

From: [Crayne, Catharine@DOT](mailto:Crayne.Catharine@DOT)
To: Hill, Shannon
Cc: state.clearinghouse@opr.ca.gov
Subject: Comments for the Downtown West Mixed-Use Plan (Google Project) NOP
Date: Friday, November 22, 2019 4:10:06 PM
Attachments: [04-SCL-2019-00689-Downtown West Mixed-Use Plan \(Google Project\).pdf](#)

[External Email]

Dear Shannon Hill,

The attached letter contains Caltrans' comments on the Notice of Preparation of an Environmental Impact Report for the Downtown West Mixed-Use Plan (Google Project), State Clearinghouse No. 2019080493.

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for this project.

Sincerely,

Catharine Crayne
Associate Transportation Planner
State & Federal Transit Grants Branch
Office of Transit & Community Planning
Caltrans District 4
Phone: (510) 286-6973

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*Making Conservation
a California Way of Life.*

November 22, 2019

SCH # 2019080493
GTS # 04-SCL-2019-00689
GTS ID: 17507
SCL/87/5.807

Shannon Hill, Environmental Project Manager
City of San Jose
Department of Planning, Building and Code
Enforcement
200 East Santa Clara Street, 3rd Floor Tower
San Jose, CA 95113-1905

Downtown West Mixed-Use Plan (Google Project) – Notice of Preparation (NOP)

Dear Shannon Hill:

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the Downtown West Mixed-Use Plan (Google Project). We are committed to ensuring that impacts to the State's multimodal transportation system and to our natural environment are identified and mitigated to support a safe, sustainable, integrated and efficient transportation system. The following comments are based on our review of the NOP of an Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

Project Understanding

The proposed project includes a General Plan Amendment, Planned Development Rezoning and a Planned Development Permit for the development of up to 5,900 residential units; up to 7,300,00 gross square feet (GSF) of office space; up to 500,00 GSF of active uses such as retail, cultural, arts, etc.; up to 300 hotel rooms ; up to 800 rooms of limited-term corporate accommodations; an approximately 100,000 GSF event center; up to two central utilities plants totaling approximately 115,000 GSF; and a logistics warehouse(s) of approximately 100,000 GSF; all on approximately 84 acres. The proposal also includes conceptual infrastructure, transportation, and public open space plans.

The project site is generally bounded by Lenzen Avenue and the Union Pacific Railroad tracks to the north; North Montgomery Street, Los Gatos Creek, the

Guadalupe River, South Almaden Street, and Royal Avenue to the east; Auzerais Avenue to the south; and Sunol Avenue, Diridon Station, and the Caltrain rail line to the west. The project also includes the area bounded by Los Gatos Creek to the west, San Fernando Street to the south, the Guadalupe River to the east, and Santa Clara Street to the north. The site is within a planned Priority Development Area.

Travel Demand Analysis

Please submit a travel demand analysis that provides a vehicle miles travelled (VMT) analysis resulting from the proposed project. With the enactment of Senate Bill (SB) 743, Caltrans is focusing on transportation infrastructure that supports smart growth and efficient development to ensure alignment with State policies using efficient development patterns, innovative travel demand reduction strategies, multimodal improvements, and VMT as the primary transportation impact metric. Please ensure that the travel demand analysis includes:

- A vicinity map, regional location map, and site plan clearly showing project access in relation to the State Transportation Network (STN). Ingress and egress for all project components should be clearly identified. Clearly identify the State right-of-way (ROW). Project driveways, local roads and intersections, car/bike parking, and transit facilities should be mapped.
- A VMT analysis pursuant to the City's guidelines. Projects that result in automobile VMT per capita greater than 15% below existing (i.e. baseline) city-wide or regional values for similar land use types may indicate a significant impact. If necessary, mitigation for increasing VMT should be identified. Mitigation should support the use of transit and active transportation modes. Potential mitigation measures that include the requirements of other agencies such as Caltrans are fully enforceable through permit conditions, agreements, or other legally-binding instruments under the control of the City.
- A schematic illustration of walking, biking and auto conditions at the project site and study area roadways. Potential safety issues for all road users should be identified and fully mitigated.
- The project's primary and secondary effects on pedestrians, bicycles, travelers with disabilities and transit performance should be evaluated, including countermeasures and trade-offs resulting from mitigating VMT increases. Access to pedestrians, bicycle, and transit facilities must be maintained.

