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### 3. RESPONSES TO COMMENTS

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#### INTRODUCTION

Pursuant to Section 15132 of the State CEQA Guidelines, the following Section identifies the list of persons, organizations, and public agencies who commented on the Draft EIR (“DEIR”) and provides written responses to each of the comments received. The Notice of Availability/Completion (“NOA/NOC”) for the DEIR was published on August 16, 2017 initiating a 60-day public review period between August 16, 2017 and October 16, 2017. Forty-two (42) comment letters were received in response to the DEIR. As such, all comments that were received on the DEIR are being responded to in this Final EIR.

Table 3-1, below, provides a summary of the comment letters submitted on the DEIR. For purposes of reviewing and providing detailed responses to the comments received, each comment letter was transcribed and responded to in detail in the section below. Copies of the original comment letters with annotated brackets identifying the comments with the corresponding responses are provided in Appendix A to this Final EIR.

**Table 3-1**  
**Summary of Comment Letters on the Draft EIR**

Comment Letters	Aesthetics	Air Quality	Biological Resources	Cultural Resources	Geology and Soils	Hydrology /Water Quality	Land Use Planning	Noise	Transportation/Circulation	Project Alternatives	Other Comments and Concerns
State Agencies											
1. State of California Department of Transportation District 7 – Office of Regional Planning Date: October 9, 2017						✓			✓		
2. State of California Governor’s Office of Planning and Research State Clearinghouse and Planning Unit Date: October 17, 2017											Acknowledgment of CEQA noticing and review by State agencies.

Comment Letters	Aesthetics	Air Quality	Biological Resources	Cultural Resources	Geology and Soils	Hydrology /Water Quality	Land Use Planning	Noise	Transportation/Circulation	Project Alternatives	Other Comments and Concerns
3. State of California Public Utilities Commission Date: September 5, 2017									✓		
Local Agencies											
4. County of Los Angeles Fire Department Date: September 12, 2017 Received: September 18, 2017									✓		Water supply for firefighting operations
5. County of Los Angeles Hall of Justice Office of the Sheriff Date: October 26, 2017											Acknowledgment of CEQA noticing
6. County of Los Angeles Sheriff's Department Date: October 9, 2017									✓		Preparation of a Construction Traffic Management Plan
7. Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (METRO) Date: October 16, 2017									✓		
8. Metropolitan Water District of Southern California Date: October 2, 2017											Impacts to Metropolitan's facilities
9. Southern California Gas Company Date: September 15, 2017											Impacts to underground facilities
10. The Southern California Regional Rail Authority Date: October 16, 2017									✓		
Organizations											
11. Placerita Canyon Property Owners Association (PCPOA) Date: September 28, 2017									✓	✓	
12. Placerita Canyon Property Owners Association (PCPOA) Date: October 13, 2017	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Individuals											
13. Renee and Randall Berglund Date: September 28, 2017								✓	✓	✓	Cost of road extension, acquisition of parcels, safety
14. Judith and JC Burkhartsmeier Date: October 2, 2017									✓	✓	
15. Sandra Cattell Date: October 16, 2016							✓		✓	✓	

Comment Letters	Aesthetics	Air Quality	Biological Resources	Cultural Resources	Geology and Soils	Hydrology /Water Quality	Land Use Planning	Noise	Transportation/Circulation	Project Alternatives	Other Comments and Concerns
16. Jim and Paige Coffey Date: October 16, 2017							✓			✓	
17. Rick Drew Date: September 28, 2017										✓	
18. F.A. Humelbaugh Date: October 9, 2017									✓	✓	
19. Olga Kaczmar Date: September 14, 2017									✓	✓	
20. Tony Matthes Date: September 25, 2017							✓		✓	✓	
21. Tony Matthes Date: October 3, 2017							✓		✓	✓	
22. Joe Morelli Date: September 14, 2017										✓	
23. Joe Morelli Date: September 28, 2017										✓	
24. Candice Nelson Date: October 15, 2017							✓		✓	✓	Safety, acquisition of parcels
25. Mr. and Mrs. Réal Paradise Date: September 14, 2017								✓	✓	✓	
26. Michael Ragsdale Date: October 18, 2017										✓	
27. Renel Ragsdale Date: October 16, 2017									✓	✓	Safety
28. Tara Ragsdale Date: October 16, 2017									✓	✓	
29. C. Rasmussen Date: September 28, 2017										✓	
30. Linda Redmond Date: October 16, 2017							✓		✓	✓	
31. Jeff and Sharon Secor Date: September 20, 2017							✓		✓	✓	Acquisition of parcels
32. Jeff Secor Date: September 28, 2017									✓		
33. Tammy Skinner Date: September 15, 2017							✓		✓		
34. Tom Soracco Date: October 16, 2017	✓		✓						✓	✓	
35. Linda Tarnoff Date: October 16, 2017									✓	✓	
36. Valerie Thomas Date: September 14, 2017						✓			✓	✓	Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Comment Letters	Aesthetics	Air Quality	Biological Resources	Cultural Resources	Geology and Soils	Hydrology /Water Quality	Land Use Planning	Noise	Transportation/Circulation	Project Alternatives	Other Comments and Concerns
37. Robert and Teresa Todd Date: October 16, 2017							✓		✓	✓	
38. Pat Willett Date: September 14, 2017									✓	✓	
39. Jong Yoon Date: October 23, 2017									✓		
40. Zamora Date: September 14, 2017										✓	
41. France Zamora Date: September 28, 2017										✓	
42. Dawn and John Zirbel Date: October 12, 2017									✓	✓	

**COMMENT LETTER No. 1**

State of California Department of Transportation  
District 7 – Office of Regional Planning  
Dianna Watson, IGR/CEQA Branch Chief  
100 S. Main Street, MS 16  
Los Angeles, CA 90012  
Date: October 9, 2017

**COMMENT 1.1**

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the above referenced project. The project consists of an extension of Lyons Avenue from Railroad Avenue southeast to a proposed connection with Dockweiler Drive, to provide a T-intersection at Dockweiler Drive. Also included are [sic] a new at-grade railroad crossing east of Railroad Avenue and Lyons Avenue as well as an extension of Docweiler [sic] Drive and other various modifications on 13<sup>th</sup> Street.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 1.1**

This comment letter acknowledges that the California Department of Transportation (“Caltrans”) has reviewed the DEIR for the Proposed Project and accurately restates the Project Description. No further response is required.

**COMMENT 1.2**

The nearest State facility to the project site is State Route 14. Caltrans does not expect project approval to result in direct adverse impacts to existing State transportation facilities.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 1.2**

Caltrans acknowledges that project approvals are not expected to result in a direct adverse impact to existing State transportation facilities. This comment has been noted for the record, and no further response is required.

**COMMENT 1.3**

Any transportation of heavy construction equipment and/or materials requiring use of oversized transport vehicles on State highways will require a Caltrans transportation permit. Caltrans recommends that large size truck trips be limited to off-peak commute periods.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 1.3**

Caltrans's concerns have been noted for the record and will be forwarded to the decision makers for their consideration. Caltrans has discretionary authority with respect to the operation of vehicles or special mobile equipment of a size, weight, or load exceeding the maximum limitations specified in the California Vehicle Code. The Caltrans Transportation Permits Issuance Branch is responsible for the issuance of these special transportation permits for oversize/overweight vehicles on the State Highway System. Project contractors would adhere to obtaining necessary permits, including permits for the use of oversized vehicles. Additionally, the Proposed Project would incorporate the requirement to schedule heavy-duty truck trips outside of peak hours when possible has been incorporated as a mitigation measure. See Section 2, Additions and Corrections and Section 4, Mitigation Monitoring Program of the Final EIR. No further response is required.

**COMMENT 1.4**

Also, storm water run-off is a sensitive issue for Los Angeles and Ventura counties. Be mindful that the project needs to be designed to discharge clean run-off water.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 1.4**

The Proposed Project's impacts to hydrology, surface runoff and water quality were thoroughly evaluated and disclosed in Section 4.6 Hydrology and Water Quality, of the DEIR. As noted in the EIR, during the construction phase, the Proposed Project would be required to prepare and implement a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan ("SWPPP") prior to earthwork activities that will use best management practices and erosion control measures to prevent pollution in stormwater discharge. Through compliance with National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System ("NPDES") requirements and City grading regulations, the Project's construction impacts related to water quality would not violate any water quality

standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade water quality. Additionally, in accordance with NPDES requirements, the Project Applicant would be required to have a Project-specific Standard Urban Stormwater Mitigation Plan (“SUSMP”) in place during the operational life of the Project to address the management of runoff from the proposed roadway extension. The SUSMP would include site design, source control, low-impact development, and best management practices. Therefore, during the Project’s construction and operation implementation of regulatory compliance would reduce water quality impacts to less than significant. No further analysis is required.

**COMMENT 1.5**

If you [sic] questions regarding these comments, please contact project coordinator, Severin Martinez at (213) 897-0067 or severin.martinez@dot.ca.gov and refer to GTS#07-LA-2017-01081.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 1.5**

This commenter letter has been included in the record and will be forwarded to the decision makers for their consideration. No further response is required.

**COMMENT LETTER No. 2**

State of California  
Governor’s Office of Planning and Research State Clearinghouse and Planning Unit  
Scott Morgan, Director  
1400 Tenth Street P.O. Box 3044  
Sacramento, CA 95812  
Date: October 17, 2017

**COMMENT 2.1**

The State Clearinghouse submitted above named Draft EIR to selected state agencies for review. On the enclosed Document Details Report please note that the Clearinghouse has listed the state agencies that reviewed your document. The review period closed on October 16, 2017, and the comments from the responding agency (ies) is (are) enclosed. If this comment package is not in order, please notify the State Clearinghouse immediately. Please refer to the project’s ten-digit State Clearinghouse number in future correspondence so that we may respond promptly.

Please note that Section 21104(c) of the California Public Resources Code states that:

“A responsible or other public agency shall only make substantive comments regarding those activities involved in a project which are within an area of expertise of the agency or which are required to be carried out or approved by the agency. Those comments shall be supported by specific documentation.”

These comments are forwarded for use in preparing your final environmental document. Should you need more information or clarification of the enclosed comments, we recommend that you contact the commenting agency directly.

This letter acknowledges that you have complied with the State Clearinghouse review requirements for draft environmental documents, pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act. Please contact the State Clearinghouse at (916) 445-0613 if you have any questions regarding the environmental review process.

### **RESPONSE TO COMMENT 2.1**

This comment letter acknowledges that the State Clearinghouse has received the DEIR for the Proposed Project and that the lead agency has complied with CEQA with respect to soliciting comments on the DEIR from applicable state agencies. As noted, one comment letter was submitted by the State of California Public Utilities Commission (“CPUC”), which is included below as Comment Letter No. 3. No further response is required.

### **COMMENT LETTER No. 3**

State of California Public Utilities Commission  
Chi Cheung To, P.E. Utilities Engineer  
Rail Crossings and Engineering Branch, Safety and Enforcement Division  
320 West 4<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 500  
Los Angeles, CA 90013  
Date: September 5, 2017

### **COMMENT 3.1**

The California Public Utilities Commission (Commission) has jurisdiction over the safety of highway-rail crossings (crossings) in California. The California Public Utilities Code requires Commission approval for the construction or alteration of crossings and grants the Commission exclusive power on the design, alteration, grade separation and closure of crossings. The Commission’s Rail Crossings and Engineering Branch (RCEB) is in receipt of the Draft EIR of the Lyons Avenue/ Dockweiler Drive Extension Project. The City of Santa Clarita (City) is the lead agency.

As part of the project, the City proposes to create a new at-grade highway-rail crossing of the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) tracks and Lyons Avenue, and potentially upgrade or close the at-grade crossing at 13<sup>th</sup> Street, identified as CPUC crossing No. 101VY-30.39 and DOT No. 746016J. Currently, the Southern California Regional Rail Authority (SCRRA) and the Union Pacific Railroad Company (UPRR) operate thirty passenger trains and nine freight trains over this line per day, respectively, at a maximum speed of 70 miles per hour.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 3.1**

This comment letter acknowledges that the CPUC has reviewed the DEIR for the Proposed Project. It should be noted that the Proposed Project, as analyzed in the DEIR, includes the closure of the at-grade crossing at 13<sup>th</sup> Street and Railroad Avenue. No further response is required.

**COMMENT 3.2**

Any development adjacent to or near the railroad right of-way (ROW) should be planned with the safety of the rail corridor in mind. New developments will increase traffic volumes not only on streets and at intersections, but also at any adjacent at-grade rail crossing. Language should be in place so that any traffic impact studies undertaken should also address rail crossing safety analysis and associated proposed mitigation measures, including grade separation.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 3.2**

As discussed in Section 2, Project Description, of the DEIR, the Proposed Project includes the addition of an at-grade rail crossing at the current terminus of Lyons Avenue and the Southern Pacific Railroad line and extension of a roadway connection from Lyons Avenue to Dockweiler Drive. The Proposed Project also includes the closure of an at-grade crossing east of the intersection of Railroad Avenue and 13<sup>th</sup> Street. The new at-grade crossing would be built to meet all safety requirements and standards. Improvements would include such features as, but not limited to:

- New railroad signal house;
- Crossing Panels;
- Advance Preemption and railroad signal design;
- Pedestrian gates (4);
- Railroad related signing, striping and legends;
- Blank out sign for northbound traffic making right turn into the eastbound Lyons Avenue;
- New fencing for railroad;
- New driveway to access railroad property for maintenance;
- New vehicular gates (6); and
- New railroad loops.

To clarify, the Proposed Project does not include the construction of any residential, commercial or industrial land uses that would directly create traffic. Rather, the Proposed Project includes the extension of Dockweiler Drive to facilitate a new east-west connection for the Santa Clarita Valley. The Proposed Project is subject to CPUC approval, and as such, the Proposed Project will comply with all applicable construction-related and operational rail crossing safety requirements, including those listed above in this comment. With respect to grade separation analyses, please refer to Response to Comment 3.3 below. No further analysis is required.



**COMMENT 3.3**

The Commission has adopted the Federal Railroad Administration's (FRA) policy to reduce the number of at-grade crossings on freight or passenger railroad mainlines in California. RCEB issued a comment letter in 2009 opposing the grade crossing alternative at Lyons Avenue and a second comment letter issued in 2015 after reviewing the City's Grade Separation Analysis with the same conclusion. While RCEB applauds the City's efforts to upgrade or close the 13<sup>th</sup> Street crossing, RCEB staff remains consistent in our position and opposes the at-grade option at Lyons Avenue due to the following reasons:

- Accident history reveals grade crossings located adjacent to a parallel highway and four-legged intersections are prone to accidents;
- Lyons Avenue will be utilized as a major local arterial between Interstate 5 Freeway and State Route 14, therefore traffic volume and roadway function are not comparable to the existing 13<sup>th</sup> Street crossing;
- Existing railroad mainline contains heavy train traffic, with intercity commuter and freight trains operating in high speed;
- The grade separation options have not been demonstrated as impracticable at this location.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 3.3**

With respect to safety, as discussed above, the Proposed Project is subject to CPUC approval and as such the Proposed Project will comply with all applicable construction-related and operational rail crossing safety requirements, including those listed above in Response to Comment 3.2. With respect grade separation analyses, two alternatives were identified in the DEIR (Refer to Section 6.1 Project Alternatives), but were ultimately rejected as infeasible during the scoping process. The two grade separation alternatives considered but rejected included (1) extending Lyons Avenue to Dockweiler Drive with a bridge over the railroad right-of-way and (2) extending Lyons Avenue to Dockweiler Drive with a below grade underpass under the railroad right-of-way. The physical constraints associated with each of these alternatives led to them being rejected are summarized below.

*Lyons Avenue Overpass Extension to Dockweiler Drive*

The Lyons Avenue Overpass Extension to Dockweiler Drive was considered as a potential option to provide a direct connection from Lyons Avenue to Dockweiler Drive without an at-grade crossing. An illustration of the Lyons Avenue connection to Dockweiler Drive with an overpass crossing Railroad Avenue and the railroad right-of-way is shown in Figure 6.1-2, Lyons Avenue Overpass Alignment (see page 6.1-2 of the DEIR). In order to provide sufficient vertical clearance for the passing trains, Lyons Avenue would be raised approximately 30' above the railroad tracks. Two connections via Walnut Street / 9<sup>th</sup> Street and Walnut Street / 11<sup>th</sup> Street between Lyons Avenue and Railroad Avenue would be established to replace the existing intersection.

As concluded in the DEIR, in addition to adverse impacts to traffic, circulation, utilities and schools (see page 6.1-4 of the DEIR), most of the properties adjacent to Lyons Avenue, Walnut Street, 9<sup>th</sup> Street and

11<sup>th</sup> Street (shown as pink shading on Figure 6.1-2 of the DEIR), would be fully acquired for the grade separation option due to change of grade on Lyons Avenue and loss of access routes. The adjacent residents and businesses would be relocated. In addition, the grade separation option is not consistent with the City's Old Town Newhall Specific Plan. The grade separation would divide the community and cause an unnecessary burden to the residents within the impacted area. Additionally, raising Lyons Avenue over Railroad Avenue, the railroad tracks, and Newhall Creek would physically bisect the existing Newhall community and create a disconnect to the properties on either side of Lyons Avenue. Especially for residents living south of Lyons Avenue, it would require more effort to get to the Old Town Newhall Library on the north side of Lyons Avenue. The front view of the library would be blocked by a retaining wall supporting the roadway embankment of the grade separation. Additionally, 24 parking stalls in the library parking lot would be lost due to the necessary widening on Railroad Avenue for the grade separation. Because this alternative would be disruptive to the existing established community of Old Town Newhall and for the reasons addressed above, this alternative was rejected from further consideration.

#### *Lyons Avenue Underpass Extension to Dockweiler Drive*

The Lyons Avenue Underpass Extension to Dockweiler Drive was considered as another alternative to provide a direct connection from Lyons Avenue to Dockweiler Drive without an at-grade crossing. An illustration of the Lyons Avenue connection to Dockweiler Drive with an underpass crossing Railroad Avenue, the railroad right-of-way, and Newhall Creek is shown in Figure 6.1-3, Lyons Avenue Underpass on page 6.1-6 of the DEIR. As shown in Figure 6.1-3, a roadway bridge for Railroad Avenue, a railroad bridge for railroad tracks and a water bridge for the creek are needed for the underpass. In order to maintain enough vertical clearance from the underpass to the soffits of the bridges, the underpass near the railroad tracks would be approximately 28' below the existing ground. To maintain traffic circulation between Lyons Avenue and Railroad Avenue, two loop connectors via Walnut Street and 11<sup>th</sup> Street to the north, and Walnut Street and 9<sup>th</sup> Street to the south, would be needed. Minor streets such as Main Street will be cul-de-sacs at Lyons Avenue.

For the underpass alternative, a bridge to carry storm water from Newhall Creek would be required so the lowered Lyons Avenue could pass underneath. However, Newhall Creek is a natural flood control channel, instead of a man-made water channel such as the California Aqueduct where flow volume is controlled. The amount of storm water flowing through the bridge would be hard to predict. If a large storm occurred with excess stormwater than the bridge could handle, the underpass would be flooded, and traffic would be interrupted. Moreover, the bridge or the underpass would be susceptible to damage during larger storm events.

Similar to the overpass alternative described above, the underpass alternative would be equally disruptive to the existing established community with respect to traffic circulation, relocation of utilities, impacts to Newhall Elementary School, and community disruption as described above for the Lyons Avenue overcrossing alternative. Therefore, for these reasons the underpass alternative was rejected from further consideration.

**COMMENT 3.4**

If the City intends to move forward with the at-grade option, a formal application must be made to the Commission. The normal timeframe for a formal proceeding usually varies from eight (8) to twelve (12) months but can be longer if the application is contested and evidentiary hearings are held. Please be advised that based on site-specific conditions, train traffic and information provided by the City, RCEB will protest the grade crossing application.

If you have any questions, please contact Chi Cheung To at (213) 576-5766.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 3.4**

This comment letter will be included in the record and forwarded to the decision makers for their consideration. No further response is required.

**COMMENT LETTER No. 4**

County of Los Angeles Fire Department  
Michael Y. Takeshita, Acting Chief, Forestry Division, Prevention Services Bureau  
1320 North Eastern Avenue  
Los Angeles, CA 90063  
Date: September 12, 2017  
Date Received: September 18, 2017

**COMMENT 4.1**

The Notice of Availability of a Draft Environmental Impact Report has been reviewed by the Planning Division, Land Development Unit, Forestry Division, and Health Hazardous Materials Division of the County of Los Angeles Fire Department.

The following are their comments:

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 4.1**

This comment letter acknowledges that the Los Angeles County Fire Department (“LACoFD”) has reviewed the DEIR for the Proposed Project. Responses to comments are provided below. No further response is required.

**COMMENT 4.2****PLANNING DIVISION:**

We have no comments.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 4.2**

LACoFD Planning Division has reviewed the DEIR for the Proposed Project and has no comments on the DEIR. No further response is required.

**COMMENT 4.3****LAND DEVELOPMENT UNIT:**

1. All proposals for traffic calming measures (speed humps/bumps/cushions, traffic circles, roundabouts, etc.) shall be submitted to the Fire Department for review prior to implementation.
2. Provide three sets of alternate route (detour) plans with a tentative schedule of planned closures prior to the beginning of construction. Complete architectural/ structural plans are not necessary.
3. Disruptions to water service shall be coordinated with the County of Los Angeles Fire Department and alternate water sources shall be provided for fire protection during such disruptions.

The County of Los Angeles Fire Department's Land Development Unit appreciates the opportunity to comment on this project.

