentives or subsidies that increase the use of modes other than single-occupancy vehicle.
- Providing on-site amenities at places of work, such as priority parking for carpools and vanpools, secure bike parking, and showers and locker rooms.
- Providing employee transportation coordinators at employment sites.
- Providing a guaranteed ride home service to users of non-auto modes.

Hydraulics

Caltrans generally does not allow development projects to impact hydraulics within the State's R/W. Any modification to the existing Caltrans drainage and/or increased runoff to State facilities will not be allowed.

For project related mitigation on SR-905 and Caliente Ave, please provide a pre- and post-development hydraulics and hydrology study.

Please show drainage configurations and patterns.

Please provide drainage plans and details. Please include detention basin details of inlets/outlets.

Please provide a contour grading plan with legible callouts and minimal building data.

For all plans, please show Caltrans' R/W.

Complete Streets

Caltrans recommends a leading pedestrian interval signalization with pedestrian countdown, and a no right turns/blank signal activated or other enhancements for safer bicycle and pedestrian crossings.

Additional recommendations include, converting Caliente Road to Class IV Bikeways with bike signal phasing and bend-in/bulb-outs and green conflict zone striping at right-turn on ramps.

Bicycle, pedestrian, and public transit access during construction is important. Mitigation to maintain bicycle, pedestrian, and public transit access during construction is in accordance with Caltrans' goals and policies.

Right-of-Way

Per Business and Profession Code 8771, perpetuation of survey monuments by a licensed land surveyor is required, if they are being destroyed by any construction.

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 the Caltrans' R/W before construction. As part of the encroachment permit process, the applicant must provide approved final environmental documents for this project, corresponding technical studies, and necessary regulatory and resource agency permits—specifically, CEQA determination or exemption. The supporting documents must address all environmental impacts within the Caltrans' R/W and address any impacts from avoidance and/or mitigation measures.

Additional information regarding encroachment permits may be obtained by visiting the website at <https://dot.ca.gov/programs/traffic-operations/ep>. Projects with the following:

- require a Caltrans Encroachment Permit
- have completed the Caltrans Local Development Review (LDR) process
- have an approved environmental document

need to have documents submitted for Quality Management Assessment Process (QMAP) process via email to D11.QMAP.Permits@dot.ca.gov. Early coordination with Caltrans is strongly advised for all encroachment permits.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Roger Sanchez, LDR Coordinator, by phone (619) 987-1043 or by e-mail at roger.sanchez-rangel@dot.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Kimberly D. Dodson

KIMBERLY D. DODSON, GISP
Branch Chief
Local Development Review