- Analysis of the impacts of transportation network companies (TNCs) on VMT, and ways to mitigate these impacts.
- Clarification of the intensity of events/receptions to be held at the location and how the associated travel demand and VMT will be mitigated.

With respect to the local and regional roadway system, provide project related trip generation, distribution, and assignment estimates. To ensure that queue formation does not create traffic conflicts, the project-generated trips should be added to the existing, future and cumulative scenario traffic volumes for the intersections and freeway ramps listed below. Potential queuing issues should be evaluated including on-ramp storage capacity and analysis of freeway segments near the project; turning movements should also be evaluated. In conducting these evaluations, it is necessary to use demand volumes rather than output volumes or constrained flow volume.

- Intersections and Ramps:

Route 87

NB 87 on-ramp from Park Ave/Woz Way (*AM metered)

NB 87 on-ramp from W Julian/James St (*AM metered)

NB 87 on-ramp from W Taylor St (*AM metered)

SB 87 on-ramp from Auzerais Ave/Delmas Ave (*PM metered)

SB 87 on-ramp from EB W Julian St - diagonal (*PM metered)

SB 87 on-ramp from W Taylor St (*PM metered).

NB 87 off-ramp to Santa Clara St

NB 87 off-ramp to Julian St

NB 87 off-ramp to Taylor St

SB 87 off-ramp to Julian St

SB 87 off-ramp to Park Ave

SB 87 off-ramp to Taylor St.

Route 280

NB 280 on-ramp from Bird Ave (*AM metered)

SB 280 on-ramp from Bird Ave (*PM metered).

NB 280 off-ramp to Bird Ave

SB 280 off-ramp to Bird Ave.

Route 880

NB 880 on-ramp from NB Route 82 (The Alameda) (*metered)

NB 880 on-ramp from Coleman Ave. (*metered)

SB 880 on-ramp from NB Route 82 (The Alameda) (*PM metered)

SB 880 on-ramp from WB Coleman Ave. (*PM metered)

NB 880 off-ramp to Route 82 (The Alameda)

NB off-ramp to Coleman Ave.

SB 880 off-ramp to Route 82 (The Alameda)

SB off-ramp to Coleman Ave.

Multimodal Planning

The project's primary and secondary effects on pedestrians, bicyclists, travelers with disabilities, and transit users should be evaluated, including countermeasures and trade-offs resulting from mitigating VMT increases. Access for pedestrians and bicyclists to transit facilities must be maintained. These smart growth approaches can be consistent with MTC's Regional Transportation Plan/SCS and would help meet Caltrans Strategic Management Plan targets.

Vehicle Trip Reduction

From Caltrans' *Smart Mobility 2010: A Call to Action for the New Decade*, the project site is identified as **Place Type 1b: Urban Centers** where location efficiency factors, such as community design and regional accessibility, are strong. Given the place, type and size of the project, it should include a robust Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Program to reduce VMT and greenhouse gas emissions. Such measures are critical to facilitating efficient site access. The measures listed below can promote smart mobility and reduce regional VMT.

- Project design to encourage walking, bicycling and transit access;
- Transit and trip planning resources such as a commute information kiosk;
- Real-time transit information system;
- Transit subsidies on an ongoing basis;
- Ten percent vehicle parking reductions;
- Charging stations and designated parking spaces for electric vehicles;
- Carpool and clean-fuel parking spaces;
- Designated parking spaces for a car share program;
- Unbundled parking;
- Showers, changing rooms and clothing lockers for employees that commute via active transportation;
- Emergency Ride Home program;

- Employee transportation coordinator;
- Secured bicycle storage facilities;
- Fix-it bicycle repair station(s);
- Bicycle route mapping resources;
- Participation/Formation in/of a Transportation Management Association (TMA) in partnership with other developments in the area; and
- Aggressive trip reduction targets with Lead Agency monitoring and enforcement.