The statutory responsibilities of the County of Los Angeles Fire Department's Land Development Unit are the review of, and comment on, all projects within the unincorporated areas of the County of Los Angeles. Our emphasis is on the availability of sufficient water supplies for firefighting operations and local/regional access issues. However, we review all projects for issues that may have a significant impact on the County of Los Angeles Fire Department. We are responsible for the review of all projects within contract cities (cities that contract with the County of Los Angeles Fire Department for fire protection services). We are responsible for all County facilities located within non-contract cities. The County of Los Angeles Fire Department's Land Development Unit may also comment on conditions that may be imposed on a project by the Fire Prevention Division which may create a potentially significant impact to the environment.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 4.3**

The Proposed Project is subject to LACoFD review and will comply with all applicable construction-related and operational fire safety and emergency access requirements of the LACoFD, including those listed in the comment above. No further analysis is required.

**COMMENT 4.4****FORESTRY DIVISION- OTHER ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS:**

The statutory responsibilities of the County of Los Angeles Fire Department's Forestry Division include erosion control, watershed management, rare and endangered species, vegetation, fuel modification for

Very High Fire Hazard Severity Zones or Fire Zone 4, archeological and cultural resources, and the County Oak Tree Ordinance.

The County of Los Angeles Fire Department's Forestry Division has no further comments regarding this project.

#### **RESPONSE TO COMMENT 4.4**

LACoFD Forestry Division has reviewed the DEIR for the Proposed Project and has no comments on the DEIR. No further response is required.

#### **COMMENT 4.5**

##### **HEALTH HAZARDOUS MATERIALS DIVISION:**

The Health Hazardous Materials Division of the Los Angeles County Fire Department has no comments or requirements for the project at this time.

If you have any additional questions, please contact this office at (323) 890-4330.

#### **RESPONSE TO COMMENT 4.5**

This comment acknowledges that the LACoFD Health Hazardous Materials Division has reviewed the DEIR for the Proposed Project. No further response is required.

#### **COMMENT LETTER No. 5**

County of Los Angeles, Hall of Justice  
Office of the Sheriff  
Jim McDonnell, Sheriff  
211 West Temple Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90012  
Date: October 26, 2017

#### **COMMENT 5.1**

The Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department (Department) is in receipt of the Notice of Availability of a Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR), dated August 16, 2017, from the City of Santa Clarita (City), for the proposed Lyons Avenue/Dockweiler Drive Extension Project (Project). The proposed Project is located in the Newhall community of the City, and includes the extension of Lyons Avenue from Railroad Avenue to Dockweiler Drive at The Master's University, and the closure of an existing at-grade railroad crossing at the intersection of 13<sup>th</sup> Street and Railroad Avenue. The proposed Project does not include residential, commercial, industrial and other habitable types of development.

The proposed Project is located within the service area of the Department's Santa Clarita Valley Station (Station). Accordingly, the Station reviewed the DEIR and authored the attached review comments (See correspondence, dated October 9, 2017, from Captain Robert J. Lewis). A scanned copy of the correspondence was emailed to you on October 11, 2017.

Thank you for including the Department in the environmental review process for the proposed Project. Should you have any further questions regarding this matter, please contact me at (323) 526-5657, or your staff may contact Ms. Maynora Castro at (323) 526-5578.

#### **RESPONSE TO COMMENT 5.1**

The County of Los Angeles Sheriff's Department Santa Clarita Valley Station ("LASD") has reviewed the DEIR for the Proposed Project. The comment letter submitted by the LASD is provided below as Comment Letter No. 6. Responses to LASD's comment letter are provided below. No further response is required.

#### **COMMENT LETTER No. 6**

County of Los Angeles Sheriff's Department  
Robert J. Lewis, Captain  
Santa Clarita Valley Station  
Date: October 9, 2017

#### **COMMENT 6.1**

The Santa Clarita Valley Station (Station) reviewed the Notice of Availability of a Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR), dated August 16, 2017, for the Lyons Avenue/ Dockweiler Drive Extension Project (Project). The Proposed Project is located in the Newhall community of the City of Santa Clarita (City), and includes the extension of Lyons Avenue from Railroad Avenue to Dockweiler Drive; the addition of a new at-grade railroad crossing east of the Railroad Avenue and Lyons Avenue intersection; the extension of Dockweiler Drive at The Master's University; and the closure of an existing at-grade railroad crossing at the intersection of 13<sup>th</sup> Street and Railroad Avenue. The proposed Project does not include residential, commercial, industrial and other habitable types of development.

#### **RESPONSE TO COMMENT 6.1**

This comment letter acknowledges that the County of Los Angeles Sheriff's Department Santa Clarita Valley Station ("LASD") has reviewed the DEIR for the Proposed Project and accurately restates the Project Description. No further response is required.

#### **COMMENT 6.2**

The proposed Project is intended to relieve existing and projected traffic congestion by reconfiguring, abandoning and/or extending certain street segments, relocating an existing at-grade railroad crossing, and

creating dedicated pedestrian and bicycle lanes. The Station generally supports these types of public improvements because they typically create well-defined separations between vehicular pedestrian, and rail traffic, often resulting in fewer collisions, injuries and damages to personal and private property. Such improvements also tend to contribute to an overall positive impact on law enforcement patrol operations, emergency access, and response times. The Proposed Project also excludes residential, commercial, office, industrial and other habitable types of development that affect the resident, workforce, and visitor populations of the Station's service area. Accordingly, the Station expects the proposed Project to have a less than significant impact on the demand for law enforcement services we provide.

## **RESPONSE TO COMMENT 6.2**

LASD's comments are consistent with the findings of the DEIR as discussed in Section 5.1 Impacts Determined to be Less Than Significant, page 5.1-3, subheading Fire and Police Protection. No further analysis is required.

## **COMMENT 6.3**

DEIR Section 4.9 contains detailed analyses of potential Project-related impacts on local traffic and circulation systems, and concludes that such impacts will be less than significant following implementation of mitigation measures described in Section 4.9.5. The Station does not dispute the information or findings contained in the DEIR. However, we are concerned with construction-related traffic because of potentially significant impacts on commuters, pedestrians, emergency responders, and our patrol operations. The Station recommends the preparation of a construction traffic management plan, requests advanced notification of temporary lane closures, realignments, etc., and requires the provision of one or more emergency lane through the Project site at all times.

## **RESPONSE TO COMMENT 6.3**

In response to LASD's concerns regarding construction, the Proposed Project will require a Construction Management Plan, which shall be submitted to the City of Santa Clarita Public Works Department (Traffic and Transportation Division) and LASD Santa Clarita Valley Station for review and approval prior to the commencement of any construction. The plans shall show the location of any roadway or sidewalk closures, traffic detours, haul routes, hours of operation, protective devices, warning signs and access to abutting properties, and if applicable, the location of off-site staging areas for haul trucks and construction vehicles, and provide one or more emergency lane through the Project site at all times. All construction related traffic shall be restricted to off-peak hours. The County of Los Angeles Sheriff's Department Santa Clarita Valley Station shall receive advance notice prior to any changes in temporary lane closures or realignments. See Section 2, Additions and Corrections and Section 4, Mitigation Monitoring Program of this Final EIR. No further response is required.

**COMMENT 6.4**

Thank you for including the Station in the environmental review process for the proposed Project. Should you have any questions regarding this matter, please contact Operations Lieutenant Justin Diez at (661) 890-5300.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 6.4**

This comment letter has been included in the record and will be forwarded to the decision makers for their consideration. No further analysis is required.

**COMMENT LETTER No. 7**

Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (METRO)  
Derek Hull, Manager, Transportation Planning  
One Gateway Plaza  
Los Angeles, CA 90012  
Date: October 16, 2017

**COMMENT 7.1**

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Notice of Availability of a Draft EIR for the Lyons Avenue/Dockweiler Drive Extension Project located on the City of Santa Clarita. This letter conveys recommendations from the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) concerning issues that are germane to our agency's statutory responsibility in relation to our facilities and services that may be affected by the proposed project.

Metro is committed to working with stakeholders across the County to support the development of transit-oriented communities (TOCs). TOCs are built by considering transit within a broader community and creating vibrant, compact, walkable and bikeable places centered around transit stations and hubs with the goal of encouraging the use of transit and other alternatives to driving. Metro looks forward to collaborating with local municipalities, developers, and other stakeholders in their land use planning and development efforts, and to find partnerships that support TOCs across Los Angeles County.

**Project Description**

The Proposed Project includes: the extension of Lyons Avenue from Railroad Avenue southeast to the proposed connection with Dockweiler Drive, to provide a T-intersection at Dockweiler Drive; the addition of a new at-grade railroad crossing east of the Railroad Avenue and Lyons Avenue intersection; and the extension of Dockweiler Drive from the approved extension a [sic] the Master's University (The Master's University extension of Dockweiler Drive through the Master's University property was approved and evaluated under a separate EIR) northwest to connect with the intersection of Arch Street and 12<sup>th</sup> Street.



**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 7.1**

This comment letter acknowledges that the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) has reviewed the DEIR for the Proposed Project and accurately restates the Project Description. No further response is required.

**COMMENT 7.2**

Metro Comments

*Metrolink Adjacent*

It is noted that the proposed project would extend Lyons Avenue across an existing LACMTA-owned Railroad Right-of-way (ROW). ROW is operated and maintained by the Southern California Regional Rail Authority (SCRRA) to run the Metrolink commuter rail service and Union Pacific Railroad freight trains also operate on this line. SCRRA will be providing separate comments, however, the following concerns related to the project's proximity to the ROW should be addressed in the EIR:

1. The project sponsor is advised that rail service operates in both directions and that trains may operate, in and out of revenue service, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, in the ROW adjacent to the proposed project.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 7.2**

The DEIR recognizes the Southern California Regional Rail Authority (SCRRA) as a responsible Agency in the DEIR. SCRRA has submitted a letter on the DEIR, which is referenced below as Comment Letter No. 9. Response to the SCRRA comment letter are provided below. This comment has been noted for the record and requires no additional analysis with respect to the DEIR.

**COMMENT 7.3**

2. The policy adopted by the SCRRA Board of Director stipulates that if a new at grade crossing is developed, one or more existing at-grade crossings in the area must be closed.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 7.3**

The Proposed Project includes the addition of a new at-grade crossing immediately east of the intersection of Lyons Avenue and Railroad Avenue and the closure of an at-grade crossing to the immediate east of the intersection of 13<sup>th</sup> Street and Railroad Avenue. As such, the Proposed Project would be consistent with this policy and no further analysis is required.

**COMMENT 7.4**

3. It should be noted that railroad crossings are under jurisdiction of the California Public Utility Commission (CPUC). The project sponsor will be required to obtain the necessary

authorization to construct the crossing. This will include demonstrating that a grade separation crossing is not practical.

#### **RESPONSE TO COMMENT 7.4**

The DEIR acknowledges CPUC as a Responsible Agency. CPUC has submitted a comment letter on the DEIR, which is referenced above as Comment Letter No. 3. Responses to CPUC's letter are provided above. With respect to the grade separation analyses as presented in the DEIR, please refer to Response to Comment 3.3 above. No further response is required.

#### **COMMENT 7.5**

4. It is likely that this proposed crossing will include the addition of warning devices, traffic signal modifications, and rail road signaling modifications. These modifications, along with the necessary use of train horns will bring additional noise factors as a result of the project.

#### **RESPONSE TO COMMENT 7.5**

With respect to noise, as discussed in Section 4.8 Noise, of the DEIR, the relocation of the existing railroad crossing signal at 13<sup>th</sup> Street and Railroad Avenue (approximately 1,150 feet south to the Lyons Avenue and Railroad Avenue crossing) would not result in a noticeable change to the ambient noise levels during train events. Therefore, the Proposed Project's noise impacts would be less than significant and no further analysis is required.

#### **COMMENT 7.6**

5. All project development, engineering, and construction efforts must be coordinated with LACMTA Regional Rail, LACMTA Real Estate, and the SCRRA.

#### **RESPONSE TO COMMENT 7.6**

The DEIR identifies LACMTA and SCRRA as Responsible Agencies. Therefore, the construction of the Proposed Project shall be conducted in coordination with the aforementioned agencies. No further response is required.

#### **COMMENT 7.7**

6. Any work Performed on the project infrastructure or property requiring access to the railroad ROW, shall be covered by specific Right-of-Entry permits with specific requirements. These may include permits for construction of infrastructure, and any future repairs, painting, graffiti removal, etc., including the use of overhead of cranes or any other equipment that could potentially impact railroad operations and safety. Frequent access for maintenance tasks such as graffiti removal, will necessitate an active license agreement. This agreement will include an annual license fee, and other requirements that meet safety standards for access to a ROW with active rail operations.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 7.7**

The Proposed Project is subject to LACMTA, CPUC and SCRRA approval and as such the Proposed Project will comply with all applicable construction-related and operational rail crossing safety requirements, including those listed above in this comment. No further analysis is required.

**COMMENT 7.8**

7. Considering the proximity of the proposed project to the railroad ROW, trains will produce noise, vibration and visual impacts. A recorded Noise Easement Deed in favor of Metro is required, a form of which is attached. The easement recorded in the Deed will extend to successors and tenants, as well. In addition, any noise mitigation required for the project will be borne by the developers of the project and not Metro or the operating railroads.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 7.8**

The Proposed Project is subject to LACMTA approval and as such the Proposed Project will comply with all applicable construction-related and operational requirements, including those listed above in this comment. No further analysis is required.

**COMMENT 7.9***Active Transportation*

For Option B of the intersection improvements for Arch Street/12<sup>th</sup> Street/ Placerita Canyon and proposed Dockweiler Drive: Roundabout design shall accommodate people on bicycles. Refer to AASHTO's Guide for the Development of Bicycle Facilities (2012) for consideration of bicycle travel at roundabouts (§4.12.11).

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 7.9**

In the event Option B, as identified in the DEIR is selected, the roundabout would be designed in accordance with the appropriate design features and standards to accommodate bicyclists. The Proposed Project would be subject to the site plan review requirements of the City of Santa Clarita. No further analysis is required.

**COMMENT 7.10***Congestion Management Program*

Beyond impacts to Metro facilities and operations, Metro must also notify the applicant of state requirements. A Transportation Impact Analysis (TIA), with roadway and transit components, is required under the State of California Congestion Management Program (CMP) statute. The CMP TIA Guidelines are published in the "2010 Congestion Management Program for Los Angeles County," Appendix D (attached). The geographic area examined in the TIA must include the following at a minimum:

1. All CMP arterial monitoring intersections, including monitored freeway on/off-ramp intersections, where the proposed project will add 50 or more trips during either the a.m. or p.m. weekday peak hour (of adjacent street traffic).
2. If CMP arterial segments are being analyzed rather than intersections, the study area must include all segments where the proposed project will add 50 or more peak hour trips (total of both directions). Within the study area the TIA must analyze at least one segment between monitored CMP intersections.
3. Mainline freeway-monitoring locations where the project will add 150 or more trips, in either direction, during either the a.m. or p.m. weekday peak hour.
4. Caltrans must also be consulted through the NOP process to identify other specific locations to be analyzed on the state highway system.

The CMP TIA requirement also contains two separate impact studies covering roadways and transit, as outlined in Sections D.8.1- D.9.4. If the TIA identifies no facilities for study based on the criteria above, no further traffic analysis is required. However, projects must still consider transit impacts. For all CMP TIA requirements please see the attached guidelines.

#### **RESPONSE TO COMMENT 7.10**

With respect to a Congestion Management Program (CMP) Transportation Impact Analysis (TIA), the Proposed Project does not include the development of residential, commercial, industrial or other habitable types of development that would generate additional vehicle trips. Rather, the Proposed Project includes implementation of a roadway extension that was previously identified and approved as part of the City's Circulation Element and analyzed and adopted as part of the One Valley One Vision (OVOV) 2010 EIR.

With respect to the traffic analysis component of the CMP TIA, the Proposed Project would include the extension of Lyons Avenue from its existing terminus at Railroad Avenue on the west to the future Master's University Master Plan Dockweiler extension to the east of railroad crossing, which would be consistent with the Circulation Element. As concluded in the Circulation Element, the traffic model conducted for the OVOV EIR indicated that all designated CMP roadway segments within the planning area would operate at level of service (LOS) "E" or better at buildout of the City's General Plan and the County's Area Plan. In conformance with the CMP, the maximum acceptable level of service on CMP roadways within the OVOV Planning Area is LOS "E". Therefore, the Circulation Element is consistent with the Congestion Management Plan.

The traffic analysis conducted for the Circulation Element utilizes the Santa Clarita Valley Consolidated Traffic Model (SCVCTM). This traffic model produces peak hour and average daily trips (ADT) forecasts for the OVOV area roadway system. Buildout land use data from the proposed City General Plan and County Area Plan Land Use Elements was used as the basis for the traffic forecasts. Consistent with the methodology utilized in the Circulation Element, the traffic analysis for the Proposed Project was also based on the SCVCTM. (Refer also to *Traffic Impact Analysis: Dockweiler Drive Alignment Project, Santa Clarita, CA*, prepared by David Evans and Associates, dated August 8, 2017, included in Appendix H of the DEIR). As concluded in Section 4.9 Transportation and Traffic of the DEIR, under the future

year 2035 Proposed Project condition (See Table 4.9-7 Intersection Capacity Analysis – Year 2035 with Proposed Project Condition, page 4.9-26 of the DEIR), with mitigation all study intersections analyzed for the Proposed Project are anticipated to operate at LOS “E” or better.

Additionally, as shown below, the Proposed Project is largely consistent with the anticipated LOS for arterial roadway segments, as analyzed in the OVOV EIR, for the buildout of the proposed City General Plan and County Area Plan. The roadway segments listed below for the Proposed Project would operate at LOS “E” or above. Under the Proposed Project, two roadway segments, Newhall Avenue north of Valle Del Oro and Newhall Avenue north of Sierra Highway, would experience slightly higher ADT as compared to the OVOV plan, and one roadway segment, Sierra Highway north of Dockweiler Drive, would experience slightly less ADT as compared to the OVOV plan. Because the Proposed Project includes a roadway extension and thus would not be generating any new trips, an increase in ADT at one roadway segment would generally be offset by a corresponding decrease of ADT at another intersection.

Roadway Segment	Lanes	Capacity	OVOV General Plan and Area Plan <sup>[a]</sup>			Proposed Project <sup>[b]</sup>		
			Volume	V/C	LOS	Volume	V/C	LOS
1 Dockweiler Drive east of Railroad Avenue	4	36,000	18,000	0.50	A	18,300	0.51	A
2 Dockweiler Drive west of Sierra Highway	4	36,000	24,000	0.67	B	25,100	0.70	B
3 Lyons Avenue west of Main Street	6	54,000	24,000	0.44	A	26,600	0.49	A
4 Newhall Avenue north of Lyons Avenue	4	36,000	1,000	0.03	A	1,400	0.04	A
5 Newhall Avenue south of Lyons Avenue	4	36,000	27,000	0.75	C	26,100	0.73	C
6 Newhall Avenue North of Valle Del Oro	6	54,000	33,000	0.61	B	44,500	0.82	D
7 Newhall Avenue north of Sierra Highway	6	54,000	40,000	0.74	C	44,000	0.81	D
8 Newhall Avenue south of Sierra Highway	6	54,000	50,000	0.93	E	50,700	0.94	E
9 Railroad Avenue north of Lyons Avenue	6	54,000	36,000	0.67	B	32,700	0.61	B
10 Railroad Avenue south of Lyons Avenue	4	36,000	26,000	0.72	C	25,800	0.72	C
11 Sierra Highway north of Dockweiler Drive	6	54,000	40,000	0.74	C	32,500	0.60	A
12 Sierra Highway north of Newhall Avenue	6	54,000	23,000	0.43	A	9,800	0.18	A
13 Sierra Highway south of Newhall Avenue	6	54,000	33,000	0.61	B	32,700	0.61	B

Notes: LOS = Level of Service

Sources:

<sup>[a]</sup> City of Santa Clarita, *One Valley One Vision Draft Program EIR, September 2010, Section 3.2 Transportation and Circulation, Table 3.2-9 Future Level of Service Summary – Arterial Roadways*, pg. 3.2-42.

<sup>[b]</sup> *Traffic Impact Analysis: Dockweiler Drive Alignment Project, Santa Clarita, CA, Figure 4-4: Future Year 2035 Proposed Project Study Intersections*, pg. 42, prepared by David Evans and Associates, dated August 8, 2017.

*Parker Environmental Consultants, 2018.*

While circulation patterns would differ under the buildout of the proposed roadway extension scenario as compared to a “No Build” scenario, the addition of trips in the project vicinity is anticipated to occur as buildout of the general plan continues. Therefore, the Proposed Project would be consistent with the CMP analysis presented in the Circulation Element and a less than significant impact upon the affected CMP roadway segments would occur.

With respect to freeway impacts, under the No Build Scenario for year 2035, SR-14 would experience ADT of approximately 255,900 vehicles. Under the Proposed Project for buildout year 2035, SR-14 would a slight decrease in ADT of approximately 249,500 vehicles. As acknowledged in Caltrans’s comment letter, referenced above as Comment Letter No. 1, project approvals are not expected to result in a direct adverse impact to existing State transportation facilities. No further analysis is required.

#### **COMMENT 7.11**

If you have any questions regarding this response, please contact Derek Hull at 213-922-3051 or by email at DevReview@metro.net. Metro looks forward to reviewing the Final EIR. Please send it to the following address: Metro Development Review One Gateway Plaza MS 99-18-3 Los Angeles, CA 90012-2952

#### **RESPONSE TO COMMENT 7.11**

This comment letter has been included in the record and will be forwarded to the decision makers for their consideration. No further response is required.

