

**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

DISTRICT 4

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a California Way of Life*

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GTS # 04-ALA-2017-00205

GTS I.D. 8342

ALA- 80 – 5.708

Fatema Crane  
City of Berkeley  
1947 Center Street, Third Floor  
Berkeley, CA 94704

**600 Addison Street– Notice of Preparation**

Dear Fatema Crane:

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the above referenced project. In tandem with the Metropolitan Transportation Commission's (MTC) Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS), Caltrans' mission signals a modernization of our approach to evaluate and mitigate impacts to the State Transportation Network (STN). Caltrans' *Strategic Management Plan 2015-2020* aims to reduce Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) by tripling bicycle and doubling both pedestrian and transit travel by 2020. Our comments are based on the Notice of Preparation (NOP).

***Project Understanding***

The Project applicant is requesting approval of a Master Use Permit to allow redevelopment of the Project site with a total of up to 475,000 gross square feet (gsf) of research and development and office uses with associated parking, circulation, utility, and landscaping improvements. Approximately 50 percent of the total research and development space would be occupied by office space with the remaining 50 percent occupied by laboratory space. In addition, the applicant is requesting the conversion of approximately 8,000 square feet (sf) of protected warehouse space that was previously removed from the site. Two potential development schemes (referred to as Scheme 1 and Scheme 2) are currently proposed, each with its own arrangement of buildings, parking, and circulation.

Scheme 1 would result in the development of seven individual buildings on the site. Six of the buildings would include three levels of office/laboratory space, for a total of approximately 469,932 gsf. Buildings would be located on the Addison Street and Bolivar Drive street frontages and oriented to internal driveways and pedestrian pathways. The seventh building would include

a four-level, approximately 55,789 sf parking garage located adjacent to the UPRR corridor, and would be accessible via Bancroft Way and Addison Street.

Scheme 2 would result in the development of five individual buildings on the site. Four of the buildings would include three levels of office/laboratory space, for a total of approximately 453,075 gsf. Buildings would be located on the Addison Street and Bolivar Drive street frontages and oriented to internal driveways and pedestrian pathways. Multiple access and lobby entry points would create a campus-like environment. The fifth building would include a six-level approximately 34,544 sf parking structure adjacent to the UPRR corridor, between buildings A, B, and C, and would be accessible via Bancroft Way and Addison Street.

The proposed uses would generate approximately 1,894 new full time employees on the site. A total of 830 parking spaces and 240 bicycle parking spaces would be provided throughout the site in both Scheme 1 and 2. The project site is regionally accessed 700 feet from the Interstate (I)-80/University Avenue interchange.

#### ***Project Coordination***

Please coordinate the project's construction schedule with Caltrans. The I-80/University Avenue overcrossing is being upgraded and has a tentative construction start date in 2020. The Caltrans project may have an impact on the proposed project's schedule if coordination efforts are ignored. Please reference EA 2K830 when communicating with Caltrans about the I-80/University Avenue overcrossing project.

#### ***Vehicle Trip Reduction***

From Caltrans' Smart Mobility 2010: A Call to Action for the New Decade, the project site is identified as **Place Type 2: Close-in Corridors** where location efficiency factors, such as community design, are moderate and regional accessibility is strong. Given the project's intensification of use, the project should include a robust Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Program to reduce VMT and greenhouse gas emissions. Such measures can include bicycle parking, transit passes or subsidies, and incentives for carpooling. Project site design should also ensure that high quality pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure connects pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users, as directly and with as few conflicts as possible, between key neighborhood sites, such as the Berkeley Amtrak Station and the Downtown Berkeley BART Station. These measures will be critical in order to facilitate efficient transportation access to and from the project site and reduce transportation impacts associated with the project. The measures listed below will promote smart mobility and reduce regional VMT.

- Project design to encourage walking, bicycling and convenient transit access;
- Secured bicycle storage facilities located conveniently near entrances to minimize deterrent of bicycle use due to weather conditions;
- Caltrans compliments the Lead Agency in including 240 bicycle spaces and suggests including a plan for expanding bicycle parking when the spaces reach capacity;

*"Provide a safe, sustainable, integrated and efficient transportation system to enhance California's economy and livability"*

and intersections, car/bike parking, and transit facilities should be mapped.

- A VMT analysis pursuant to the Lead Agency's guidelines or, if the Lead Agency has no guidelines, the Office of Planning and Research's Draft 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 Lead Agency.
- A schematic illustration of walking, biking and auto conditions at the project site and study area roadways. Potential issues for all road users should be identified and fully mitigated.

The project's primary and secondary effects on pedestrians, bicycles, disabled travelers 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.

#### ***Transportation Impact Fees***

Please identify project travel demand or VMT and estimate the costs of public 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 multi-modal 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.

#### ***Lead Agency***

As the Lead Agency, the City of Berkeley (City) 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.

- Fix-it bicycle repair station(s);
- The shuttle service fronting Building A should be provided at no cost to employees;
- Subsidize transit passes on an ongoing basis;
- Charging stations and designated parking spaces for electric vehicles;
- Carpool and clean-fuel parking spaces conveniently located to encourage carpooling and clean-fuel vehicles;
- Lower parking ratios;
- Transportation and commute information kiosk;
- Outdoor areas with patios, furniture, pedestrian pathways, picnic and recreational areas;
- Showers, changing rooms and clothing lockers for bike commuters;
- Bicycle route mapping resources and bicycle parking incentives;
- Employee transportation coordinator;
- Emergency Ride Home program;
- Participation/Formation in/of a Transportation Management Association (TMA) in partnership with other developments in the area; and
- Aggressive trip reduction targets with annual 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 SR 123 and I-80 and other nearby State facilities. These smart growth approaches are consistent with the MTC's Regional Transportation Plan/SCS goals and would 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>.

### ***Travel Demand Analysis***

Please analyze VMT 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 through the use of 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 STN. Ingress and egress for all project components should be clearly identified. Clearly identify the State right-of-way (ROW). Project driveways, local roads

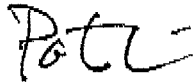
Fatema Crane, City of Berkeley

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Thank you again for including Caltrans in the environmental review process. Should you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact Jannette Ramirez at 510-286-5535 or [jannette.ramirez@dot.ca.gov](mailto:jannette.ramirez@dot.ca.gov).

Sincerely,



PATRICIA MAURICE

District Branch Chief

Local Development - Intergovernmental Review

c: State Clearinghouse