

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

DISTRICT 11, DIVISION OF PLANNING

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July 24, 2015

11-SD-5 (PM 47.8)
Agua Hedionda SP

Patrick Thomas
Public Works Director
City of Carlsbad
1635 Faraday Avenue
Carlsbad, CA 92008

Dear Mr. Thomas,

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) would like to take this opportunity to provide comments to the City of Carlsbad (City) on the "Agua Hedionda 85/15 Specific Plan Initiative" (Project) and Environmental Analysis (EA). These comments reflect input from the City on an initial draft comment letter dated July 17, 2015.

The initiative and accompanying Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA - Appendix N, May 7, 2015) propose the following Environmental Protective Features (EPFs):

- Project will pay fair-share contribution towards improvements on I-5 from La Costa Ave. to Carlsbad Village Drive. (EPF TRA-12)
- Project will pay fair-share contribution towards improvements to the I-5 Southbound On-Ramp at Tamarack Ave. (EPF TRA-13)
- Project will pay fair-share contribution towards improvements to the I-5 Southbound On-Ramp at Cannon Road (EPF TRA-14)
- Project will pay fair-share contribution towards improvements to the I-5 Northbound Ramps at Cannon Road (EPF TRA-15)

The comments below are based on Caltrans' initial review. Additional analysis and discussion will be required to determine specific improvement details, costs and timing of those improvements. Based on the scope and cost of the Cannon Road Interchange mitigation improvements, a permit application review and development of a Permit Engineering Evaluation Report (PEER) or appropriate Project Initiation Document (PID) may be required.

Based on initial reviews, the Project's anticipated trip generation appears consistent with the traffic forecasts used by Caltrans to design future ramp improvements and auxiliary lanes at Cannon Road as a part of the I-5 North Coast Corridor Project (I-5 NCC). However, it is important to note that per the 2050 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), the I-5 NCC funded improvements to the Cannon Road Interchange are not anticipated to be completed prior to 2035. Interchange improvements required for the Project should be phased in a manner that avoids significant congestion impacts in the interim.

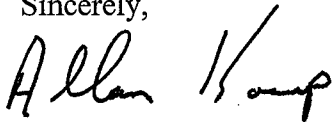
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Caltrans anticipates working with the City and Project Developer on other items including:

1. Assessment of queuing caused by the northbound Cannon Road ramp meter on the Project's westerly driveway.
2. Assessment of the scope and timing of improvements to the northbound and southbound Cannon Road off-ramps to avoid intersection queuing extending onto the I-5 main lanes.
3. Caltrans requests that the development be planned and constructed in a manner consistent with the I-5 Express Lanes project to avoid any future conflicts that would restrict or increase the cost of the project. Caltrans also recommends that the Project dedicate property required for the ultimate express lane project and implement a joint use bike path.
4. It is important to note, as part of the I-5 Express Lanes planning process Direct Access Ramps (DAR) had been recommended at Cannon Road. The DAR would improve travel and reduce congestion for carpool and Fastrak users from Carlsbad and surrounding cities. Additionally the DAR, if constructed, would improve operations at the I-5/Cannon Road Interchange and the I-5/Palomar Airport Road interchange. Although the DAR was included in the Draft I-5 EIR/EIS, Caltrans deferred a final decision on the DAR until local decisions on land-use and circulation were finalized. For this reason, the DAR was removed from the Final EIR. It is important to note that the proposed development would limit or preclude the region from implementing a DAR at this location. Previous planning studies determined that there are no other feasible sites for a DAR in Carlsbad.
5. Consistent with the State's goal of reducing Green House Gas (GHG) emissions, Caltrans encourages the Project to include multi-modal and Transportation Demand Management (TDM) mitigation strategies to reduce vehicular trips.

Caltrans appreciates the opportunity to provide comments and feedback to the City on the "Agua Hedionda 85/15 Specific Plan Initiative." We look forward to the continued coordination with the City and the Project Developer leading to the execution of a Mitigation Agreement prior to submittal of the encroachment permit.

Sincerely,



Allan Kosup
Interstate 5 Corridor Director