#### **COMMENT LETTER No. 8**

The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California  
Jennifer Harriger, Team Manager, Environmental Planning Section  
700 North Alameda Street  
Los Angeles CA, 90012  
October 2, 2017

#### **COMMENT 8.1**

##### Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Lyons Avenue/Dockweiler Drive Extension Project

The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (Metropolitan) has reviewed the Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Lyons Avenue/Dockweiler Drive Extension Project (SCH No. 2013082016). The proposed Project includes the extension of Lyons Avenue from Railroad Avenue southeast to the proposed connection with Dockweiler Drive, to provide a T-intersection at Dockweiler Drive; the addition of a new at-grade railroad crossing east of the Railroad Avenue and Lyons Avenue intersection; and the extension of Dockweiler Drive from the approved extension at The Master’s University northwest to connect with the intersection of Arch Street and 12<sup>th</sup> Street. The proposed Project also includes the closure of an at-grade railroad crossing at the intersection of 13<sup>th</sup> Street and Railroad

Avenue. The intersection at 13<sup>th</sup> Street would be modified, removing the northbound right turn lane and southbound left turn lane and restricting the eastbound through movement.

Metropolitan is a public agency and regional water wholesaler. It is comprised of 26 member public agencies serving approximately 19 million people in portions of six counties in Southern California, including Los Angeles County.

#### **RESPONSE TO COMMENT 8.1**

This comment letter acknowledges that the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (Metropolitan) has reviewed the DEIR for the Proposed Project and accurately restates the Project Description. No further response is required.

#### **COMMENT 8.2**

Metropolitan owns and operates facilities adjacent to the proposed Project Limits. As shown on the attached map, Metropolitan's Foothill Feeder, an approximately 16-foot, 9-inch inside diameter pipeline within fee property rights-of-way, is located north of the proposed Project Limits. There are no Metropolitan facilities within the proposed Project Limits.

Metropolitan must be allowed to maintain its rights-of-way and access to its facilities and properties at all times, to repair and maintain the current condition of those facilities. In order to avoid potential conflicts with Metropolitan's facilities and rights-of-way, we require that any design plans for any activity in the area of Metropolitan's pipelines or facilities be submitted for our review and written approval. Approval of the project is contingent on Metropolitan's approval of design plans for portions of the proposed project that could impact its facilities. Any future design plans associated with this project should be submitted to the attention of Metropolitan's Substructures Team.

Detailed prints of drawings of Metropolitan's pipelines and rights-of-way may be obtained by calling Metropolitan's Substructures Information Line at (213) 217-6564. To assist the applicant in preparing plans that are compatible with Metropolitan's facilities and easements, we have enclosed a copy of the "Guidelines for Developments in the Area of Facilities, Fee Properties, and/or Easement of The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California." Please note that all submitted designs or plans must clearly identify Metropolitan's facilities and rights-of-way.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide input to your planning process and we look forward to receiving future documentation and plans for this project. For further assistance, please contact Ms. Lilia I. Martinez at (213) 217-5656.

#### **RESPONSE TO COMMENT 8.2**

This commenter letter acknowledges that there are no Metropolitan facilities within the project limits. The Proposed Project is subject to review by Metropolitan. As specified in Metropolitan's comment letter, design plans for the Proposed Project shall be compatible with Metropolitan's facilities and easements

and consistent with Metropolitan's "Guidelines for Development in the Area of Facilities, Fee Properties, and/or Easement of the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California". Design plans associated with this project shall be submitted to Metropolitan's Substructures team for approval. As such, no further analysis is required.

**COMMENT LETTER No. 9**

Southern California Gas Company  
James Chuang, Senior Environmental Specialist  
555 Fifth Street  
Los Angeles, CA 90013  
Date: September 15, 2017

**COMMENT 9.1**

Southern California Gas Company (SoCalGas) appreciates the opportunity to review and respond to the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the Lyons Avenue/Dockweiler Drive Extension Project. SoCalGas understands that the proposed project would involve an extension of Lyons Avenue from Railroad Avenue southeast to connect with Dockweiler Drive, creating a T-intersection. The project would also include the addition of a new at-grade railroad crossing east of the Railroad Avenue and Lyons Avenue intersection, as well as another extension of Dockweiler Drive from the approved extension at The Master's University northwest to connect with the intersection of Arch Street and 12<sup>th</sup> Street.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 9.1**

This comment letter acknowledges that the Southern California Gas Company ("SoCalGas") has reviewed the DEIR for the Proposed Project. No further response is required.

**COMMENT 9.2**

We respectfully request that the following comments be incorporated in the administrative record for the DEIR:

- SoCalGas has several underground facilities in the area that the proposed road extension would traverse. These include a high-pressure transmission line 24 inches in diameter, at the Lyons Avenue/Railroad Avenue intersection. Several medium pressure distribution lines located at the Lyons Avenue/Railroad Avenue intersection and along 12<sup>th</sup> Street and Placerita Canyon Road where the proposed extension would cross.
- SoCalGas recommends that the project proponent call Underground Service Alert at 811 at least two business days prior to performing any excavation work for the proposed project. Underground Service Alert will coordinate with SoCalGas and other Utility owners in the area to mark the locations of buried utility-owned lines.



- Should it be determined that the proposed project may require SoCalGas to abandon and/or relocate or otherwise modify any portion of its existing natural gas lines, SoCalGas respectfully requests that the County and/or the project proponent coordinate with us by calling (800) 427-2000 for Non-residential to follow-up on this matter.

## **RESPONSE TO COMMENT 9.2**

While impacts to utilities were determined to be less than significant (refer to Section 5.1 Impacts Determined to be Less Than Significant of the DEIR), the Final EIR will include mitigation to ensure that locations of buried utility-owned lines are marked prior to commencement of excavation work for the Proposed Project. Additionally, mitigation will be incorporated into the Final EIR to ensure that the abandonment and/or relocation and/or modification of any portion of an existing natural gas lines is coordinated with SoCalGas. See Section 2, Additions and Corrections, of this Final EIR. The addition of these mitigation measures does not change the impact conclusion with respect to utilities. No further analysis is warranted.

## **COMMENT 9.3**

Once again, we appreciate the opportunity to comment on the DEIR. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact SoCalGas Environmental Review at [Envreview@semprautilities.com](mailto:Envreview@semprautilities.com) or (213) 244-5817.

## **RESPONSE TO COMMENT 9.3**

This comment letter has been included in the record and will be forwarded to the decision makers for their consideration. No further response is required.

## **COMMENT LETTER No. 10**

The Southern California Regional Rail Authority (SCRRA)  
Roderick Diaz, Director Planning & Development  
One Gateway Plaza, 12<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Los Angeles, CA 90012  
Date: October 16, 2017

## **COMMENT 10.1**

The Southern California Regional Rail Authority (SCRRA) has received the above noted DEIR for the Lyons Avenue/Dockweiler Drive Extension Project. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on key issues relative to SCRRA and operations of the railroad that crosses the project location. As background information, SCRRA is a five-county Joint Powers Authority (JPA) that operates the regional commuter rail system known as Metrolink. Additionally, SCRRA provides rail engineering, construction, operations and maintenance services to its five JPA member agencies. The JPA consists of the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (METRO), San Bernardino County

Transportation Authority (SBCTA), Orange County Transportation Authority (OCTA), Riverside County Transportation Commission (RCTC) and Ventura County Transportation Commission (VCTC). The railroad right of way where the project is located is owned by Metro and operated, dispatched and maintained by SCRRA.

The Lyons Avenue extension project (as proposed) would be located at railroad milepost 30.16 on our Valley Subdivision rail line. Currently, there are 30 Metrolink commuter trains and 5 Union Pacific (UPRR) freight trains that pass this location on a daily basis.

#### **RESPONSE TO COMMENT 10.1**

This comment letter acknowledges that the Southern California Regional Rail Authority (“SCRRA”) has reviewed the DEIR for the Proposed Project. No further response is required.

#### **COMMENT 10.2**

As this project involves a new at-grade crossing proposal of the very active rail line we offer the following initial comments:

1. **Noise from warning devices and train horns will be generated from creation of new at-grade crossing.** Trains operate 7 days a week and 24 hours a day. Trains do generate noise both from operations and also from Federal requirements to sound their horn as warning to pedestrians and motorists when approaching at-grade crossings.

#### **RESPONSE TO COMMENT 10.2**

While this comment does not raise specific concerns with respect to the environmental analysis of the DEIR, nonetheless, as disclosed in Section 4.8 Noise, of the DEIR, the relocation of the existing railroad crossing signal at 13<sup>th</sup> Street and Railroad Avenue (approximately 1,150 feet south to the Lyons Avenue and Railroad Avenue crossing) would not result in a noticeable change to the ambient noise levels during train events. Therefore, the Proposed Project’s noise impacts would be less than significant. No further analysis is required.

#### **COMMENT 10.3**

2. **SCRRA’s adopted policies discourage the creation of new at-grade crossings.** [sic] SCRRA has adopted Resolution 98-21 Regarding Highway-Rail Grade Crossings (Exhibit A) and a new SCRRA *Highway-Rail Grade Crossings Recommended Design Practices and Standards Manual*. In Chapter 7.4 of the manual it states that “Before considering a new highway-rail grade crossing, the first alternative that should always be considered is a grade-separated crossing.” In Resolution 98-21 it states in Item 2 that SCRRA *shall oppose the creation of new rail- highway grade crossings to the extent feasible on all regional passenger rail lines*. Item 6 of the same resolution states that *The SCRRA would support the creation of a new rail-highway grade crossing only if improvements to other grade crossings, including elimination of grade crossing(s), are made part*

*of the creation of the new grade crossing which together clearly improve public convenience and safety.* In order for SCRRA to even consider the possibility of supporting a new at-grade crossing the City would have to prove that adequate mitigation measures would be in place to make the new crossing application package safer than what exists today. A closure of a smaller less used at-grade crossing for a new larger multi-lane at-grade crossing (1 for 1 swap) does not prove that the overall safety factor for all crossings would be increased. A clear “reduction in risk” for SCRRA and member agency Metro must be clearly shown. Your DEIR only shows closing 13<sup>th</sup> Street and opening of a new multi-lane crossing of Lyons Avenue. Other safety mitigation measures could include the closure of other at-grade crossings within the city’s jurisdiction, and upgrade of other existing at-grade crossings to the latest standards as noted in the Design Manual (refer to SCRRA’s previous letter response to NOP of DEIR dated 10-22-13 for possible other safety mitigations).

### RESPONSE TO COMMENT 10.3

With respect to safety, the Proposed Project is subject to SCRRA approval and as such the Proposed Project will comply with all applicable construction-related and operational rail crossing safety requirements, including those listed Section 2, Project Description of, the DEIR. Refer also to Response to Comment 3.2, above. Additionally, the Alternative 2 Project, which was identified as the Environmentally Superior Alternative, as discussed in Section 6.4 and Section 6.5 of the DEIR, would include infrastructure and traffic improvements to the intersection of 13<sup>th</sup> Street and Railroad Avenue and the at-grade crossing to accommodate the proposed extension of Dockweiler Drive to Arch Street. Under this alternative, Lyons Avenue would not be extended and the current terminus would remain. As such, no new crossing would occur. This comment has been noted for the record and will be forwarded to the decision makers for their consideration. No further response is required.

### COMMENT 10.4

3. **A formal application to the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) needs to be made** with letters of concurrence from all stakeholders (Metro, SCRRA and UPRR). The CPUC has ultimate jurisdiction for approval of new at- grade crossings in California. Our preference at this time would be that a grade separated crossing proposal be put in place in lieu of the at-grade option.

### RESPONSE TO COMMENT 10.4

A formal application for the Proposed Project will be submitted to the CPUC. With respect grade separation analyses, two alternatives were identified in the DEIR (Refer to Section 6.1 Project Alternatives), but were ultimately rejected as infeasible during the scoping process. The two grade separation alternatives considered but rejected included (1) extending Lyons Avenue to Dockweiler Drive with a bridge over the railroad right-of-way and (2) extending Lyons Avenue to Dockweiler Drive with a below grade underpass under the railroad right-of-way. The physical constraints associated with each of these alternatives led to them being rejected. Please refer also to Response to Comment 3.3 above. This

comment has been noted for the record and will be forwarded to the decision makers for their consideration. No further response is required.

#### **COMMENT 10.5**

4. **At-grade crossing creates operational and safety issues.** The location of the proposed crossing would traverse 2 tracks in the immediate vicinity of an SCRRA control point (CP Hood). The location of the crossing signals and gates could impact line of sight for train engineer needing to see the controlling signals for CP Hood to move from one track to another. This potential operational issue could force relocation or modifications to the control point at city's expense.

#### **RESPONSE TO COMMENT 10.5**

With respect to safety, the Proposed Project is subject to SCRRA approval, and as such, the Proposed Project will comply with all applicable construction-related and operational rail crossing safety requirements, including those listed Section 2, Project Description, of the DEIR. Refer also to Response to Comment 3.2, above. This comment has been noted for the record and will be forwarded to the decision makers for their consideration. No further response is required.

#### **COMMENT 10.6**

5. **A new at-grade crossing so close to an existing station could present additional traffic impacts when the trains are sitting in the station.** The gates would either stay down or have to time-out and go back up when the train is stopped in the station. A thorough analysis would have to be done to determine if an at-grade crossing is feasible within the control point location. The traffic impacts if the gates remain in the down position to the new intersection should be studied. This type of situation exists at other Metrolink station locations near crossings and does present some safety concerns and complaints.

#### **RESPONSE TO COMMENT 10.6**

The Proposed Project would include a new at-grade crossing at the proposed extension of Lyons Avenue from Railroad Avenue. The Proposed Project would include the closure of the existing at-grade crossing at 13<sup>th</sup> Street and Railroad Avenue. The new crossing would be located approximately 0.25 mile north of the existing at-grade crossing located at Market Street. Similar to existing conditions, the Proposed Project would not provide access between Dockweiler Drive to Market Street. Therefore, in the event that railroad gates are in a down position at the new crossing at Lyons Avenue, when a train is stopped at the Metrolink station to the south, the traffic on Market Street would remain unaffected by the new at-grade crossing. Additionally, under the Alternative 2 Project, the 13<sup>th</sup> Street at-grade crossing would remain and no at-grade crossing would occur at Lyons Avenue and Railroad Avenue. As such, future conditions would be similar to existing conditions at 13<sup>th</sup> Street under the Alternative 2 Project, with respect to when a train is stopped at the Metrolink station to the south. The Proposed Project is subject to SCRRA approval and as such the Proposed Project will comply with all applicable operational rail crossing safety improvements and technology with respect to control point locations, crossing signals and gates to

minimize disruptions to both vehicular, pedestrian and train circulation. No further analysis of this issue is warranted at this time.

**COMMENT 10.7**

6. **Pedestrian safety and potential trespassing issues** to and from the Newhall Station should be considered in the design of Lyons Avenue extension. An additional safety concern would be the fact that the shortest route for pedestrians using the new proposed crossing to get to the station would be to trespass into the railroad right of way from the sidewalk and off the ends of the existing platforms. Trespassing in the right of way to or from the station would need to be addressed.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 10.7**

With respect to safety the Proposed Project is subject to SCRRRA approval and as such the Proposed Project will comply with all applicable construction-related and operational rail crossing safety requirements, including those listed Section 2, Project Description, of the DEIR. Refer also to Response to Comment 3.2, above. This comment has been noted for the record and will be forwarded to the decision makers for their consideration. No further response is required.

**COMMENT 10.8**

If you have any questions on this DEIR, please contact Ron Mathieu at 213-452-0456 or via e-mail at [mathieur@scrra.net](mailto:mathieur@scrra.net).

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 10.8**

This comment letter has been included in the records and will be forwarded to the decision makers for their consideration. No further response is required.

**COMMENT LETTER No. 11**

Placerita Canyon Property Owners Association (PCPOA)

Date: September 28, 2017

**COMMENT 11.1**

PCPOA applauds the City for recognizing the physical and environmental challenges of the Lyon [sic] to Dockweiler extension.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 11.1**

The Placerita Canyon Property Owner's Association ("PCPOA") has submitted a comment letter on the Proposed Project, responses to their concerns are provided below. No further response is required.

**COMMENT 11.2**

We have always favored the Market Street connection and continue to do so.

Here's what we favor: bring Dockweiler, as planned, down to Arch or Pine. Instead of having traffic bear right to 13<sup>th</sup> Street crossing, have it bear left to Market Street.

Market Street is an already-improved crossing. Traffic can go right, left or straight. It leads both to Railroad for north and south travel or directly into Downtown Newhall.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 11.2**

As disclosed in the DEIR in Section 6.1, the Market Street Alternative was rejected from further consideration due to the physical constraints associated with grading, as well as the Alternative's incompatibility with respect to public safety and local residential street standards (See Section 6.1, page 6.1-2 of the DEIR). Specifically, this alternative was rejected from further consideration due to the resulting 11.15% gradient of the roadway profile resulting from the existing topographical gradient between Market Street and Dockweiler Drive and the relatively sharp curve at the base of an incline where the alignment would connect to Market Street. A gradient of 11.15% would not meet the street standards of a secondary highway and would potentially result in unsafe roadway conditions. Additionally, Market Street is a local residential street that directly abuts and provides access to single and multi-family residential land uses. The proposed alignment of Dockweiler Drive through this existing residential neighborhood would not be consistent with the alignment identified within the Circulation Element and would not be compatible with respect to public safety and local residential street standards. This alternative alignment was rejected as infeasible.

As further discussed in Response to Comment 12.38 below, and in Section 2 Additions and Corrections, under additional Market Street analysis, in response to public comments, the City of Santa Clarita re-examined the feasibility of an alternative route from Market Street to the proposed Dockweiler Drive roadway extension at The Master's University limits. Despite meeting a 6% grade, this alternative remains infeasible because it would not align with the proposed and approved terminus of Dockweiler Drive to The Master's University. Furthermore, this alternative would require the partial acquisition of 17 parcels, including the existing Newhall Metrolink Station, the Newhall Community Center and the Veteran Memorial Plaza to allow for a 92-foot right-of-way to comply with secondary highway roadway standards, which would disrupt the pedestrian-friendly character and transit oriented environment of Market Street, which is contrary to the objects identified in the Old Town Newhall Specific Plan. Therefore, the Market Street Alternative would actually result in increased impacts with respect to land use and planning impacts. Refer also to Response to Comment 11.3 below. The commenter's opinion has been noted for the record and will be forwarded to the decision makers for their consideration. No further response is required.

**COMMENT 11.3**

13<sup>th</sup> Street, on the other hand is a T-intersection. No matter how much it is improved, it will remain a T-intersection. It has many drawbacks:

- It floods easily.
- It is often overcrowded with long waits.
- It does not lead directly to any destination.
- Traffic waiting to turn in from the north often lines up past 14<sup>th</sup> Street cutting off a lane of traffic on Railroad.
- The U-turn allowed from the north further impedes access.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 11.3**

The commenter's concerns with respect to the existing conditions observed at the intersection of 13<sup>th</sup> Street and Railroad Avenue are noted for the record. Additionally, the Alternative 2 Project, which was analyzed in Section 6.4 of the DEIR, would include infrastructure and traffic improvements to accommodate the proposed extension of Dockweiler Drive and improve vehicle and pedestrian safety and circulation, similar to the Proposed Project.

As shown in Figure 6.4-2 (see page 6.4-3 of the DEIR), the existing westbound travel lanes on 13<sup>th</sup> Street approaching Railroad Avenue would be improved with two westbound lanes and a median, with one dedicated left turn lane, one shared through lane and left turn lane, and one dedicated right turn lane. The eastbound traffic lanes on 13<sup>th</sup> Street would be improved to provide two through travel lanes. The existing median nose on Railroad Avenue would be removed to reconfigure the four southbound lanes to provide two protected left turn lanes, one dedicated through lane and one shared right turn lane and through lane. The northbound lanes on Railroad Avenue would provide two through lanes, one protected left turn lane and one protected right turn lane.

Additionally, Alternative 2, with implementation of mitigation, would result in reduced vehicle delays during A.M. and P.M. peak hours at the intersection of Railroad Avenue and 13<sup>th</sup> Street as compared to the No Build Conditions for both the 2019 and 2035 buildout year scenarios. This comment has been included in the record and will be forwarded to the decision makers for their consideration. No further analysis with respect to the environmental analysis is warranted.

**COMMENT 11.4**

The 13<sup>th</sup> Street crossing is within Placerita Canyon's Special Standards District in which the City guarantees our rural equestrian neighborhood. Directing more traffic into the Special Standards District will require a General Plan Amendment.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 11.4**

The 13<sup>th</sup> Street crossing is an already existing intersection. The Alternative 2 Project would include infrastructure and traffic improvements to accommodate the proposed extension of Dockweiler Drive to Arch Street and improve vehicle and pedestrian safety and circulation. The commenter does not provide substantial evidence, pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21080(e) (2), to support their assertion that the Alternative 2 Project is in conflict or inconsistent with the provisions of the PCSSD. As disclosed in the DEIR, similar to the Proposed Project, the Alternative 2 Project would be in compliance with the applicable standards identified in the PCSSD. Additionally, as discussed above in Response to Comment 11.3, Alternative 2, with implementation of mitigation, would result in reduced vehicle delays during A.M. and P.M. peak hours at the intersection of Railroad Avenue and 13<sup>th</sup> Street as compared to the No Build Conditions for both the 2019 and 2035 buildout year scenarios. Therefore, no further analysis with respect to the DEIR is warranted.

**COMMENT 11.5**

Please choose the simplest and best alternative and take the Dockweiler traffic down to Arch or Pine and then over to Market Street.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 11.5**

As disclosed in the DEIR in Section 6.1, the Market Street Alternative was evaluated and rejected from further consideration due to the physical constraints associated with grading, as well as the Alternative's incompatibility with respect to public safety and local residential street standards (See Section 6.1, page 6.1-2 of the DEIR). See also Response to Comment 12.38, below, and Section 2. Additions and Corrections, Market Street Alignment Additional Analysis. This comment has been noted for the record and will be forwarded to the decision makers for their consideration. The commenter does not raise a specific issue with respect to the environmental analysis presented in the DEIR, and as such no further response is required.

**COMMENT 11.6**

Our horse people are adamant – no roundabout, unsafe!! [sic] That's been stated for years!