Transportation Demand Management programs should be documented with annual monitoring reports by an onsite TDM coordinator to demonstrate effectiveness. If the project does not achieve the VMT reduction goals, the reports should also include next steps to take in order to achieve those targets. Also, reducing parking supply can encourage active forms of transportation, reduce regional VMT, and lessen future transportation impacts on State facilities. These smart growth approaches are consistent with the MTC's Regional Transportation Plan/SCS goals and would help meet Caltrans Strategic Management Plan sustainability goals.

For additional TDM options, please refer to the Federal Highway Administration's *Integrating Demand Management into the Transportation Planning Process: A Desk Reference* (Chapter 8). The reference is available online at: <http://www.ops.fhwa.dot.gov/publications/fhwahop12035/fhwahop12035.pdf>.

Transportation Impact Fees

The Lead Agency should identify project-generated travel demand and estimate the costs of transit and active transportation improvements necessitated by the proposed project; viable funding sources such as development and/or transportation impact fees should also be identified. We encourage a sufficient allocation of fair share contributions toward multimodal and regional transit improvements to fully mitigate cumulative impacts to regional transportation. We also strongly support measures to increase sustainable mode shares, thereby reducing VMT. The Lead Agency should also consider fair share fees for shuttles that use the public curb space.

The City should also ensure that a capital improvement plan identifying the cost of needed improvements, funding sources, and a scheduled plan for implementation is prepared along with the General Plan Amendment. Caltrans welcomes the opportunity to work with the City and local partners to secure the funding for needed mitigation. Traffic mitigation- or cooperative agreements are examples of such measures.

Construction-Related Impacts

Potential impacts to the State ROW from project-related temporary access points should be analyzed. Mitigation for significant impacts due to construction and noise should be identified in the EIR. Project work that requires movement of oversized or excessive load vehicles on state roadways requires a transportation permit that is issued by Caltrans. To apply, visit:

<https://dot.ca.gov/programs/traffic-operations/transportation-permits>.

Prior to construction, coordination is required with Caltrans to develop a Transportation Management Plan (TMP) to reduce construction traffic impacts to the STN.

Utilities

Any utilities that are proposed, moved or modified within Caltrans' ROW shall be discussed. If utilities are impacted by the project, provide site plans that show the location of existing and/or proposed utilities. These modifications require a Caltrans-issued encroachment permit.

Lead Agency

As the Lead Agency, the City of San Jose is responsible for all project mitigation, including any needed improvements to the STN. The project's fair share contribution, financing, scheduling, implementation responsibilities and lead agency monitoring should be fully discussed for all proposed mitigation measures.

Encroachment Permit

Please be advised that any work or traffic control that encroaches onto the State ROW requires a Caltrans-issued encroachment permit. To obtain an encroachment permit, a completed encroachment permit application, environmental documentation, six (6) sets of plans clearly indicating the State ROW, and six (6) copies of signed, dated and stamped (include stamp expiration date) traffic control plans must be submitted to: Office of Encroachment Permits, California DOT, District 4, P.O. Box 23660, Oakland, CA 94623-0660. To download the permit application and obtain more information, visit <https://dot.ca.gov/programs/traffic-operations/ep/applications>.

Thank you again for including Caltrans in the environmental review process. Should you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact Catharine Crayne at 510-286-6973 or catharine.crayne@dot.ca.gov.

Shannon Hill, Environmental Project Manager
November 22, 2019
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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Mark Leong", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Mark Leong
District Branch Chief
Local Development - Intergovernmental Review

c: State Clearinghouse