

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

DISTRICT 4
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Governor's Office of Planning & Research

March 1, 2019

MAR 05 2019

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

SCH # 2019029016
 GTS # 04-ALA-2019-00396
 GTS I.D. 14401
 ALA – 84 – 7.652

Paul Cristilli
 Fremont Unified School District
 4210 Technology Drive
 Fremont, CA 94538

Thornton Junior High School Improvement Project – Notice of Preparation

Dear Paul Cristilli:

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 proposed project would convert a 7th/8th grade junior high school into a middle school with 6th grade. It would include two components: 1) construction of new buildings to provide new classrooms and facilities to support an expanded student enrollment; and 2) modernization and upgrades to existing facilities. The project is intended to support an increase in the overall capacity of the school's facilities from the current capacity of 1,259 students to 2,176 students.

The project proposes the demolition of the existing school entrance building and construction of a new 9,000 square-foot (sf) structure; a series of four new 2-story, modular classroom structures totaling 35,400 square feet and oriented to create courtyard-style outdoor learning spaces; and a 485-sf addition to an existing building for music education.

In addition, the school locker room building would be reconfigured and structurally upgraded; two support buildings would be reconfigured and receive minor facility modernizations; and 5 buildings would receive very minor facility modernizations. Campus hardtop play areas would be fully redeveloped. New parking areas totaling 102 new stalls and a vehicle turn-around would

extend inward on the southwest side of the campus, parallel to Coronado Drive. The existing vehicular entrance and parking/drop-off area would be reconfigured for better circulation, parking, safety and ingress/egress.

Project Access

To minimize the effect of extra traffic volume on Thornton Avenue (SR 84), additional entrance and exit driveways are recommended to be built on the side streets.

Multimodal Planning

To improve connectivity in the proposed project area and encourage active transportation, any reconstruction or changes to the Project's frontage with Thornton Avenue (SR 84) should consider geometry that will accommodate future Class IV bikeways, mentioned in both the City of Fremont's 2018 Bicycle Master Plan, and the Caltrans District 4 Bicycle Plan.

See Caltrans District 4 Bike Plan's Appendix A –
http://www.dot.ca.gov/d4/bikeplan/docs/D4BikePlan_ProjectList.pdf

Vehicle Trip Reduction

We strongly support measures to increase sustainable mode shares, thereby reducing VMT and impacts on the state highway system. The measures listed below should be considered to facilitate efficient transportation access to and from the project location, reduce transportation impacts associated with the project, and promote smart mobility.

- Project design to encourage walking, bicycling and transit access
- On-campus bicycle parking and a shuttle service
- Participation in the 511.org SchoolPool RideMatch service to promote walking, biking and carpooling to school

Additionally, walking and bicycling routes to the campus should be evaluated regarding their safety and directness. The School District should work with the City to plan and fund projects or treatments, such as striping, signage or signals.

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>.

Encroachment Permit

Please be advised that any work such as tree removal or traffic control that encroaches onto the State right-of-way requires an encroachment permit that is issued by Caltrans. To apply, a completed encroachment permit application, the adopted environmental document, and six (6) sets of plans clearly indicating State right-of-way must be submitted to: Office of Permits, California DOT, District 4, P.O. Box 23660, Oakland, CA 94623-0660. Traffic-related

mitigation measures should be incorporated into the construction plans prior to the encroachment permit process. See the website link below for more information.
<http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/traffops/developserv/permits/>

Lead Agency

As the lead agency, Fremont Unified School District is responsible for all project mitigation, including any needed improvements to state highways. The project's fair share contribution, financing, scheduling, implementation responsibilities and lead agency monitoring should be fully discussed for all proposed mitigation measures.

Thank you again for including Caltrans in the environmental review process. Please contact us for coordination on the project. We look forward to working with Fremont Unified School District. Should you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact Michelle Matranga at (510) 286-5544 or michelle.matranga@dot.ca.gov.

Sincerely,



PATRICIA MAURICE
District Branch Chief
Local Development - Intergovernmental Review

c: State Clearinghouse