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 11.6**

In the event "Option B", as identified in the DEIR (See Figure 2-12) is selected, the traffic circle would be designed in accordance with the appropriate design features and standards and would be subject to the site plan review requirements of the City of Santa Clarita. No further analysis is required.



**COMMENT LETTER No. 12**

Law Offices, Graham • Vaage LLP  
Arnold K. Graham  
801 North Brand Boulevard, Suite 1180  
Glendale California 91203  
October 13, 2017

**COMMENT 12.1**

*Re: Objection by Placerita Canyon Property Owner's Association to the Lyons Avenue DEIR Proposed At-Grade Rail Crossing and its relationship to the Dockweiler Drive Alignment Project ("Dockweiler Project")*

Dear Mayor Smyth and Council Members:

This office represents the interests of the Placerita Canyon Property Owner's Association ("PCPOA") and its members in regard to their opposition to the above-referenced proposed Lyons Avenue At-Grade Rail Crossing Project ("Lyons Avenue Project"), and its nexus to the proposed Dockweiler Project. The Lyons Avenue Project is required to be tied to the proposed Dockweiler Project.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 12.1**

This comment identifies the commenter and its representation of the PCPOA's interests and objection to the Proposed Project. The commenter's assertion that there is a nexus between the previously proposed Lyons Avenue At-Grade Rail Crossing Project ("Lyons Avenue Project") and the proposed Lyons Avenue/Dockweiler Drive Extension Project (the "Proposed Project") is incorrect. For clarification, the Lyons Avenue At-Grade Rail Crossing Project DEIR was prepared in 2010 as a staged EIR to evaluate the impacts of an at-grade rail crossing at Lyons Avenue and the closure of the 13<sup>th</sup> Street at-grade rail crossing. The Lyons Avenue At-Grade Rail Crossing Project DEIR did not propose or analyze connecting Lyons Avenue to Dockweiler Drive. That DEIR was published in March 2010 but was never completed or certified as a Final EIR. In response to public comments on the Lyons Avenue At-Grade Rail Crossing Project DEIR, the City decided to abandon that project for the Proposed Dockweiler Drive Extension Project. Due to the length of time that had lapsed between the circulation of the DEIR for the Lyons Avenue At-Grade Crossing EIR, and substantial revisions and analysis entailed with the revised project, the City decided to proceed with an entirely new project and issued a Notice of Preparation (NOP) in August 2013. As such, the proposed Lyons Avenue/Dockweiler Drive Extension Project is a stand-alone Project EIR and does not tier off of the previous DEIR prepared for the Lyons Avenue At-Grade Rail Crossing Project. Responses to the commenter's concerns with respect to CEQA are provided below.

**COMMENT 12.2**

As a first point, the Dockweiler Project is neither wanted nor needed especially by that sector of the Santa Clarita that will be the most significantly and severely adversely impacted, namely, PCPOA.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 12.2**

The commenter's opinion has been noted for the record and will be forwarded to the decision-makers for their consideration. No further response with regards to the DEIR is warranted.

**COMMENT 12.3**

The approval of the Dockweiler Project and the Lyons Avenue Crossing Project are in derogation to the protections intended by the Placerita Canyon Special Standards District, enacted "to protect, maintain, preserve and enhance the secluded, rural equestrian character of the community." In fact, if and when constructed, the Dockweiler Project will eviscerate the protections intended Placerita Canon [sic] Special Standards District to protect the community against uncontrolled development in the future, and to protect against harm and damage to the existing community, its structures, and its residents.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 12.3**

With respect to the commenter's reference to the Lyons Avenue Crossing Project, see Response to Comment 12.1. The commenter's assertion that Proposed Project would violate the protections guaranteed by the PCSSD is not substantiated. The commenter has not provided any specific examples of how the Project is in conflict or inconsistent with the provisions of the PCSSD, which are established in Chapter 17.39.020, of the Santa Clarita Municipal Code (SCMC). As disclosed in the DEIR, the Proposed Project was properly identified as being located in the PCSSD. Additionally, the DEIR included a detailed analysis evaluating the consistency of the Proposed Project to the specific applicable development standards for the PCSSD area. As analyzed in Section 4.7, Table 4.7-3, page 4.7-18, of the DEIR, the Proposed Project is in substantial compliance with the standards identified in the PCSSD. Therefore, no further analysis with respect to the DEIR is warranted.

**COMMENT 12.4**

The City is proposing to construct the Proposed Dockweiler Drive Alignment Project directly through the heart and in violation of the Placerita Canyon Special Standards District, by extending Dockweiler Avenue to extend it to Lyons Avenue, across the SCRRA railroad tracks, essentially connecting Sierra Highway (even though it will never be connected to an onramp to the 14 Freeway because it is too close to the existing freeway connections at Placerita Canyon and Newhall Avenue), by formalizing Dockweiler into becoming a major bypass to divert and redirect tens of thousands of cars daily from the 14 Freeway directly through the Placerita Special Standards District, across the proposed Lyons Avenue Crossing, and into the commercial center of Santa Clarita, then connecting on to the 1-5 Freeway. (See previous report of Arthur L. Kassan, P.E., dated May 26, 2010, submitted by PCPOA, incorporated herein by this reference.)

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 12.4**

This comment describes the Proposed Project's alignment of Dockweiler Drive to Lyons Avenue. As noted in the DEIR, the proposed connection and extension of Lyons Avenue to Dockweiler Drive is

identified in the Circulation Element of the City's General Plan as one of the primary east-west arterials through the City of Santa Clarita that would provide a through connection from Sierra Highway to Railroad Avenue. The purpose of the EIR is to analyze the environmental impacts that would result from the construction and operation of the Proposed Project and analyze alternatives to the Proposed Project that may be effective in reducing or avoiding environmental impacts. With respect to the incorporation of the letter prepared by Arthur L. Kassen in 2010 (in response to the Lyons Avenue At-Grade Crossing EIR), see Response to Comment 12.1, above. With respect to the Proposed Project's consistency with PCSSD, please refer to Response to Comment 12.3 above. The commenter does not raise specific issues with respect to the DEIR for the Proposed Project and as such, no further analysis is required.

#### **COMMENT 12.5**

The City attempts to sanctify the intended Dockweiler Project in conjunction with the Lyons Avenue Project premised on its contention that they are consistent with the General Plan which, of course, presupposes that the General Plan was flawless, which it clearly is not because it never proffered a specific combined Dockweiler / Lyons Project [sic] which was subjected or has met current CEQA standards. The City has admitted such in its DEIR.<sup>1</sup>

#### **RESPONSE TO COMMENT 12.5**

With respect to the General Plan, as disclosed and analyzed in the DEIR, the extension of Dockweiler Drive is identified in the Circulation Element as a major new roadway. The extension, as proposed in the Circulation Element, would complete the approved roadway connection from Railroad Avenue to Sierra Highway. The Proposed Project includes the extension of Lyons Avenue from Railroad Avenue to the approved alignment of Dockweiler Drive at The Master's University site. The Master's University extension of Dockweiler Drive through The Master's University property was evaluated under a separate EIR (The Master's College Master Plan DEIR, dated July 2008, and Final EIR, dated October 2008. SCH No. 2004021002), and approved in 2009. As shown in Section 4.7, Table 4.7-2 on page 4.7-10, the Proposed Project would be in substantial compliance with the goals, objectives, and policies of the Circulation Element.

The footnote referenced by the commenter is a mischaracterization of the text as it appears in the DEIR. The text is in reference to the Market Street Alignment, not the Proposed Project, as suggested by the commenter. The residential community referenced in this text is located immediately south of Market Street. The paragraph in its entirety is located in Section 6.1 Introduction, page 6.1-2, of the DEIR:

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<sup>1</sup> *"The proposed alignment of Dockweiler Drive through this existing residential neighborhood would not be consistent with the alignment identified within the Circulation Element and would not be compatible with respect to public safety and local residential street standards"*

*“Additionally, Market Street is a local residential street that directly abuts and provides access to single and multi-family residential land uses. The proposed alignment of Dockweiler Drive through this existing residential neighborhood would not be consistent with the alignment identified within the Circulation Element and would not be compatible with respect to public safety and local residential street standards. For this reason, this alternative alignment was rejected as infeasible.”*

Furthermore, it should be noted that the Market Street alignment was considered but dismissed as a feasible project alternative as it would result in increased environmental impacts as compared to the Proposed Project. Pursuant to Section 15126.6(c) of the CEQA Guidelines, “the range of potential alternatives to the proposed project shall include those that could feasibly accomplish most of the basic objectives of the project and could avoid or substantially lessen one or more of the significant effects. The EIR should briefly describe the rationale for selecting the alternatives to be discussed. The EIR should also identify any alternatives that were considered by the lead agency but were rejected as infeasible during the scoping process and briefly explain the reasons underlying the lead agency’s determination. Additional information explaining the choice of alternatives may be included in the administrative record. Among the factors that may be used to eliminate alternatives from detailed consideration in an EIR are: (i) failure to meet most of the basic project objectives, (ii) infeasibility, or (iii) inability to avoid significant environmental impacts.” Because the Market Street alternative was found to not reduce or eliminate the Project’s significant environmental impacts and was found to result in increased environmental impacts in terms of expanding the development footprint through Newhall Creek, requiring additional grading, and connecting a major roadway to a residential street, this alternative was rejected from further consideration.

#### **COMMENT 12.6**

As a bureaucratic diversion intended to dilute any opposition to the Dockweiler Project and its eventual intended tie to the Lyons Crossing, purported “alternatives” to the Lyons Avenue Crossing have been referenced in the form of crossings at 13<sup>th</sup> Street and Market Street, neither of which provides any support for the Dockweiler Project and its intended resulting flow of thousands of additional vehicles through the Placerita Specific Standards District.

#### **RESPONSE TO COMMENT 12.6**

With respect to the commenter’s opinion regarding the alternatives presented in the DEIR, as stated in Section 6.1 Introduction, page 6.1-1, pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(a), an EIR is required to describe a range of reasonable alternatives to the project, or to the location of the project, which would feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the project but would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project, and evaluate the comparative merits of the alternatives. The commenter’s opinion has been noted for the record and will be forwarded to the decision-makers for their consideration. No further response with regards to the DEIR is warranted.

**COMMENT 12.7**

Aside from the major intended increase in traffic volume on Dockweiler, the proposed construction on Dockweiler itself will not meet current highway safety standards, as the gradient of 11.5% (based on the City's own analyses) far exceeds the legally allowable grade of less than 6%, immediately disqualifying Dockweiler [sic] from available federal and state funding, causing the City to have to bear the sole cost and expense of millions of dollars to construct a substandard cross-town highway. In short, the Dockweiler Project effectively drops straight down a cliff to reach the river grade before crossing the railroad.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 12.7**

The commenter incorrectly states that the Proposed Project will not meet safety standards based on the grading. As concluded in the DEIR, the Proposed Project would be built to the adopted roadway standards for Secondary Highway of the City's Circulation Element. The extent of grading and contour of the proposed roadway extension is illustrated in Figure 2-14, Proposed Dockweiler Drive Alignment and Grading Plan Profile (See page 2-22 of the DEIR). As shown in Figure 2-14, the maximum gradient of the Dockweiler Drive extension is 4.67%. The commenter's assertion that the proposed alignment has a gradient of 11.5% is incorrect and not supported by the information presented in the DEIR. The commenter's opinion has been noted for the record and will be forwarded to the decision-makers for their consideration.

**COMMENT 12.8**

Even more egregious is that the Dockweiler Project which would funnel these thousands of additional vehicles would be on a roadway that would be only 10-15 feet from some of the existing structures in an established multiple family and condominium community.<sup>2</sup>

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 12.8**

The commenter is referring to the multi-family residential community located along Dockweiler Drive to the southeast of the Proposed Project, which lies outside of the limits of the Proposed Project. Furthermore, the construction of Tract No. 32365 in which the commenter is referring to included the construction of Dockweiler Drive as a major roadway with a 73 foot right-of-way and was designed as a major roadway. While Dockweiler Drive currently terminates at the western limits of Tract No. 32365, it was designed to continue westward as a major roadway consistent with the City's Circulation Element. The portion of Dockweiler that extends from the Master's University to the current terminus of Dockweiler was evaluated under a separate EIR (The Master's College Master Plan DEIR, dated July 2008, and Final EIR, dated October 2008. SCH No. 2004021002), and was approved in 2009. The

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<sup>2</sup> *If Dockweiler is constructed with two lanes of traffic in each direction, it would be extremely close to the existing condominiums at the top of the hill, even though former Community Development Director Paul Brotzman deceptively pledged to those residents that the planned expansion would never be built.*

commenter's concerns have been noted for the record and will be forwarded to the decision-makers for their consideration. No further environmental analysis is warranted.

#### **COMMENT 12.9**

An even further defect on the list of defective analyses is the fact that the proposed Lyons Crossing will expose the railroad tracks to erosion and flood damage, as the constriction of the water course by the proposed Lyons Crossing would [sic] raise the water level under high water storm flows that overtop the elevation of the railroad.<sup>3</sup> Placerita Canyon is already susceptible to poor runoff creating flooding on 12<sup>th</sup> Street near Placeritos, 13<sup>th</sup> Street, and other areas. Such constriction of water flow in the water course will exacerbate the already-existing water flow, flooding, and drainage issues.

#### **RESPONSE TO COMMENT 12.9**

As discussed in detail in Section 4.6 Hydrology and Water Quality, a post-Project hydraulic model was analyzed to determine the impacts of inundation and flooding (See *Hydraulic and Scour Analysis Newhall Creek at Proposed Dockweiler Road Bridge, Newhall, California*, prepared by Rivertech, Inc., dated February 2015 ("Hydraulic Report"), (See Appendix G of the DEIR). The hydrology and scour analysis concluded that the Proposed bridge spanning the banks of Newhall Creek would accommodate the Capital Flood, i.e., no overtopping of the road, and will not create any flood hazard for the adjacent railroad and proposed street improvements. The bridge conveys both the 50-year burn/bulk and FIS 100-year flood flows with more than 2 feet of freeboard. Therefore, the construction of the bridge would not be detrimental to adjacent upstream or downstream properties (See also page 4.6-14 of the DEIR). Additionally, improvements to Newhall Creek would be designed in accordance with current regulatory and State permitting agencies. As concluded in the DEIR, impacts associated with flooding would be less than significant and no further analysis of this issue is required.

#### **COMMENT 12.10**

Yet another unexplored issue relating to any expansion of Dockweiler is MWD's announced intention to expand its services with its planned 20 foot in diameter parallel feed pipe through the Dockweiler alignment.

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<sup>3</sup> *Mike Hennaway [sic] of City of Santa Clarita stated in a December 14, 2009 email to Craig Kwasviewski, Senior Hydrologist/ Project Engineer with HMK Engineering, that "...the profile of the (proposed Lyon's) bridge ... is below the Water Surface Elevation ("WSE") for both a 100 year clear flow and a 50 year burned-and-bulked flow," which means that the bridge would be beneath the level of flood waters in Newhall Creek, and in the event of a heavy rainstorm, the Placerita Canyon community of 450+ homes would be cut off from evacuation and emergency support services by floodwaters cresting over the bridge. The overflows would also inundate the Downtown Newhall area, and the section in front of the new Newhall Library would become a lake due to the built-up roadway required to be raised to meet the top of the tracks for an at-grade Crossing at Lyons.*

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 12.10**

The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (“Metropolitan”) is a commenting agency pursuant to CEQA. Metropolitan submitted a comment letter on the DEIR, dated October 2, 2017 and included herein as Comment Letter No. 8, stating that they own and operate facilities adjacent to but not within the limits of the Proposed Project. Metropolitan’s Foothill Feeder, which is an approximate 16-foot, 9-inch inside-diameter pipeline within fee property rights-of-way, is located north of the Proposed Project (Refer to Comment Letter No. 8, Enclosure 1 Location Map of Metropolitan’s Foothill Feeder within Project Limits). As specified in Metropolitan’s comment letter, design plans for the Proposed Project shall be compatible with Metropolitan’s facilities and easements and consistent with Metropolitan’s “Guidelines for Development in the Area of Facilities, Fee Properties, and/or Easement of the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California” (Refer to Enclosure 2 of Commenter Letter No. 8). Design plans associated with this project shall be submitted to Metropolitan’s Substructures team for approval. As such, no further analysis is required.

**COMMENT 12.11**

Simply, the Lyons Crossing Project does not and cannot exist in the abstract without also fully considering and evaluating of the corresponding impacts of the proposed Dockweiler Project, because they are completely integrated in their intended purpose and use: piecemealing of contemplated Projects to prevent their full analyses and evaluation in their total context is a direct violation of the fundamental requirements of CEQA. The City has failed to comply with CEQA in not completely combining the environmental analyses of Lyons Crossing Project along with the Dockweiler Project.

There can be no viable (or legal) alternative Crossing that can be proposed unless and until the full context of the Dockweiler Project is included in the environmental review.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 12.11**

The claim that the EIR fails to evaluate the Proposed Project in conjunction with the previously proposed Lyons Avenue At-Grade Crossing Project is incorrect. With respect to the commenter’s understanding of the Lyons Avenue At-Grade Crossing Project, see Response to Comment 12.1.

**COMMENT 12.12**

The lesser of evils---albeit still legally defective in the present context would be the Market Street Alternative, as it would be a better solution to address the access and circulation issues requiring a crossing. That Crossing already exists and could be expanded, and Market Street has the advantage of having access from other parts of Railroad Street prior to the crossing at Railroad/Newhall/Main St. (Pine and Arch St.) The 13th Street alternative will never receive PUC approval.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 12.12**

As disclosed in the DEIR in Section 6.1, the Market Street Alternative was evaluated and rejected from further consideration due to the physical constraints associated with grading, as well as the Alternative's incompatibility with respect to public safety and local residential street standards (See Section 6.1, page 6.1-2 of the DEIR). See also Response to Comment 12.38, below, and Section 2. Additions and Corrections, Market Street Alignment Additional Analysis. The commenter's opinion regarding the Market Street and 13<sup>th</sup> Street alternatives has been noted for the record and will be forwarded to the decision makers for their consideration. No further response is required.

**COMMENT 12.13**

In addition to its objections stated herein, PCPOA restates its previously asserted objections to the proposed Lyons Crossing Project, as follows:

Topic 1: Aesthetics

There will be significant impact [sic] to the scenic vistas and it will make significant impact [sic] to the rural equestrian nature of the area. An at-grade crossing will mean raising the road bed five to six feet. This will impede the walkability in the section of Downtown Newhall currently undergoing redevelopment, and will virtually bury the historic jailhouse located almost adjacent to the proposed Crossing. The proposed Project will create light, noise and visual blight in a Special Standards District in which these uses are restricted.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 12.13**

A detailed analysis of the Proposed Project's impacts to aesthetics including scenic vistas and visual character is provided in Section 4.1 Aesthetics of the DEIR (See pages 4.1-9 through 4.1-14). With respect to the commenter's concerns regarding the Proposed Project's impact to scenic vistas and visual character, no buildings or development is proposed on the Project Site that would block existing views or substantially degrade the visual character of the Old Town Newhall community. Construction impacts would be reduced to less than significant levels with the implementation of mitigation measure 4.1-1, which would require the contractor to erect screening materials such as fences or other closures to effectively block the line of sight of unsightly stockpiles of construction debris and soil, and construction equipment from neighboring residential properties. Mitigation measure 4.1-2 would ensure that the roadway median and contoured slopes along the roadway alignment would be attractively landscaped and maintained in accordance with landscape plans to the satisfaction of the City Planning Department. With the incorporation of mitigation measures 4.1-1 and 4.1-2, impacts upon aesthetics, including scenic vistas and visual character would be less than significant.

With respect to access, Dockweiler Drive would include sidewalks for pedestrian use and Class II bike lanes on each side. Class II bike routes would provide a striped lane for one-way bike travel and would be marked with signs and pavement striping. Potential Bike Lane connectors would be proposed from



Dockweiler Drive to connect to the Proposed Class I Bike Path along Railroad Avenue and the existing Class II Bike Path along Railroad Avenue.

With respect to light, as disclosed in the DEIR, the Project would be expected to slightly increase ambient lighting in the area, but compliance with the design standards and requirements established in the Santa Clarita Municipal Code Section 17.050 would mitigate lighting impacts to a less than significant level.

With respect to impacts upon the historic jailhouse, grading for the roadway extension of Lyons Avenue to Dockweiler Drive would not adversely impact the Old Newhall Jail, located at 24522 Spruce Street. This historic property is identified in Figure 4.4-1 in Section 4.4 Cultural Resources. The Proposed Project would not alter or affect the grade within the immediate vicinity of the Old Newhall Jail. Cross section illustrations of the grading plan profile at the Lyons Avenue railroad at-grade crossing and Newhall Creek overcrossing are shown in Figure 2-15, Proposed Grading Plan Profile and Cross Section of the Railroad Crossing at Lyons Avenue (See page 2-23 of the DEIR). Additionally, Figure 2.16 depicts the proposed grading plan profile and cross sections of the railroad crossing at Lyons Avenue and Railroad Avenue, as well as the intersection and at the Newhall Creek overcrossing (See page 2-25 of the DEIR).

With respect to noise, as disclosed in Section 4.8 Noise, of the DEIR, the estimated construction noise levels impacting sensitive receptors are expected to exceed the City's daytime noise standards for residential uses (See Section 4.8, Table 4.8-3, page 4.8-9). The construction noise levels would therefore constitute a significant impact. During operation of the Proposed Project, the anticipated noise levels at all off-site receptor locations would be within the "normally acceptable" range of noise for residential areas. The relocation of the existing railroad crossing signal at 13<sup>th</sup> Street and Railroad Avenue (approximately 1,150 feet south to the Lyons Avenue and Railroad Avenue crossing) would not result in a noticeable change to the ambient noise levels during train events. Therefore, the Proposed Project's noise impacts would be less than significant.

In summary, with the exception of temporary construction noise, which would be a significant and unavoidable impact (as discussed above and disclosed in the DEIR), the Proposed Project would be in compliance with the standards identified in the PCSSD. The commenter provides no substantial evidence, pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21080(e) (2), to support their assertion that the Proposed project would result in significant impacts, not already disclosed in the DEIR, with respect to scenic vistas and visual character. Therefore, no further analysis is required with respect to CEQA.

#### **COMMENT 12.14**

##### **Topic 2: Agricultural Resources**

The proposed at-grade Crossing will alter an area near equestrian facilities. Tractors and other farm equipment are common on local streets; they also use the crossing presently at 13<sup>th</sup> Street. Placerita Canyon is a Rural Equestrian Community, specifically so [sic] designated as a Special Standards District in Santa Clarita's UDC.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 12.14**

As analyzed in Section 4.7, Table 4.7-3, page 4.7-18, of the DEIR, the Proposed Project is in substantial compliance with the standards identified in the PCSSD. The proposed connection of Lyons Avenue to Dockweiler Drive would not conflict with, alter or remove any equestrian facilities or trails. To the contrary the Proposed Project would improve access in the PCSSD, as the proposed alignment of Dockweiler Drive would include Class II Bike Routes and pedestrian walkways.

**COMMENT 12.15****Topic 3: Air quality**

The Santa Clarita commercial center area is already out of compliance with Federal and State clean air standards, and there will be at least three additional elements that have to be considered: more trains, more traffic, and longer waits for each vehicle to make the crossing, which will create even more air pollution in an area that is already suffering.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 12.15**

With respect to the commenter's general concerns regarding impacts to air pollution and clean air standards, see Section 4.2 Air Quality, of the DEIR. As noted in Section 4.2, the DEIR properly disclosed that the Santa Clarita Valley is in non-attainment with the California and Federal Air Quality Standards for ozone (O<sub>3</sub>) and PM<sub>10</sub>, and PM<sub>2.5</sub>. The commenter's assertion that the Proposed Project would result in more trains, more traffic and longer waits for vehicles to cross at-grade crossings is incorrect and unsubstantiated. The Proposed Project would add an additional east west connector to facilitate traffic between the Old Town Newhall community and the neighborhoods to the east. The Proposed Project does not include any commercial or residential land uses that would generate additional traffic. Additionally, the proposed alignment would be used by motorists to reduce travel time or otherwise avoid congested intersections in the local area. As an additional alternative route, the Proposed Project is expected to result in fewer VMT's as the proposed connection between Dockweiler Drive and Railroad Avenue would shorten the distance traveled as compared to existing traffic patterns. Therefore, as concluded in Section 4.2, Air Quality, the Proposed Project's impacts upon regional air quality would be less than significant.

**COMMENT 12.16**

Under the Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006, California emissions must be reduced to 1990 levels by the year 2020. The heavier volume of traffic in the heart of the commercial and governmental center of Santa Clarita, combined with longer wait times, will result in more emissions not less in an already non-attainment area.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 12.16**

The commenter's assertion that the Proposed Project would result in longer wait times and generate more air quality emissions is not substantiated. To the contrary, as noted in Section 4.9, Transportation and Traffic, based on an evaluation of the Proposed Project's impact on are roadways, the Proposed Project is anticipated to reduce vehicle delays at nine of the 16 study intersections analyzed during the A.M. and P.M. peak hours for the 2019 buildout year scenario and at 12 of the 16 intersections during the A.M. and P.M. peak hours for the 2035 buildout year scenario. Overall, the Proposed Project would reduce traffic congestion on local roadways and would reduce travel time and the amount of time vehicles idle at intersections. Thus, contrary to the commenter's assertion, the Proposed Project would not result in heavier traffic with an increase in emissions. Nonetheless, with respect to the AB 32, Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006, the City of Santa Clarita adopted a Climate Action Plan (CAP), which provides policies and identifies actions intended to reduce GHG emissions within the City and assist in the fight against Climate Change. Overall the goal of the CAP is to reduce Santa Clarita's community-wide GHG emissions below the 2005 baseline emissions by 2020. Implementation of the strategies identified in the CAP would also exceed the City's goal to reduce 2020 GHG emissions to a level below the 2005 GHG emissions baseline by 4 percent.

The commenter's concerns have been noted for the record and will be forwarded to the decision makers for their consideration. No further analysis is required.

**COMMENT 12.17****Topic 4: Biological Resources**

The proposed Lyons Avenue at-grade Crossing will adversely affect Newhall Creek, an identified "blue line stream" under Fish and Game jurisdiction, and also likely under federal Fish & Wildlife jurisdiction since Newhall Creek would be considered to be "waters of the United States." To accommodate this Crossing and its required elevation change to be at-grade, Newhall Creek would need to be bridged and channeled. Newhall Creek is a natural highway for wildlife, both large and small, including deer, cougars, bobcats, coyotes, skunks, opossums, rabbits, mice, squirrels, snakes, lizards, raptors, owls, turkey vultures, road runners and other species.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 12.17**

With respect to the Proposed Project's impacts to wildlife movement through Newhall Creek, as discussed further in Section 4.3 Biological Resources, of the DEIR, four 25-foot wide and 8-foot deep openings in a concrete box bridge with 80-foot wide soft base and 2:1 protected side slopes is proposed where the proposed roadway extension crosses Newhall Creek. As designed, this bridge would not result in any barrier to wildlife movement and would serve to protect Newhall Creek as a functioning wildlife movement corridor. Impacts upon wildlife were analyzed in the Biological Resources Assessment (contained in Appendix D to the DEIR and summarized in Section 4.3, Biological Resources). As noted in the DEIR, the project as proposed would not result in significant impacts to wildlife movement. With

the incorporation of mitigation measures 4.3-1 through 4.3-7, impacts upon biological resources, including vegetation and wildlife resources would be less than significant. No further analysis is warranted.

**COMMENT 12.18**

The local oak trees are also highly protected under Santa Clarita's ordinances; changing the water flow will be a threat to many of these cherished denizens, which has to be evaluated.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 12.18**

As disclosed in the DEIR, Section 4.3 Biological Resources, two coast live oaks were the only special-status plants observed during the field investigation. The two oak trees that occur within the project limits would be required to be removed for project construction. A permit is required for the encroachment into the Protected Zone. Native oak trees are protected under City of Santa Clarita Oak Tree Ordinance (Ordinance No. 89-10, passed by the City Council on April 25, 1989) and the City's Oak Tree Preservation and Protection Guidelines (adopted September 11, 1990). Replacement oak trees would be planted in the number necessary to comply with the requirements stipulated in the Oak Tree Permit issued by the City. With approval of the required oak tree permits, and implementation of Mitigation Measure 4.3-7, impacts upon the loss or pruning of any oak tree would be reduced to less than significant levels. No further analysis is required.

**COMMENT 12.19**

There are many City-built hiking and equestrian trails in the area. Changes to the creek bed will affect these crossings and uses.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 12.19**

The commenter's assertion that changes to the creek bed will affect City-built hiking and equestrian trails in the area is unsubstantiated. Neither the temporary construction impacts within the footprint of the Newhall Creek, nor any of the grading impacts associated with the proposed alignment of Lyons Avenue or Dockweiler Drive will result in direct impacts upon existing City built hiking or equestrian trails. To the contrary, the Proposed Project would improve access in the project vicinity. Dockweiler Drive would include a Class II Bike Route and sidewalks. The Proposed Project will be designed in accordance with the appropriate design features and standards required for secondary highways and railroad crossings. The bridge crossing above Newhall Creek would not impede wildlife movement or equine access within the creek bed. Further all physical improvements to the proposed roadways, pedestrian walkways and hiking trails to be constructed as part of the Proposed Project would be subject to the site plan review requirements of the City of Santa Clarita.

**COMMENT 12.20**

The proposed at-grade Lyons Crossing will affect the ultimate flow of the Santa Clara River, of which Newhall Creek is a tributary. Full current hydrology studies must be conducted to determine the capacity status of all drains, channels and related facilities.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 12.20**

Section 4.6 Hydrology and Water Quality includes a thorough analysis of the Proposed Project's impacts with respect to hydrology and water quality. A post-Project hydraulic model was analyzed to determine the impacts of inundation and flooding (See *Hydraulic and Scour Analysis Newhall Creek at Proposed Dockweiler Road Bridge, Newhall, California*, prepared by Rivertech, Inc., dated February 2015, which is provided in Appendix G of the DEIR). The hydrology and scour analysis concluded that the Proposed bridge spanning the banks of Newhall Creek would accommodate the Capital Flood, i.e., no overtopping of the road, and will not create any flood hazard for the adjacent railroad and proposed street improvements. The bridge conveys both the 50-year burn/bulk and FIS 100-year flood flows with more than 2 feet of freeboard. Therefore, the construction of the bridge would not be detrimental to adjacent upstream or downstream properties (See page 4.6-14 of the DEIR). Additionally, improvement to Newhall Creek would be designed in accordance with current regulatory and State permitting agencies. As concluded in the DEIR, impacts associated with flooding would be less than significant, and no further analysis of this issue is required.

**COMMENT 12.21****Topic 5: Cultural Resources**

The historic Old Jail building in Santa Clarita is a cultural icon that will be threatened with the ramping up of Lyons Avenue to make it an at-grade railroad crossing.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 12.21**

The commenter's assertion that the Old Newhall Jail will be threatened with the ramping of Lyons Avenue is unsubstantiated and incorrect. Grading for the roadway extension of Lyons Avenue to Dockweiler Drive would not adversely impact the Old Newhall Jail, located at 24522 Spruce Street. Cross section illustrations of the grading plan profile at the Lyons Avenue railroad at-grade crossing and Newhall Creek overcrossing are shown in Figure 2-15, Proposed Grading Plan Profile and Cross Section of the Railroad Crossing at Lyons Avenue, Figure 2.16, Proposed Grading Plan Profile and Cross Section of the Railroad Crossing at Railroad Avenue, and Figure 2-17, Lyons Avenue Street Widening – Proposed New Crossing. (See pages 2-23, 2-25 and 2-26 of the DEIR). As shown in these renderings, no grading is proposed outside of the existing right-of-way along Railroad Avenue. The proposed elevation change within the right-of-way will not affect the surface parking lot of the existing Newhall Library building, nor would affect the Old Newhall Jail, which is set back over 195 feet from Railroad Avenue. No further analysis with respect to cultural resources is warranted.

**COMMENT 12.22**

## Topic 6: Geology

The area of the at-grade crossing is a known seismically active area and subject to liquefaction.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 12.22**

As concluded in Section 4.5 Geology of the DEIR, the majority of the Project Site is underlain by bedrock materials that are not susceptible to liquefaction. The alluvial soils present at the site, as depicted in Figure 4.5-2 on page 4.5-4 of the DEIR, are not designated on the State of California Seismic Hazard Zone Map for the Newhall Quadrangle as a zone in which investigation of potentially liquefiable materials is required. The depth to historic high ground water at the Project Site is greater than 50 feet. Based on the preceding factors, the potential for liquefaction and associated seismic settlements and lateral spreading is therefore considered very low. (Refer also to *Geologic and Geotechnical Report EIR-Level Review Of Road Alignments For Dockweiler Road and Lyons*, prepared by Allan E. Seward Engineering Geology, Inc., dated October 17, 2014, included as Appendix F of the DEIR). No further analysis is required.

**COMMENT 12.23**

## Topic 7: Hazards and Hazardous Materials

San Fernando Road (now, Railroad Ave.) is approved for the transporting of hazardous materials. The area is slated for industrial development and will result in hazardous materials crossing the railroad tracks at Lyons Avenue. Trains will also be carrying hazardous materials. Heavy vehicle traffic congestion will increase the potentiality of vehicle interference, and thus collisions and spills.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 12.23**

As discussed in Section 5.1 Impacts Determined to be Less Than Significant, of the DEIR (See pg. 5.1-2) a significant impact may occur if a project involves the use or disposal of hazardous materials as part of its routine operations, which may have the potential to generate toxic or otherwise hazardous emissions that could adversely affect sensitive receptors. The Proposed Project itself would not require the transport, use, and/or disposal of potentially hazardous materials. The commenter's concern has been noted for the record and will be forwarded to the decision-makers for their considerations. No further analysis with respect to the DEIR is warranted.

**COMMENT 12.24**

## Topic 8: Hydrology

FEMA studies show that much of Placerita Canyon as well as much of the area affected by the proposed Lyons Avenue at-grade Crossing and extension to Dockweiler to be in a floodway. An EIR is required to

analyze and to show how that designation will impact all traffic flow and how roads must be designed to avoid the areas of concern. A FEMA letter sent to the City dated August 9, 2013 confirms the vulnerability of Placerita Canyon to flooding.

#### **RESPONSE TO COMMENT 12.24**

As disclosed in Section 4.6 Hydrology and Water Quality, the western portion of the roadway extension that crosses Newhall Creek, is located in a “Zone A”, as identified in the National Flood Insurance Rate Map for Los Angeles County. Zone “A” indicates a special flood hazard area that is subject to inundation by the 1% annual chance flood (100-year flood) (See also *Geologic and Geotechnical Report EIR-Level Review Of Road Alignments For Dockweiler Road and Lyons Avenue*, dated October 17, 2014, Appendix F of the DEIR). A post-Project hydraulic model was analyzed to determine the impacts of inundation and flooding (See *Hydraulic and Scour Analysis Newhall Creek at Proposed Dockweiler Road Bridge, Newhall, California*, prepared by Rivertech, Inc., dated February 2015 (“Hydraulic Report”), which is provided in Appendix G of the DEIR). The hydrology and scour analysis concluded that the proposed bridge spanning the banks of Newhall Creek would accommodate the Capital Flood, i.e., no overtopping of the road, and will not create any flood hazard for the adjacent railroad and proposed street improvements. The bridge conveys both the 50-year burn/bulk and FIS 100-year flood flows with more than 2 feet of freeboard. Therefore, the construction of the bridge would not be detrimental to adjacent upstream or downstream properties (See also page 4.6-14 of the DEIR). Additionally, improvement to Newhall Creek would be designed in accordance with current regulatory and State permitting agencies. As concluded in the DEIR, impacts associated with flooding would be less than significant and no further analysis of this issue is required.

#### **COMMENT 12.25**

The Crawford, Multari & Clark study (April 10, 2008) indicates “Potentially Significant Impacts” to all aspects of Hydrology and Water Quality. The Lyons Avenue Project may violate water quality standards and waste discharge requirements, affects groundwater supplies, alter the existing drainage pattern through the alteration of the course of a stream, and affect erosion or siltation. Further, the Project may also affect the overall drainage pattern and increase runoff, causing flooding both on and off-site. This is in an area in which the City has previously warned residents in writing to pay particular attention to protecting themselves from the danger of flooding. (October 2012 letter.)

#### **RESPONSE TO COMMENT 12.25**

The commenter is referencing an outdated study that was conducted for the prior Lyons Avenue At-Grade Rail Crossing Project DEIR, which was prepared in 2010. Refer also to Response to Comment 12.1, above. The Proposed Project’s impacts to hydrology, surface runoff and water quality were thoroughly evaluated and disclosed in Section 4.6 Hydrology and Water Quality, of the DEIR. As noted in the EIR, the Proposed Project would be required to prepare and implement Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (“SWPPP”) prior to earthwork activities that will use best management practices and erosion control measures to prevent pollution in stormwater discharge. All Project construction activities would comply

with the City's grading permit regulations, which require the implementation of grading and dust control measures, including a wet weather erosion control plan if construction occurs during rainy season, as well as inspections to ensure that sedimentation and erosion is minimized. Therefore, through compliance with National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System ("NPDES") requirements and City grading regulations, the Project's construction impacts related to water quality would not violate any water quality standards or waste discharge requirements or otherwise substantially degrade water quality. Additionally, in accordance with NPDES requirements, the Project Applicant would be required to have a Project-specific Standard Urban Stormwater Mitigation Plan ("SUSMP") in place during the operational life of the Project to address the management of runoff from the proposed roadway extension. The SUSMP would include site design, source control, low-impact development, and best management practices. Therefore, during the Project's construction and operation implementation of regulatory compliance would reduce water quality impacts to less than significant. With respect to potential for flooding, please refer to Response to Comment 12.24, above. No further analysis is required.

**COMMENT 12.26****Topic 9: Land Use and Planning**

Previously applied for/approved projects affecting this proposed Project include Master's College and Placerita Baptist Church expansions, and expansions for Our Lady of Perpetual Help Catholic Church. The impact of the Compass Project, a high-density transit oriented development, must be weighed along with traffic from Dockweiler and Valle del Oro that previously used Newhall Avenue to access Lyons, because much of that traffic will be diverted this proposed at-grade Crossing at Lyons.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 12.26**

As further discussed in Section 4.9 Transportation and Traffic, the Proposed Project's future year traffic volumes incorporated the growth assumptions pursuant to the Santa Clarita Valley Consolidated Traffic Model ("SCVCTM"). The related projects identified by the commenter, along with other related development anticipated to occur as a result of the General Plan Buildout were incorporated into the SCVCTM and account for expected growth. As such, the commenter's concerns have been addressed in the DEIR and no further analysis is required.

**COMMENT 12.27**

The Lyons at-grade Crossing will facilitate new development which will conflict with Placerita Canyon's Special Standards District which was promised to residents and written into the UDC to maintain the rural equestrian nature of Placerita Canyon. The Special Standards District has no sidewalks, and no curbs or gutters, and special lighting must be designed to be compatible with the area. Such potential development must also be anticipated and evaluated.



**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 12.27**

The commenter raises concerns that the Proposed Project would conflict with the standards established by the PCSSD. As disclosed in the EIR, the Proposed Project is located in the PCSSD and is part of the North Newhall Area (“NNA”). As analyzed in Section 4.7, Table 4.7-3, on page 4.7-18 of the DEIR, the Proposed Project is in substantial compliance with the standards identified in the PCSSD. The commenter does not specify how the Proposed Project would be inconsistent with the PCSSD. Therefore, no further analysis with respect to the DEIR is warranted.

**COMMENT 12.28**

## Topic 10: Mineral Resources

The area served by the proposed at-grade Crossing is adjacent to an oil production area, whose trucks will traverse the Crossing.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 12.28**

As discussed in Section 5.1 Impacts Determined to be Less Than Significant, of the DEIR (See pg. 5.1-2), a significant impact may occur if a project involves the use or disposal of hazardous materials as part of its routine operations, which may have the potential to generate toxic or otherwise hazardous emissions that could adversely affect sensitive receptors. The Proposed Project itself would not require the transport, use, and/or disposal of potentially hazardous materials. Additionally, the Project Site is not located in an area of potential petroleum resources. The commenter’s concern has been noted for the record and will be forwarded to the decision-makers for their considerations. No further analysis with respect to the DEIR is warranted.

**COMMENT 12.29**

## Topic 11: Noise

The design and construction of the proposed at-grade Lyons Crossing, including the lowering of some of the ridgelines called for in OVOV, would allow more noise from trains and traffic to penetrate the entire area. The Crossing remove [sic] or reduce some of the existing physical barriers to noise. The area would clearly become a traffic “hub” if the Lyons Crossing were approved, as it would connect with other major roads throughout the City. The Lyons Avenue at-grade Crossing would carry the highest crossing traffic volume in the Santa Clarita Valley

With the possibility of five at-grade Crossings (Newhall Ave., Market St., Lyons Ave., 13th St., and Circle J) in a two-mile stretch, train whistles will sound for an extended period of time every time a train passes through town at all hours of the day and night which will be a significant disturbance to broad swaths of the community.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 12.29**

The commenter's statement that the Lyons Avenue At-Grade Crossing would carry the highest crossing traffic volume in the Santa Clarita Valley is unsubstantiated and incorrect. As shown in Table 4.9-8 Railroad Crossing Analysis – Project Year 2019 Conditions, Lyons Avenue would experience 8,060 railroad vehicle crossings, while Newhall Avenue would experience 44,790 railroad vehicle crossings in 2019. Thus under the 2019 analysis year, Lyons Avenue would experience approximately 18 percent of the total volume of crossings experienced at Newhall Avenue. For the Future Year 2035 Conditions, as shown in Table 4.9-10, Lyons Avenue would experience 28,870 railroad vehicle crossings, as compared to 47,100 railroad vehicle crossings that are projected to occur at Newhall Avenue. Thus under the 2035 analysis year, Lyons Avenue would experience approximately 61 percent of the total volume of crossings experienced at Newhall Avenue. Additionally, the commenter is incorrect in their assertion that the Proposed Project would result in the operation of both a crossing at Lyons Avenue and Railroad Avenue and a crossing at 13<sup>th</sup> Street and Railroad Avenue. To clarify, the Proposed Project includes the addition of a new at-grade crossing at Lyons Avenue and Railroad Avenue and the closure of the crossing at 13<sup>th</sup> Street and Railroad Avenue.

With respect to the Project's impacts to noise, as discussed in detail in Section 4.8 Noise of the DEIR, future noise levels on the new roadway segment from Lyons Avenue to Valle del Oro are expected to be 63.3 dBA (CNEL) within 50 feet of the centerline of the roadway. The resulting noise levels at the three identified sensitive receptors would be below 52.9 dBA. Thus, the anticipated with project noise levels at all off-site receptor locations would be within the "normally acceptable" range of noise for residential areas. Therefore, the Proposed Project's noise impacts would be less than significant.

As evaluated in the DEIR, the closure of the existing at-grade railroad crossing at 13<sup>th</sup> Street would reduce the railroad warning signal bell levels in the vicinity of 13<sup>th</sup> Street and Railroad Avenue as the railroad crossing warning signal devices would be removed at this location and installed at a new at-grade crossing at Lyons Avenue and Railroad Avenue. The relocation of the existing railroad crossing signal at 13<sup>th</sup> Street and Railroad Avenue approximately 1,150 feet south to the Lyons Avenue and Railroad Avenue crossing would not result in a noticeable change to the ambient noise levels during train events. Noise impacts from at-grade warning signals would be less than significant.

The commenter's opinions and concerns have been noted for the record and will be forwarded to the decision makers for their consideration. No further analysis is required.

**COMMENT 12.30****Topic 12: Population and Housing**

OVOV has proposed to induce substantial population growth both directly and indirectly, all of which will be using the at-grade Lyons Crossing. Directly, development of the property adjacent to the Lyons Crossing will increase dwelling units by 150% (plus the approved Compass Project), may add 500,000-700,000 square feet of commercial industrial space, may allow for a hotel/spa, will allow 40,000-50,000

square feet of new local retail, and add (a proposed) additional elementary school. Indirectly, the resulting growth will create a new traffic hub that will adversely affect a long-existing rural equestrian neighborhood, and will displace some of its existing homes and local businesses.

### **RESPONSE TO COMMENT 12.30**

The commenter does not raise a specific concern related to the environmental analysis or methodology as presented in the DEIR. The Proposed Project involves the buildout of a proposed roadway alignment that was identified within the City's Circulation Element of the General Plan and assumes for projected growth to occur consistent with the growth projections of the General Plan Buildout. No residential, commercial, or industrial land uses are proposed. The potential displacement of existing properties is noted in the Project Description Section of the DEIR under the heading Property Acquisition and/or Easements. (See Table 2-1, Potential Property Acquisition and/or Easements and Figure 2-18, Dockweiler Drive Study Area – Adjacent Properties Map).

### **COMMENT 12.31**

#### Topic 13: Public Services

The proposed Lyons Crossing would be a traffic hub which could impede response time for fire, sheriff, and other emergency vehicles. The resulting proposed new development would further increase demand and need for those services.

### **RESPONSE TO COMMENT 12.31**

As discussed in Section 5.1 Impacts Determined to be Less Than Significant, page 5.1-3, subheading Fire and Police Protection, of the DEIR, the Proposed Project would not directly increase the demands for fire and police protection as the Project does not include any new housing units or commercial uses. Emergency access to the Placerita Canyon community would be facilitated through the Proposed Project's alignment, which is consistent with the City's adopted Circulation Element. The Proposed Project's alignment would be an improvement to the current access route into the Placerita Canyon community via 13<sup>th</sup> Street. The closure of the 13<sup>th</sup> Street at-grade crossing is a proposed safety feature aimed at reducing potential conflicts between pedestrians, vehicles and trains. Furthermore, as noted in Comment Letters No. 4 and 5, the Los Angeles County Fire Department and the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department reviewed and commented on the DEIR. (See Comment Letters No. 4 and 5, above). As noted in Comment Letter No. 4, the Los Angeles County Fire Department requests all proposals that include traffic calming measures be submitted for their review. The Proposed Project would comply with this request. As noted in Comment Letter No. 5, the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Station noted that the Proposed Project is intended to relieve existing and projected traffic congestion by reconfiguring, abandoning, and/or extending certain street segments, relocating an existing at-grade railroad crossing, and creating dedicated pedestrian and bicycle lanes. The Station generally supports these types of public improvements because they typically result in an overall positive impact upon law enforcement patrol operations, emergency access, and response times. (See Comment Letter No. 5, above). As such, the

Proposed Project's impact upon fire and police services would be less than significant, and no further analysis is warranted.

**COMMENT 12.32**

## Topic 14: Recreation

Placerita Canyon is a rural equestrian area with a large active facility hosting frequent regional horse shows. A second equestrian facility is planned, increasing the amount of horse trailer traffic across the railroad crossing. Santa Clarita's trail system has many existing paths in Placerita Canyon and more planned. These accommodate hikers, bicyclists, and equestrians, all of whom would access the area by the at-grade railroad Crossing.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 12.32**

This comment is noted for the record and will be forwarded to the decision makers for their consideration.

**COMMENT 12.33**

## Topic 15: Transportation

A second rail line has been constructed in the area, confirming the demand for additional rail traffic. Additional train traffic can be expected from the proposed feeder lines for ExpressRail. The effect of the High Speed Rail Project on existing facilities is yet unknown but must be anticipated.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 12.33**

The addition and timeline of the proposed High Speed Rail is speculative and immaterial with respect to addressing the Proposed Project's impacts. The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority (Metro) and the Southern California Regional Rail Authority (SCRRA) have reviewed the DEIR and provided comments addressing the operations of the existing railroad (see Comment Letters No. 7 and 10, respectively). As noted by Metro, rail service currently operates in both directions and trains may operate in and out of revenue service, 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and in the R-O-W adjacent to the Proposed Project. The effects of the High Speed Rail Project are evaluated under a separate EIR authored by the California High Speed Rail Authority. In 2001, the Authority, in cooperation with the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA), started a tiered environmental review process for the statewide high-speed rail system per requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The 2005 first-tier California High-Speed Rail Program Final Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (Statewide Program EIR/EIS) described the program alignment, which included a corridor between Palmdale and Los Angeles. The environmental document for the Palmdale to Burbank Project Section has not yet been published. However, based on fact sheet for the Palmdale to Burbank Project Section, three alignments along the approximately 40-mile corridor are being considered, known as State Route 14, E1, and E2. None of these routes pass through the City of Santa Clarita and as such it is not anticipated that the High

Speed Rail Project would have any impacts within the Newhall Area. As such, no further analysis is warranted.

**COMMENT 12.34**

The Lyons Project analysis must fully account for proximity to the Newhall Metrolink Station. Every Metrolink train will bring traffic to a halt whether or not it stops at the station, and the frequency will be greater during peak hour vehicle traffic. When a train is stopped at the Newhall Metrolink Station, the arms will be down for an extended time.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 12.34**

The Proposed Project would include a new at-grade crossing at the proposed extension of Lyons Avenue from Railroad Avenue. The Proposed Project would include the closure of the existing at-grade crossing at 13<sup>th</sup> Street and Railroad Avenue. The new crossing would be located approximately 0.25 mile north of the existing at-grade crossing located at Market Street. Similar to existing conditions, the Proposed Project would not provide access between Dockweiler Drive to Market Street. Therefore, in the event that railroad gates are in a down position at the new crossing at Lyons Avenue, when a train is stopped at the Metrolink station to the south, the traffic on Market Street would remain unaffected by the new at-grade crossing. Under the Alternative 2 Project, the 13<sup>th</sup> Street at-grade crossing would remain and no at-grade crossing would occur at Lyons Avenue and Railroad Avenue, when a train is stopped at the Metrolink station to the south. As such, future conditions would be similar to existing conditions at 13<sup>th</sup> Street under the Alternative 2 Project. The Proposed Project is subject to SCRRRA approval and as such the Proposed Project will comply with all applicable operational rail crossing safety improvements with respect to control point locations, crossing signals and gates to minimize disruptions to both vehicular, pedestrian and train circulation. No further analysis of this issue is warranted at this time.

**COMMENT 12.35**

Placerita Canyon Road is a private road located wildfire/fire [sic] hazard zone, and is gated on its eastern end. While the gate is supposed to be open during emergencies, that has not always been the case, requiring residents to cross over the railroad.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 12.35**

The commenter's concerns have been noted for the record and will be forwarded to the decision makers for their consideration. The operation of the private gate on the east end of Placerita Canyon is the responsibility of the PCPOA and is not related to the scope of the Proposed Project. The commenter does not raise any issues related to the DEIR; as such, no further response is required.

**COMMENT 12.36**

In summary, the Lyons Avenue Project DEIR has not met CEQA requirements. It has not properly evaluated the Dockweiler Project in conjunction with the Lyons Project. The Lyons Project creates its

own safety hazards, and will create a traffic hub that connects other major streets, but that foreseeable impact has not been fully evaluated.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 12.36**

With respect to the commenter's references to the "Dockweiler Project" and the "Lyons Project," as separate but related projects, see Response to Comment 12.1. The commenter does not substantiate their claim that the proposed Project will create a traffic hub with foreseeable impacts that have not been evaluated. As noted in Public Resources Code Section 21080(e) (2), substantial evidence does not consist of argument, speculation, unsubstantiated opinion or narrative, evidence that is clearly inaccurate or erroneous, or evidence of social or economic impacts that do not contribute to, or are not caused by, physical impacts on the environment. The commenter's opinion has been noted for the record and will be forwarded to the decision makers for their consideration.

**COMMENT 12.37**

The alternative crossing at 13<sup>th</sup> Street will never obtain PUC approval, and is also inadequate.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 12.37**

It is unclear whether the commenter is referring to the Alternative 1 or the Alternative 2 Project. Nonetheless, Alternative 1 evaluates the Proposed Project with the construction of a new at-grade railroad crossing at Lyons Avenue and Railroad Avenue and the retention of the 13<sup>th</sup> Street at-grade crossing. While it is acknowledged that the addition of an at-grade crossing without the removal of another grade crossing does not meet the Southern California Railroad Authority's policies, this alternative was analyzed and disclosed in the DEIR for informational purposes. Alternative 2 evaluates the roadway extension of Dockweiler Drive to 12<sup>th</sup> Street and does not include the extension of Lyons Avenue to Dockweiler Drive. Under Alternative 2, the existing at-grade railroad crossing at 13<sup>th</sup> Street would remain and would be improved. The commenter's opinion is noted for the record and will be forwarded to the decision makers for their consideration.

**COMMENT 12.38**

The Market Street crossing is the only alternative which lessens but does not eliminate the major environmental burdens which adversely impact the rest of the community, and especially Placerita Canyon.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 12.38**

As disclosed in the DEIR in Section 6.1, the Market Street Alternative was rejected from further consideration due to the physical constraints associated with grading, as well as the Alternative's incompatibility with respect to public safety and local residential street standards (See Section 6.1, page 6.1-2). Specifically, this alternative was rejected from further consideration due to the resulting 11.15% gradient of the roadway profile resulting from the existing topographical gradient between Market Street

and Dockweiler Drive and the relatively sharp curve at the base of an incline where the alignment would connect to Market Street. A gradient of 11.15% would not meet the street standards of a secondary highway and would potentially result in unsafe roadway conditions. Additionally, Market Street is a local residential street that directly abuts and provides access to single and multi-family residential land uses. The proposed alignment of Dockweiler Drive through this existing residential neighborhood would not be consistent with the alignment identified within the Circulation Element and would not be compatible with respect to public safety and local residential street standards. For this reason, this alternative alignment was rejected as infeasible.

In response to public comments, the City of Santa Clarita re-examined the feasibility of an alternative route from Market Street to the proposed Dockweiler Drive roadway extension at The Master's University limits. As discussed in Section 2, Additions and Corrections, under the additional Market Street analysis, despite meeting a 6% grade, this alternative remains infeasible because it would not align with the proposed and approved terminus of Dockweiler Drive to The Master's University. Furthermore, this alternative would require the partial acquisition of 17 parcels, including the existing Newhall Metrolink Station, the Newhall Community Center and the Veteran Memorial Plaza to allow for a 92-foot right-of-way to comply with secondary highway roadway standards, which would disrupt the pedestrian-friendly character and transit oriented environment of Market Street, which is contrary to the objects identified in the Old Town Newhall Specific Plan. With respect to traffic impacts, as concluded in the Traffic Addendum Traffic Impact Analysis, prepared by David Evans and Associates (See Appendix B of this Final EIR), under the Market Street Alternative, Year 2019 project mitigation would include intersection modifications at Main Street (North-South) and Market Street (East-West). The intersection modifications would include installing a traffic signal. The north, south, east, and westbound directions would include a shared through-right turn lane. Intersection modifications at Newhall Avenue (North-South) and Market Street (East-West) would include removal of the traffic signal at the Newhall Avenue (North-South) and Market Street (West) intersection. The Newhall Avenue (North-South) and Market Street (East- West) intersections would be combined and converted to a multilane roundabout. The northbound direction would include a shared left-through lane and shared through-right lane. The southbound direction would include a left turn lane and a shared left-through-right lane. The eastbound and westbound directions would include a shared left-through-right lane.

As discussed further, and shown in Table 6.5-1 Environmentally Superior Alternative Matrix, in Section 2 Additions and Corrections to the Draft EIR, the Market Street Alternative Project would result in significant unavoidable impacts with respect to air quality, land use and planning and noise. The Market Street Alternative Project may result in potentially significant impacts with respect to aesthetics and cultural resources. Additionally, the Market Street Alternative would result in slightly increased impacts with respect to traffic, as compared to the Proposed Project; however, with implementation of mitigation, traffic impacts would remain less than significant.

The commenter's opinion has been noted for the record and will be forwarded to the decision makers for their consideration. No further response is required.

**COMMENT LETTER No. 13**

Renee and Randall Berglund

Date: September 28, 2017

**COMMENT 13.1**

There are many concerns:

- 1.) Cost – market st is already graded + accessalbe [sic]

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 13.1**

This comment has been noted for the record and will be forwarded to the decision makers for their consideration. The commenter does not raise a specific issue with respect to the environmental analysis presented in the DEIR, as such no further response is required.

**COMMENT 13.2**

- Will you have to purchase parcels to put road through to Lyons or 13<sup>th</sup> St?

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 13.2**

Implementation of the Proposed Project may require the potential acquisition of easements over public and private properties that are adjacent to the proposed alignment. Figure 2-18, Dockweiler Drive Study Area – Adjacent Properties Map (see page 2-27 of the DEIR), identifies properties in the project area that are located within or adjacent to the proposed alignment. Table 2-1 of the DEIR (see page 2-24), identifies a total of 19 of the 29 properties identified within the study area that would be affected by easements and or acquisitions. The commenter does not raise a specific issue with respect to the environmental analysis presented in the DEIR, as such no further response is required.

**COMMENT 13.3**

- 2.) My home is below Dockweiler – noise, dirt, traffic + trespassors [sic] coming down to our home.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 13.3**

With respect to analyses regarding noise, dust (as it relates to air quality) and traffic, please refer to sections 4.8, 4.2 and 4.9 of the DEIR. The commenter does not raise a specific issue with respect to the environmental analysis or provide context to the issues identified in their comment. As such, no further response is required.

**COMMENT 13.4**

- 3.) Two other good possibilities were given in lieu of this proposal at the last meeting.



**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 13.4**

This comment has been noted for the record and will be forwarded to the decision makers for their consideration. The commenter does not raise a specific issue with respect to the environmental analysis presented in the DEIR, nor does the commenter provide details regarding the alternatives referenced at the public meeting held on September 28, 2017. As such, no further response is required.

**COMMENT 13.5**

- 4.) Safety for those who live on Dockweiler.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 13.5**

This comment has been noted for the record and will be forwarded to the decision makers for their consideration. The commenter does not raise a specific issue with respect to the environmental analysis presented in the DEIR, nor does the commenter provide context to their concern regarding safety. It should be noted that the residences located along the existing portion of Dockweiler Drive are outside the project limits of the Proposed Project. No further response is required.

**COMMENT LETTER No. 14**

Judith and JC Burkhartsmeier

Date: October 2, 2017

**COMMENT 14.1**

Thank you for the recent presentation to the Placerita Canyon Homeowners. My husband and I, 30 year residents of the Canyon, support the extension of Dockweiler so that Masters College can safely expand. But we feel that a connection to Market is much better than Lyons Avenue.

-A RR [sic] crossing already exists at Market, and that area is a transportation hub. The grade for the Road [sic], and creek crossing is much easier than Lyons Avenue.

-The RR [sic] crossing at 13<sup>th</sup> could remain open, allowing Canyon residents to maintain their primary exit. The crossing could be improved at a later time, as future development of the plot of land off 13<sup>th</sup> is developed.

-Bringing traffic into downtown Newhall at Market, encourages drivers to become familiar with the shops and restaurants in the area, that the city has worked so hard to promote.

Thank you for this opportunity to offer our opinion.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 14.1**

As disclosed in the DEIR in Section 6.1, the Market Street Alternative was evaluated and rejected from further consideration due to the physical constraints associated with grading, as well as the Alternative's incompatibility with respect to public safety and local residential street standards (See Section 6.1, page 6.1-2 of the DEIR). See also Response to Comment 12.38, above, and Section 2. Additions and Corrections, Market Street Alignment Additional Analysis. The commenter's opinions regarding the Market Street and 13<sup>th</sup> Street alternatives have been noted for the record and will be forwarded to the decision makers for their consideration. No further response is required.

**COMMENT LETTER No. 15**

Sandra Cattell  
October 16, 2017

**COMMENT 15.1**

Comments on the Dockweiler Extension DEIR

I moved to Placerita Canyon 20 years because of the rural equestrian lifestyle it supports. I have 2 horses on the property. My home is very special to me.

With that said, I believe the city has continually sidestepped the intention of the special standards district. The new Revelo project and mixed use being introduced into the neighborhood have promised to negatively change the neighborhood forever. This Dockweiler Extension will further the decline.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 15.1**

This comment has been noted for the record and will be forwarded to the decision makers for their consideration. The commenter does not raise a specific issue with respect to the environmental analysis presented in the DEIR, and as such no further response is required.

**COMMENT 15.2**

The proposed Lyons crossing was always a bad idea. It would have necessitated raising Railroad Ave and part of Lyons, dumped lots of traffic into the train track crossing and the Railroad/Lyons intersection, and would have created a traffic nightmare for this community.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 15.2**

It is reasonable to assume that the commenter is referring to the previous DEIR that was prepared for the Lyons Avenue At-Grade Rail Crossing Project, which was published in 2010 (but was never certified) (See also Response to Comment 12.1). To clarify, the Proposed Project does not necessitate the re-profiling of the Railroad Avenue and Lyons Avenue intersection, as shown in Figure 2-9 Proposed Site Plan at Lyons Avenue, of the DEIR. The commenter does not raise a specific issue with respect to the

environmental analysis presented in the DEIR for the Proposed Project, and as such no further response is required.

**COMMENT 15.3**

Alternative 2, the extension of Dockweiler to 13<sup>th</sup> Street is only a little better (and is the preferred by the DEIR, less encroaching alternative).

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 15.3**

As discussed in Section 6.5 of the DEIR, the Alternative 2 Project was selected as the Environmentally Superior Alternative, because it would reduce the footprint of the Project Site, as it excludes the Lyons Avenue Extension to Dockweiler Drive, and maintains the at-grade crossing at 13<sup>th</sup> Street. No further response is required.

**COMMENT 15.4**

Both alternatives will further erode the rural equestrian feel of the area, and of course, no one would want to ride their horse anywhere near the road.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 15.4**

Both the Proposed Project and the Alternative 2 Project would not conflict with or alter any equestrian facilities or trails. To the contrary the Proposed Project would increase access in the PCSSD, as the proposed alignment of Dockweiler Drive would include a Class II Bike Route and pedestrian walkways. The Proposed Project and the Alternative 2 Project would be designed in accordance with the appropriate design features and standards required for secondary highways and railroad crossings. The Proposed Project would be subject to the site plan review requirements of the City of Santa Clarita. No further analysis is required.

**COMMENT 15.5**

It will increase the traffic flows through our community to a shared track crossing. Your traffic study and its counts are 5 years old, and do not truly reflect the total picture of the traffic in this neighborhood. Long lines when there is a train! Long lines when church gets out (or before church)! These will be exacerbated by more trains and the new development, which most likely (no matter what your counts say) will double the traffic flows across the train tracks. Improvement at the 13<sup>th</sup> St. crossing will barely improve the built out situation without adding lots of Dockweiler traffic.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 15.5**

As further discussed in Section 4.9 Transportation and Traffic, traffic counts were conducted in December 2012 and the Traffic Study was updated in 2017 (refer also to Traffic Impact Analysis: Dockweiler Drive

Alignment Project, Santa Clarita, CA, prepared by David Evans and Associates, dated August 8, 2017, included in Appendix H of the DEIR).

With respect to future development, traffic projections are based on the General Plan Buildout. The buildout includes construction of future roadways including: Dockweiler Drive, between Railroad Avenue and Valle Del Oro; Magic Mountain Parkway, from Railroad Avenue to Via Princessa; and Via Princessa, between Claibourne Lane and Sheldon Avenue. This also includes the proposed conceptual development of the North Newhall area (809 dwelling unit plus an approximate 11-acre commercial land use).

A comparison of the No Build scenario, the Proposed Project scenario, and the Alternative 2 Project scenario for Daily, A.M. and P.M. Peak hour traffic volumes were compiled for the Year 2019 and 2035 conditions as presented in Table 6.4-3 and Table 6.4-4, respectively (see page 6.4-28 of the DEIR). With respect to traffic counts at the 13<sup>th</sup> Street Crossing under the Alternative 2 Project, as presented in Table 6.4-3 under Alternative 2 Year 2019, the total average daily traffic for the Alternative 2 Project is anticipated to result in a reduction of 3,860 average daily trips at the 13<sup>th</sup> Street crossing as compared to the No Build Condition. As presented in Table 6.4-4 under Alternative 2 Year 2035, the total average daily traffic for the Alternative 2 Project is anticipated to result in a slight increase of 730 average daily trips at the 13<sup>th</sup> Street crossing as compared to the No Build Condition.

The Alternative 2 Project would include infrastructure and traffic improvements to accommodate the proposed extension of Dockweiler Drive and improve vehicle and pedestrian safety and circulation. With implementation of mitigation, the Alternative 2 Project would result in reduced vehicle delays during A.M. and P.M. peak hours at the intersection of Railroad Avenue and 13<sup>th</sup> Street as compared to the No Build Conditions for both the 2019 and 2035 buildout year scenarios. This comment has been included in the record and will be forwarded to the decision makers for their consideration. No further analysis with respect to the environmental analysis is warranted.

#### **COMMENT 15.6**

I am suggesting two outlets; an improved, widened, safe 13<sup>th</sup> St crossing for Placerita Cyn residents and the new mixed-use development, and a smaller connection to Railroad at Market St. It is possible if a gentle curving road is nested into the hillside. It will dilute the amount of traffic going onto the roadway at one time. And, it will protect the Special Standards District of Placerita Cyn, and its residents from extra traffic. I am not sure why it was dismissed and not included as an alternative when it truly can be accomplished. Of course, it might decrease the total flow of traffic on Dockweiler, and although you might not like that, it is the only safe way to have an extra traffic connection and preserve the safety of the people who live on Dockweiler. That community needs protection too. There is an affordable housing crisis, and the homes along Dockweiler and below are both moderate and lower income housing. Sometimes it takes a roommate or two to afford the rent. There are no sidewalks, and no place to park extra cars other than the street, so removing the lane of parking for widening the road is out of the question.

Thank you for your consideration of my suggestions.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 15.6**

With respect to project alternatives, Alternative 2 proposes to maintain and improve the 13<sup>th</sup> Street rail crossing. An analysis of Alternative 2 is provided in Section 6, Project Alternatives, page 6.4-1, of the DEIR. With respect to the Market Street Alternative, as disclosed in the DEIR in Section 6.1, the Market Street Alternative was evaluated and rejected from further consideration due to the physical constraints associated with grading, as well as the Alternative's incompatibility with respect to public safety and local residential street standards (See Section 6.1, page 6.1-2 of the DEIR) (See also Response to Comment 12.38, above and Section 2, Additions and Corrections, under the Additional Market Street Alternative Analysis). The commenter's opinion regarding the Market Street and 13<sup>th</sup> Street alternatives has been noted for the record and will be forwarded to the decision makers for their consideration. No further response is required.

**COMMENT LETTER No. 16**

Jim Coffey  
October 16, 2017

**COMMENT 16.1**

Good morning Mike. I'm writing you with my Wife in copy to express our opinion of the pending Dockweiler extension in general, and as it relates to both Placerita Canyon Road and the Placerita Canyon neighborhood in general. Both Paige and I are 50 year residents of mostly Newhall, the last 17 of which have been in Placerita Canyon at our current home located at 21551 Placerita Canyon Road. We love our Special Standards District community, and like our neighbors there our goal is to protect it from any negative impact to ourselves or anyone else who created a home there.

We're aware of the multiple Dockweiler extension options on the table, one of which I name as an option even though the City seems not to recognize it as one. We are very optimistic about Masters traffic to and from Dockweiler, as it should lighten the congestion on Placerita Canyon Road which is a source of aggravation often. That said, our formal opinion and request toward the Dockweiler extension is as follows:

- New Lyons crossing and connection to Dockweiler with spurs to adjacent and/or adjoining streets affected. We are strongly opposed to this in any form. The crossing is far too costly and will negatively affect Old Town Newhall. With Newhall Avenue and Via Princessa pending, there is no reason to open such a major flow of traffic between Lyons and Sierra. Such traffic will negatively inhibit Placerita Canyon Residents in and out of the west end of the neighborhood.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 16.1**

As discussed further in Section 4.9, Transportation and Traffic, of the EIR the Proposed Project would add an additional east-west connector to facilitate traffic between the downtown Newhall community and the neighborhoods to the east. The proposed alignment would be used by motorists to reduce travel time

or otherwise avoid congested intersections in the local area. The Proposed Project is anticipated to reduce vehicle delays at nine of the 16 study intersections analyzed during the A.M. and P.M. peak hours for the 2019 buildout year scenario and at 12 of the 16 intersections during the A.M. and P.M. peak hours for the 2035 buildout year scenario. Overall, the Proposed Project would reduce traffic congestion on local roadways and would reduce travel time. Thus, as concluded in the DEIR, with implementation of mitigation, the Proposed Project would reduce traffic congestion in the project vicinity and no further analysis is required. The commenter's opinion has been included in the record and will be forwarded to the decision makers for their consideration.

#### **COMMENT 16.2**

- Expanded 13<sup>th</sup> Street crossing with connection to Dockweiler and associate connection(s) to 12<sup>th</sup> Street, Placerita Canyon et al. While we are less opposed to this than the new Lyons crossing, we are opposed to it again because of the traffic it will bring to the west end on our neighborhood. In the end, with this option our now overcrowded 13<sup>th</sup> Street crossing aka west end entry/exit will be worse off than it currently is even though widened. The "shortcut" created by this connection of Sierra Highway to 13<sup>th</sup> Street will be a traffic nightmare, especially when any Ravello or similar project is built out. As one of only two canyon exits, we're already in danger of getting out quickly and safely during an emergency.

#### **RESPONSE TO COMMENT 16.2**

With respect to future development, traffic projections are based on the General Plan Buildout, which includes the proposed conceptual development of the North Newhall area (809 dwelling unit plus an approximate 11-acre commercial land use).

The Alternative 2 Project would include infrastructure and traffic improvements to accommodate the proposed extension of Dockweiler Drive and improve vehicle and pedestrian safety and circulation. With implementation of mitigation, the Alternative 2 Project would result in reduced vehicle delays during A.M. and P.M. peak hours at the intersection of Railroad Avenue and 13<sup>th</sup> Street as compared to the No Build Conditions for both the 2019 and 2035 buildout year scenarios.

As discussed in Section 5.1 Impacts Determined to be Less Than Significant, on page 5.1-3, subheading Fire and Police Protection, of the DEIR, emergency access to the Placerita Canyon community would be facilitated through the Proposed Project's alignment, which is consistent with the City's adopted Circulation Element. The Proposed Project's alignment would be an improvement to the current access route into the Placerita Canyon community via 13<sup>th</sup> Street. As stated in Comment Letter No. 5, the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Station generally supports public improvements similar to that of the Proposed Project because these improvements typically result in an overall positive impact upon law enforcement patrol operations, emergency access, and response times. (See Comment Letter No. 5, above). The commenter's opinion has been included in the record and will be forwarded to the decision makers for their consideration. No further analysis is warranted.

**COMMENT 16.3**

- No Dockweiler extension past connection to Masters. We would be in favor of this, since the true goal of any Dockweiler extension should be to gain proper access and traffic flow in and out of Masters' campus as necessary to avoid negative impact to the Placerita Canyon residents and neighborhood.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 16.3**

This comment has been noted for the record and will be forwarded to the decision makers for their consideration. The commenter does not raise a specific issue with respect to the environmental analysis presented in the DEIR, and as such, no further response is required.

**COMMENT 16.4**

- Dockweiler connection to Market Street. We are in favor of and request this option. We call this an option because it is, even though it would require a few steps back to realign the current approved Dockweiler extension. As a good neighbor should, Masters should allow such a realignment as long as it doesn't negatively impact their new entry/exit. This option will allow direct access to Old Town Newhall for Masters, as well as provide an additional general entry and exit to Old Town Newhall from an additional point of access. Everyone benefits from this option, and other than some additional preconstruction prep and process work there is no downside.

Thank you for receiving our formal comments and opinion. Kindly acknowledge your receipt of this and formal entry into the EIR documents.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 16.4**

As disclosed in the DEIR in Section 6.1, the Market Street Alternative was evaluated and rejected from further consideration due to the physical constraints associated with grading, as well as the Alternative's incompatibility with respect to public safety and local residential street standards (See Section 6.1, page 6.1-2 of the DEIR). See also Response to Comment 12.38, above, and Section 2. Additions and Corrections, Market Street Alignment Additional Analysis. The commenter's opinions regarding the Market Street and 13<sup>th</sup> Street alternatives have been noted for the record and will be forwarded to the decision makers for their consideration. No further response is required.

**COMMENT LETTER No. 17**

Rick Drew

Date: September 28, 2017

**COMMENT 17.1**

If Dockweiler to Market St. is an 11+% [sic] grade, why can't a road alignment be developed to lower the grade to below 6% or less. Alignment with curve and /or switchback to lessen the grade? [sic]

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 17.1**

As disclosed in the DEIR in Section 6.1, the Market Street Alternative was evaluated and rejected from further consideration due to the physical constraints associated with grading, as well as the Alternative's incompatibility with respect to public safety and local residential street standards (See Section 6.1, page 6.1-2 of the DEIR). See also Response to Comment 12.38, above, and Section 2. Additions and Corrections, Market Street Alignment Additional Analysis. The commenter's opinion regarding the Market Street alternative has been noted for the record and will be forwarded to the decision makers for their consideration. No further response is required.

**COMMENT LETTER No. 18**

F.A. Humelbaugh

Date: October 9, 2017

**COMMENT 18.1**

Having lived here for more than 35 years. [sic] I know that a 13<sup>th</sup> St crossing closure would certainly create horrendous additional traffic problems. An at grade crossing at Lyons Ave. is a non-workable engineering fiasco.

A Dockweiler extension and connection to the existing Marker St. Crossing would do nothing to alleviate any increase in local traffic flow without [sic] a connection to the northerly side of the railroad in the vicinity of Arch St. & thence [sic] to Dockweiler.

Another important road improvement need is for our city to give Placerita Canyon residents a connection to an extended Golden Valley Road, as a safety escape route of this area in the event of a serious threat of fire or flooding.

Please leave the 13<sup>th</sup> St crossing functioning but with an improved egress "right turn lane" at the crossing. It is hazardous at the present time.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 18.1**

This comment has been noted for the record and will be forwarded to the decision makers for their consideration. The commenter does not raise a specific issue with respect to the environmental analysis presented in the DEIR, and as such no further response is required.



**COMMENT LETTER No. 19**

Olga Kaczmar

Date: September 14, 2017

**COMMENT 19.1**

We don't want dockweiler [sic] traffic coming to 13<sup>th</sup> St and impacting our left turn traffic onto Railroad (we're a horse community.) (Horse trailers) [sic] We don't want to lose 13<sup>th</sup> Street exit to Railroad. Have Dockweiler exit onto Market. at [sic] 13<sup>th</sup>, We [sic] want a "legitimate" right turn lane onto Railroad. If we wait legitimately for a right hand turn, we have to wait several lights for left turn to clear.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 19.1**

As disclosed in the DEIR in Section 6.1, the Market Street Alternative was evaluated and rejected from further consideration due to the physical constraints associated with grading, as well as the Alternative's incompatibility with respect to public safety and local residential street standards (See Section 6.1, page 6.1-2 of the DEIR). See also Response to Comment 12.38, above, and Section 2. Additions and Corrections, Market Street Alignment Additional Analysis. Alternative 2, which includes upgrades and improvements to the intersection of 13<sup>th</sup> Street and Railroad Avenue would include a designated right turn lane onto Railroad Avenue from 13<sup>th</sup> Street (see Figure 6.4-2, Alternative 2 13<sup>th</sup> Street Improvements, on page 6.4-3 of the DEIR). The commenter's opinions have been noted for the record and will be forwarded to the decision makers for their consideration. No further response is required.

**COMMENT LETTER No. 20**

Tony Matthes

Date: September 25, 2017

**COMMENT 20.1**

The Honorable Members of the City Council of Santa Clarita, the Manager of the City of Santa Clarita and the Director of Development for the City of Santa Clarita:

I have written a response concerning the Dockweiler Extension. It is attached. Please read it and distribute it to the various departments and personnel involved with this proposed project. I am aware that my position is not fully in sync with the PCPOA, but I believe my opposition to this project has merits and hopefully I would have the opportunity to discuss or communicate my concerns with the city officials and also present my position points at any public hearing on this matter. In anticipation of your consideration, I thank you.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 20.1**

The commenter does not raise a specific issue with respect to the environmental analysis presented in the DEIR, and as such no further response is required. The commenter's opinion has been included in the record and will be forwarded to the decision makers for their consideration.

**COMMENT 20.2**

Why is the city fixated on **another** "east-west" connection at this location? Is it simply because it was in the General Plan to make this happen? If that is the case, we need to amend the General Plan before we build Dockweiler, as a route to nowhere, or the Santa Clarita Parkway.

The blatant fact is that we already have an east-west connection. It's Newhall Avenue! If Dockweiler is an east-west connection, so is Newhall Avenue. The absurdity of building and using Dockweiler is that Dockweiler and Newhall Avenue parallel each other and are only one-half mile apart.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 20.2**

As discussed in Section 2, Project Description (see page 2-28), of the DEIR, the purpose of the Proposed Project is to achieve CPUC approval of an at-grade rail crossing at the current terminus of Lyons Avenue and the Southern Pacific Railroad line and extend a through roadway connection from Lyons Avenue to Dockweiler Drive. Additionally, as noted in the DEIR, the proposed connection and extension of Lyons Avenue to Dockweiler Drive is identified in the Circulation Element of the City's General Plan as one of the primary east-west arterials through the City of Santa Clarita that would provide a through connection from Sierra Highway to Railroad Avenue. The Proposed Project is being developed to facilitate the increase in vehicles and relieve congestion in the project area as build out of the General Plan continues. As identified in DEIR, objectives of the Proposed Project include:

- Implementation of the goals of the Circulation Element of the Santa Clarita General Plan, including the crossing at Lyons Avenue and the extension of Lyons Avenue/Dockweiler Drive;
- Improve roadway level of service and circulation network;  
Provide a safe and efficient at-grade rail crossing that meets the standards of the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC);
- Provide sufficient information for CPUC application and approval of the proposed crossing;
- Improve pedestrian and vehicle railroad safety by eliminating an existing substandard at-grade rail crossing at 13<sup>th</sup> Street and replacing it with a more advanced and enhanced at-grade rail crossing at Lyons Avenue;
- Reduce vehicle miles traveled by creating a more direct route for motorists, eliminating circuitous driving patterns.
- Provide greater connectivity between Old Town Newhall, Placerita Canyon, The Master's University and the residents that live along Dockweiler Drive;
- Provide an economic stimulus to Old Town Newhall with enhanced connectivity to the Old Town Newhall area; and

- Provide an enhanced gateway to Placerita Canyon.

The purpose of the EIR is to analyze the environmental impacts that would result from the construction and operation of the Proposed Project and analyze alternatives to the Proposed Project that may be effective in reducing or avoiding environmental impacts. This comment has been noted for the record and will be forwarded to the decision makers for their consideration. No further response is required.

### **COMMENT 20.3**

The positives of using Newhall Avenue are the following:

- It is already built.
- Newhall Avenue extends and/or starts at an existing freeway on and off ramp.
- Newhall Avenue does not go through any residential neighborhoods.
- Newhall Avenue does not cost the city anything.

The negatives of using Newhall Avenue are zero.

The only positive of using and building Dockweiler is that it may be a better entrance and exit to Masters' College future building expansion, which would be in addition to an existing route to Newhall Avenue already planned by the college. It can be argued that it provides a faster route to the northern part of the east side of the Santa Clarita Valley. However, this is highly debatable as Newhall Avenue provides a north-south freeway on-ramp to this portion of the eastern portion of the Valley, which may take the same amount of time, or at worst approximately the same amount of time. The negatives of building and using Dockweiler as an east-west route are the following:

- The cost of building and maintaining a new road. Some costs, but not all, include the "mitigation" measures for 13<sup>th</sup> street, the railroad crossing upgrades, Placeritos, and Placerita Canyon, the road and signal modifications on Railroad Avenue to enable north and south bound traffic proper access to 13<sup>th</sup> street.
- The road does not serve any benefit, as its primary function would be for the east to the west traffic. However, this route ends at Sierra Highway, with no freeway on or off-ramp access. Traffic traveling south from Dockweiler would turn south and continue on Sierra Highway to the intersection of Newhall Avenue and Sierra Highway. Ironically, this is the same terminus as the Newhall Avenue route!
- There would be very little benefit for traffic that wanted to travel north from the intersection of Dockweiler and Sierra Highway, as the distance from 13<sup>th</sup> street to Dockweiler to Sierra Highway is greater than the distance from 13<sup>th</sup> Street to the intersection of Newhall Avenue and Sierra Highway.
- Repercussions for and from the community for making the land at the intersection of 13<sup>th</sup> Street and Railroad Avenue available for large scale development would be egregious. As a case in point, when the city was considering a Metro Link station at this intersection it was deemed untenable and not in the best interest of the community or Newhall or Placerita Canyon.

Additionally, a large scale development's traffic impact on this portion of entrance to Dockweiler would make this an F grade road and intersection.

### RESPONSE TO COMMENT 20.3

The commenter's opinions regarding the use of Newhall Avenue are noted for the record and will be forwarded to the decision makers for their consideration. The commenter does not raise specific concerns related to the environmental analysis as presented in the DEIR. Nonetheless, as discussed further in Section 4.9, Transportation and Traffic, of the EIR the Proposed Project would add an additional east-west connector to facilitate traffic between the downtown Newhall community and the neighborhoods to the east. The proposed alignment would be used by motorists to reduce travel time or otherwise avoid congested intersections in the local area. The Proposed Project is anticipated to reduce vehicle delays at nine of the 16 study intersections analyzed during the A.M. and P.M. peak hours for the 2019 buildout year scenario and at 12 of the 16 intersections during the A.M. and P.M. peak hours for the 2035 buildout year scenario. Overall, the Proposed Project would reduce traffic congestion on local roadways and would reduce travel time. Thus, as concluded in the DEIR, with implementation of mitigation, the Proposed Project would reduce traffic congestion in the project vicinity, and no further analysis is required.

### COMMENT 20.4

- The importance of Placerita Canyon's rural nature and the preservation of one of the last symbols of Newhall's history were confirmed with the establishment of a Special Standards District by the City, which states:
  - *The purpose of the Placerita Canyon special standards district (PCSSD) is to protect, maintain, preserve and enhance the secluded, rural equestrian character of the community, to enhance the community's unique appeal and to help mitigate the cumulative impacts of residential development. Additionally, it is the purpose of these special standards to ensure that new and expanded structures are compatible with the characteristics of surrounding single-family residential neighborhoods, and protect the light, air, and privacy of existing single-family residences from negative impacts. These standards are also intended to ensure reasonable access to public riding and hiking trails, and to minimize the need for installation of infrastructure such as sewers, streetlights, concrete sidewalks and concrete flood control systems that would alter the community's character, while providing for adequate drainage and other community safety features.*
- This route and future mass development of this area of the Canyon is contrapositive to the preservation, and the city's original intent, for the community of Placerita Canyon.

### RESPONSE TO COMMENT 20.4

The commenter does not provide any specific examples of how the Proposed Project would be in conflict with the provisions of the PCSSD, which are established in Chapter 17.39. 020, of the SCMC. The DEIR

included a detailed analysis evaluating the consistency of the Proposed Project to the specific applicable development standards for the PCSSD area. As analyzed in Section 4.7, Table 4.7-3, page 4.7-18, of the DEIR, the Proposed Project is in substantial compliance with the standards identified in the PCSSD. This comment letter will be included in the record and will be forwarded to the decision makers for their consideration. No further response is required.

**COMMENT 20.5**

- No study exists as to the importance or need to build a secondary route to Sierra Highway at this location at this time.
- It does not benefit the community of Valencia or the east side of the Santa Clarita Valley, which presently utilizes Newhall Ranch Road and Soledad Canyon Road.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 20.5**

With respect to the commenter's concerns regarding the purpose and function of the Proposed Project, please refer to Response to Comment 20.2 and 20.3 above. No further response is required.

**COMMENT 20.6**

So, what is the solution, and why did the EIR not include an alternative route in their report? The solution, if needed at this time, is to build that portion of Via Princessa from the existing terminus of Via Princessa (in circle J Ranch), to Golden Valley Road, at the future and planned intersection of Via Princessa and Golden Valley Road. The benefits of this route are as follows:

- It adheres to the General Plan as the planned major east west connection for the valley
- It has an existing bridge crossing spanning Railroad Ave. and the train tracks.
- It serves the communities of Valencia and Newhall and the eastern communities of the valley, including Vista Canyon and most developments in that area.
- The cost of this road will be repaid by future developers, as mandated in their Conditions of Approval.
- The distance of connecting from the present terminus in Circle J to Golden Valley Road is less than the distance from 13<sup>th</sup> Street to the terminus of Dockweiler (1.2 miles to 1.5 miles).
- Will lessen the traffic impact on Railroad Ave., Newhall Ave and Soledad Canyon.

The negatives of building this route are as follows:

- None, as it is the planned major east-west connector route of the General Plan, evidenced by the completed construction of the Wiley Canyon Bridge.

Why didn't the EIR include this alternative in their report? I don't know.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 20.6**

As discussed in Section 6.1 Project Alternatives Introduction, of the DEIR, the objective of the project alternatives analysis, as directed by CEQA, is to identify alternatives that could feasibly attain most of the basic objectives of the project but would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project, and evaluate the comparative merits of the alternatives. Objectives of the Proposed Project are discussed in Section 2 Project Description (see page 2-28), of the DEIR, and are also listed above in Response to Comment 20.2. The DEIR does not consider the extension of Via Princessa as an alternative because this extension would be an entirely different project as it does not analyze the extension of Dockweiler Drive as shown on the General Plan, and therefore does not meet the objectives of the Proposed Project. No further response is required.

**COMMENT 20.7**

Nothing exists as to why a second route at the Dockweiler location is needed at this time. Additionally, the EIR did not mention Newhall Avenue as an alternative to Dockweiler, nor did they mention Via Princessa. Everything should **stop** [sic] until a full analysis, with community participation, of constructing a section of Via Princessa is completed: as well as an in depth study of why we need an additional east-west connection at this time paralleling Newhall Ave [sic]

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 20.7**

With respect to the commenter's concerns regarding the purpose and function of the Proposed Project, please refer to Response to Comment 20.2 and 20.3 above. With respect to Project alternatives, please refer to Response to Comment 20.3 and 20.6, above. This comment letter will be forwarded to the decision makers for their consideration. No further response is required.

**COMMENT LETTER No. 21**

Tony Matthes

Date: October 3, 2017

**COMMENT 21.1**

In response to Ken Striplin's letter to me, I want to express my gratitude for having the opportunity to put forward my objections to the Dockweiler Extension at this time.

I have lived in the canyon for over 40 years; 31 in Placerita Canyon. I am a past Board Member of the PCPOA, and with the help of Buck McKeon, was personally instrumental in moving the proposed Metrolink Placerita station to Soledad Canyon, Rd. I have been involved in the real estate industry in Santa Clarita since 1972, including starting and owning a real estate sales company in the 70's, forming a real estate development and construction company in the 80's, entitling and building several residential and commercial developments in the Santa Clarita, and starting Valencia National Bank in 1985. The

reason for describing my personal involvement in the city during my 40+ years in Santa Clarita is meant to assure you that my opposition to the Dockweiler Extension is not a rant.

After taking part in the community meeting held at Masters College last Thursday evening, it was evident the PCOPA board members that were there, and several of the most vocal homeowners in attendance, unfortunately spent most of their time on the minutiae of the Dockweiler Extension issue. Additionally, after meeting with several Placerita Canyon homeowners in attendance and over 20 that were not in the meeting, the “Board” is not aligned with our position, and misrepresenting the majority of the homeowners in the Placerita Canyon area.

#### **RESPONSE TO COMMENT 21.1**

This comment has been noted for the record and will be forwarded to the decision makers for their consideration. The commenter does not raise a specific issue with respect to the environmental analysis presented in the DEIR, and as such no further response is required.

#### **COMMENT 21.2**

It is our position that the focus of the Dockweiler EIR does not address the merits of not building Dockweiler at this time. Those, but not all, are the following:

- Why should Dockweiler be built at this time? Newhall Ave is not impacted at this time and Newhall proper is built-out. Therefore, traffic from Newhall or the surrounding area of Newhall will not increase enough to warrant another east-west connection at this location at this time,

#### **RESPONSE TO COMMENT 21.2**

With respect to the commenter’s concerns regarding the purpose and function of the Proposed Project, please refer to Response to Comment 20.2 and 20.3 above. This comment will be forwarded to the decision makers for their consideration. No further response is required.

#### **COMMENT 21.3**

- Via Princessa would serve as a better east-west connection for the following reasons:
  - It serves the communities of Valencia, Newhall, Circle J, Valencia Town Center and other commercial and office communities of Valencia on the west side of the city.
  - It serves the communities on the east side of the city, such as Vista Canyon, Sand Canyon Plaza, Sand Canyon, Fair Oaks, Friendly Valley, developments boarding Via Princessa, Sierra Highway and Golden Valley, and the commercial developments at Sierra Highway, Via Princessa and Golden Valley, along with those traveling on the Antelope Valley freeway.
  - The overpass of Sierra Highway and the railroad is already constructed via the Wiley Canyon Bridge.

It should also be noted that very few people throughout the city, including staff at the Signal newspaper, have any awareness of the Dockweiler Extension. It is my belief that if the general public was aware that the city was contemplating building out Via Princessa, you would have thousands of people responding.

In all good conscience, and for the benefit of the whole City of Santa Clarita, an EIR on completing the construction of Via Princessa to Golden Valley prior to building the “Dockweiler Extension” is paramount.

### **RESPONSE TO COMMENT 21.3**

With respect to Project alternatives please refer to Response to Comment 20.3 and 20.6, above. This comment letter will be forwarded to the decision makers for their consideration. No further response is required.

### **COMMENT LETTER No. 22**

Joe Morelli

Date: September 14, 2017

### **COMMENT 22.1**

Please look at Market St. again and use Pine St. as a second [sic] as well as Dockweiler Drive. If you use Market onto Dockweiler Pine St. does not cross the RR [sic] tracks and any one can get out to Railroad at the end of Pine St. Also Pine St. [sic] is already there to use along with a light at the end of Pine to Railroad.

### **RESPONSE TO COMMENT 22.1**

As disclosed in the DEIR in Section 6.1, the Market Street Alternative was evaluated and rejected from further consideration due to the physical constraints associated with grading, as well as the Alternative’s incompatibility with respect to public safety and local residential street standards (See Section 6.1, page 6.1-2 of the DEIR). See also Response to Comment 12.38, above, and Section 2. Additions and Corrections, Market Street Alignment Additional Analysis. The commenter’s opinion has been noted for the record and will be forwarded to the decision makers for their consideration. No further response is required.



**COMMENT LETTER No. 23**

Joe Morelli

Date: September 28, 2017

**COMMENT 23.1**

On page Figure 6-1-1 Market Street alignment if 1350 @ 58+00 why stop at 75+00 and not take it out to 104+66 and it would be under 1500 that is less then .6%. at points 85+00 Lower Master's point and draw a straight line it does go approx. 1480 vertical at 104+66. I not an engineer but please look at it. [sic]

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 23.1**

As disclosed in the DEIR in Section 6.1, the Market Street Alternative was evaluated and rejected from further consideration due to the physical constraints associated with grading, as well as the Alternative's incompatibility with respect to public safety and local residential street standards (See Section 6.1, page 6.1-2 of the DEIR). The grading alignment for the Market Street Alternative was based on the roadway alignment limits for The Master's University project, which was already approved in 2009. See also Response to Comment 12.38, above, and Section 2. Additions and Corrections, Market Street Alignment Additional Analysis. The commenter's opinion has been noted for the record and will be forwarded to the decision makers for their consideration. No further response is required.

**COMMENT No. 24**

Candice Nelson

Date: October 15, 2017

**COMMENT 24.1**

After analyzing the DEIR for the Proposed Lyons Avenue/ Dockweiler Drive Extension the following questions and concerns have sparked my attention:

- 1) How will all of the properties needed for the construction of the extension be obtained? Will the needed properties be completely acquired by the City of Santa Clarita, or will only the necessary portions needed for the extension be acquired, either by purchase and re-zoning property lines or leasing the needed portion of the property from the owner?

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 24.1**

Implementation of the Proposed Project may require the potential acquisition of easements over public and private properties that are adjacent to the proposed alignment. Figure 2-18, Dockweiler Drive Study Area – Adjacent Properties Map (see page 2-27 of the DEIR), identifies properties in the project area that are located within or adjacent to the proposed alignment. Table 2-1 of the DEIR (see page 2-24), identifies a total of 19 of the 29 properties identified within the study area would be affected by easements

and or acquisitions. The commenter does not raise a specific issue with respect to the environmental analysis presented in the DEIR, as such no further response is required.

#### **COMMENT 24.2**

- 2) With the Dockweiler extension, Valle del Oro has a direct connection into Placerita Canyon. With such access, how will The City of Santa Clarita, as well as the Santa Clarita Sheriffs Station enforce and prevent a non-avoidable increase in crime rates. The current layout of Placerita Canyon allows a one-way entrance and exit, resulting in an extremely low rate of crime. However with this connection, there are multiple entrances and exits providing a higher chance of crime. When looking at recent crime maps, the neighborhood surrounding Valle del Oro has numerous incidents (including the recent Lyons Ave. road closure involving LAPD and an armed robbery suspect), while Placerita Canyon has extremely low crime reports.

#### **RESPONSE TO COMMENT 24.2**

The portion of Dockweiler Drive that would extend to Valle del Oro is beyond the scope of the Proposed Project. The Proposed Project analyzes the extension of Dockweiler Drive from Arch Street to the limits at The Master's University. Refer to Figure 2-1, Project Location Map, of the DEIR. Nonetheless, with respect to the commenter's concerns regarding crime, for purposes of CEQA, a significant impact may occur if the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department ("LASD") could not adequately serve the areas affected by the Project's circulation plan based upon response time or access. LASD reviewed and commented on the DEIR. (See Comment Letters No. 5, above). As noted in Comment Letter No. 5, the Station generally supports these types of public improvements like the Proposed Project because these improvements typically result in an overall positive impact upon law enforcement patrol operations. No further response is required.

#### **COMMENT 24.3**

- 3) When reading the DEIR, all options for the project are said to "avoid direct impact to Placerita Canyon". After analyzing the options, I feel that all rather provide a "direct impact" to Placerita Canyon. Whether it is from a non-avoidable increase in crime, traffic, or the loss of the rural equestrian lifestyle that we all have worked very hard to preserve, this extension will result in a detrimental decline of a neighborhood that is proud of the historical importance it holds.

#### **RESPONSE TO COMMENT 24.3**

The DEIR does not claim to "avoid direct impacts to Placerita Canyon" as stated by the commenter. The Proposed Project's impacts with respect to each category, pursuant to CEQA, were fully analyzed and disclosed in the DEIR. A summary of each impact category and its impact conclusion is provided in Section 1. Executive Summary of both the DEIR and Final EIR. With respect to impacts related to crime, refer to Response to Comment 24.2. With respect to traffic impacts, refer to Response to Comment 20.3. With respect to the Proposed Project's consistency with the PCSSD and impacts to equestrian uses, please refer to Response to Comments 12.3 and 12.4, respectively.

**COMMENT 24.4**

Rather than focusing on increasing the size and profitability of every square inch of Santa Clarita, I truly hope the members of the City Counsel who democratically represent the people of Santa Clarita (including the residents of Placerita Canyon) will listen to, and make an educated decision regarding this extension with the residents' concerns and opinions in mind.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 24.4**

This comment letter has been include in the record and will be forwarded to the decision makers for their consideration. No further analysis is warranted.

**COMMENT LETTER No. 25**

Mr and Mrs. Réal Paradise

Date: September 14, 2017

**COMMENT 25.1**

at TMU 9-14-2017 [sic]

Thank you sincerely for helping, caring, for us this evening. [sic] We needed this meeting, we needed this time with you. [sic]

Big concern:

Coming into 13<sup>th</sup> to Dockweiler – Too much Noise and Traffic [sic] Brining city traffic into or next to – (near) [sic] Placerita Cyn Placerita Blvd – No – No – No – [sic]

Please - take Market Street to Dockweiler [sic]

Noise and hundreds more vehicle at the West end of our canyon – Sorry – wrong way to solve this problem [sic]

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 25.1**

This comment letter has been included in the record and will be forwarded to the decision makers for their consideration. See also Response to Comment 12.38, above, and Section 2. Additions and Corrections, Market Street Alignment Additional Analysis. The commenter does not raise a specific issue with respect to the environmental analysis presented in the DEIR, as such no further response is required.

**COMMENT LETTER No. 26**

Michael Ragsdale  
Date: October 18, 2017

**COMMENT 26.1**

I would like to express my concern and disagreement with your plans regarding the Lyons Avenue / Dockweiler Drive Extension Project EIR. As a resident of Placerita Cyn Rd [sic] I feel this will have a negative impact on my family and neighbors. Having spoken with a number of the community here, I know that I'm not alone in these thoughts and we believe there are better alternatives to reduce traffic.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 26.1**

This comment letter has been included in the record and will be forwarded to the decision makers for their consideration. The commenter does not raise a specific issue with respect to the environmental analysis presented in the DEIR; as such, no further response is required.

**COMMENT LETTER No. 27**

Renel Ragsdale  
October 16, 2017

**COMMENT 27.1**

I have been a resident of Placerita Canyon for forty years. It is a small beautiful area with a unique lifestyle.

I am concerned with and I am AGAINST [sic] the Dockweiler Drive extension.

We are constantly threatened by fires. If a passing motorist throws out a cigarette while driving on this new extension our community will be destroyed.

I also think it is a waste of taxpayers money. A Golden Valley extension would make more sense.

The traffic that would be created at the end of our road is also a big concern.

I do not fell [sic] this extension is a critical issue at this time and think there should be another solution.

Thank you for reading this and I hope you make the correct decision.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 27.1**

This comment letter has been included in the record and will be forwarded to the decision makers for their consideration. The commenter does not raise a specific issue with respect to the environmental analysis presented in the DEIR, as such no further response is required.

**COMMENT LETTER No. 28**

Tara Ragsdale  
October 16, 2017

**COMMENT 28.1**

My name is Tara Ragsdale and I have lived in Placerita Canyon for 35 years. I recently learned about a proposal to connect Dockweiler Drive to 13<sup>th</sup> Street, Lyons Avenue, or Market Street to decrease the traffic on Newhall Avenue. I believe that the problem isn't lying in the traffic on Newhall Avenue, it is the traffic on the 5 and 14 freeways. Many commuters that drive down Newhall Avenue are not driving to Newhall, they are driving to Valencia, Saugus, or other parts of Santa Clarita. The major intersections in Newhall are two and three lanes wide on each side while the intersections in Valencia are around six. You see a fraction of the cars driving through Newhall compared to Valencia. Newhall Avenue is the first exit off the freeway and people would rather get off to drive on side streets than sit on the freeway in stop and go traffic. My point is that possibly the traffic situation would improve if the residents in the Northern part of Santa Clarita had an easier way to commute to and from their homes. Widening the freeways or improving the off ramps near their homes would be more effective for the future and eminent growth of this city.

I have lived in Placerita Canyon long enough to remember the days before the gate was installed on our street. As kids, we weren't allowed to go outside our fence at any time because the traffic was terrible and too dangerous. After the gate was installed it changed our lives completely. Placerita Canyon became a neighborhood that some of us had never experienced before. I remember looking out the window and couldn't believe when I saw people walking their dogs on the street! My dad started taking us for bike rides in the evening and that was the first time we were ever able to do that together. For once we could ride our horses and bicycles safely across the street to the little market for ice cream on a warm summer day. To this day I walk down the street with my horse and come across families on bicycles, elderly neighbors dropping off their farm fresh eggs at friends' houses, and people that I would have never even met before walking their dogs.

My stand on the proposal is for the "No Build" option. To turn nice quiet residential neighborhoods into major thoroughfares with large amounts of traffic in order alleviate traffic elsewhere is unfair. It is not the responsibility of the residents to solve commuter problems and the issues should be addressed elsewhere. Every person should be able to raise their kids in a nice neighborhood without the concern of their safety. Please take this letter into consideration before moving forward with these proposals.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 28.1**

This comment letter has been included in the record and will be forwarded to the decision makers for their consideration. The commenter does not raise a specific issue with respect to the environmental analysis presented in the DEIR, as such no further response is required.

**COMMENT No. 29**

C. Rasmussen

Date: September 28, 2017

**COMMENT 29.1**

We would like to have further studied on the Market Street – alternative [sic]

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 29.1**

As disclosed in the DEIR in Section 6.1, the Market Street Alternative was evaluated and rejected from further consideration due to the physical constraints associated with grading, as well as the Alternative's incompatibility with respect to public safety and local residential street standards (See Section 6.1, page 6.1-2 of the DEIR). See also Response to Comment 12.38, above, and Section 2. Additions and Corrections, Market Street Alignment Additional Analysis. This comment letter has been noted for the record and will be forwarded to the decision makers for their consideration. No further response is required.

**COMMENT LETTER No. 30**

Linda Redmond

Date: October 16, 2017

**COMMENT 30.1**

I am totally against the "Dockweiler" connection into Placerita Canyon and using the "13<sup>th</sup>" street option. I have lived in this canyon for over 34 years. There is a quality of life in our canyon that is rare and hard to find elsewhere in the city. By dumping Dockweiler, Casden, and additional Master's College vehicles into the canyon you are greatly disrupting our "quality of Life"! There are several issues I would suggest you review/re-review.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 30.1**

This comment has been noted for the record and will be forwarded to the decision makers for their consideration. Responses to the commenter's concerns are provided below. No further response is required.

**COMMENT 30.2**

1). What is the impact of the increased population of Master's College. More students equal more cars equal more traffic. They need an entrance/exit off of Railroad Avenue.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 30.2**

As discussed further in Section 4.9 Transportation and Traffic, traffic projections included the construction of future roadway: Dockweiler Drive, between Railroad Avenue and Valle Del Oro. The commenter's opinion has been noted for the record and will be forwarded to the decision makers for their consideration. The commenter does not raise a specific issue with respect to the environmental analysis presented in the DEIR, as such no further response is required.

**COMMENT 30.3**

2). What is the impact of the studio overlay for filming in the Canyon? In addition to Melody Ranch's filming, there has been a huge increase of additional filming in the canyon. Within the last month I have been stopped on Placerita Canyon Road (the private portion) and not allowed to go through until their filming shot was done. There is an additional impact into this canyon related to traffic just from the filming traffic and this is before the possibly additional vehicles are added from Dockweiler, Casden, and Master's. The increase in filming vehicles, trucks, van, etc. is also at a detriment to our quality of life. The oversized trucks from the studios come barreling down the canyon at all hours of the day and night. They even come into contact with the oak trees this city works so hard to protect! What is the impact of all of this additional traffic prior to you adding more vehicles if the proposed option is adopted?

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 30.3**

An analysis of existing traffic conditions is presented in Section 4.9 Transportation and Traffic of the DEIR. With respect to traffic modeling, Year 2019, or opening year, traffic volumes were provided by the City of Santa Clarita using the Santa Clarita Valley Consolidated Traffic Model ("SCVCTM"). Other area projects anticipated to be constructed by Year 2019 were incorporated into the SCVCTM and account for expected growth. Future Year 2035 utilizes the traffic volume projections for the City of Santa Clarita's traffic model together with the existing traffic flow data. The traffic projections are based on the General Plan Buildout. The buildout includes construction of future roadways: Dockweiler Drive, between Railroad Avenue and Valle Del Oro; Magic Mountain Parkway, from Railroad Avenue to Via Princessa; and Via Princessa, between Claibourne Lane and Sheldon Avenue. This also includes the proposed conceptual development of the North Newhall area (809 dwelling unit plus an approximate 11-acre commercial land use). No further analysis is required.

**COMMENT 30.4**

3). Additionally - what is the impact of accidents on the local freeways? Well I can tell you what happens. Railroad Avenue backs up and trying to get out of Placerita Canyon takes a long time. If you add vehicles from Dockweiler, Casden, and Master's College to this scenario it will be and [sic] even larger nightmare. While everyone is always affected by traffic accidents, it is unfair to put the residents of Placerita in an even worse position. On October 5 and October 10 of this year there were accidents of the southbound 5 freeway. Both days saw the traffic on Railroad Avenue back up and left Placerita Canyon residents waiting for multiple lights to get out of the canyon. Again everyone is affected by accidents buy [sic] this

option will make it three times worse for the canyon which I don't believe is fair or the correct thing to do. There are other options that make more sense.

#### **RESPONSE TO COMMENT 30.4**

As discussed further in Section 4.9, Transportation and Traffic, of the DEIR, because the Proposed Project would add an additional east-west connector to facilitate traffic between the downtown Newhall community and the neighborhoods to the east, the proposed alignment would be used by motorists to reduce travel time or otherwise avoid congested intersections in the local area. The Proposed Project is anticipated to reduce vehicle delays at nine of the 16 study intersections analyzed during the A.M. and P.M. peak hours for the 2019 buildout year scenario and at 12 of the 16 intersections during the A.M. and P.M. peak hours for the 2035 buildout year scenario. Overall, the Proposed Project would reduce traffic congestion on local roadways and would reduce travel time. As concluded in the DEIR, with implementation of mitigation, the Proposed Project would reduce traffic congestion in the project vicinity. No further analysis is required.

#### **COMMENT 30.5**

Suggestions:

I would highly recomend [sic] using the Market Street crossing. There is already more infrastructure at that intersection to handle the amount of vehicles. Cars could go left, right or straight as opposed to only having the option of going left or right with the 13<sup>th</sup> street option.

Another suggestion would be to spend our hard earned tax payer [sic] money on completing Via Princessa. Have the Casden properties connect with Via Princessa to the North and leave Dockweiler alone. If you must do something with Dockweiler have it connect at Market Street which is better able to handle the traffic.

#### **RESPONSE TO COMMENT 30.5**

As disclosed in the DEIR in Section 6.1, the Market Street Alternative was evaluated and rejected from further consideration due to the physical constraints associated with grading, as well as the Alternative's incompatibility with respect to public safety and local residential street standards (See Section 6.1, page 6.1-2 of the DEIR). See also Response to Comment 12.38, above, and Section 2. Additions and Corrections, Market Street Alignment Additional Analysis. This comment has been noted for the record and will be forwarded to the decision makers for their consideration. No further response is required.

#### **COMMENT 30.6**

Lastly, I just would ask that you not ruin the Placerita Canyon way of life. Since this city was incorporated all I hear about is the Quality of Life [sic] that we enjoy and need to protect. Well, please practice what you preach and don't ruin our "Quality of Life"!



Thank you for addressing these issues.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 30.6**

This comment has been noted for the record and will be forwarded to the decision makers for their consideration. The commenter does not raise a specific issue with respect to the environmental analysis presented in the DEIR, and as such no further response is required.

**COMMENT LETTER No. 31**

Jeff and Sharon Secor

Date: September 20, 2017

**COMMENT 31.1**

We attended a meeting on September 14, 2017 held at Masters University regarding the Lyons Ave/Dockweiler Extension, along with a number of our neighbors. We appreciate you holding the meeting, but aren't really sure you came with an open mind and ears to LISTEN to what the community was saying.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 31.1**

This comment has been noted for the record and will be forwarded to the decision makers for their consideration. The commenter does not raise a specific issue with respect to the environmental analysis presented in the DEIR, and as such no further response is required.

**COMMENT 31.2**

A very compelling question asked, that was not answered very clearly, was "Why this project at all?" It doesn't make sense to divide traffic in one area, just to bring it back together a mile or two later. Is TMU still even planning to do their previously approved plan? That is another discussion that needs to be had.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 31.2**

With respect to the purpose and objectives of the Proposed Project, please refer to Response to Comment 20.2. No further analysis is warranted.

**COMMENT 31.3**

We were also very disappointed that the idea of bringing Dockweiler to Market Street, which already has a large RR [sic] crossing was not readily discussed. This seems like such a natural solution. It seemed that many of the residents were more favorable toward this crossing than the other crossing options.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 31.3**

As disclosed in the DEIR in Section 6.1, the Market Street Alternative was evaluated and rejected from further consideration due to the physical constraints associated with grading, as well as the Alternative's incompatibility with respect to public safety and local residential street standards (See Section 6.1, page 6.1-2 of the DEIR). See also Response to Comment 12.38, above, and Section 2. Additions and Corrections, Market Street Alignment Additional Analysis. The commenter's opinion regarding the Market Street Alternative has been noted for the record and will be forwarded to the decision makers for their consideration. No further response is required.

**COMMENT 31.4**

Another question is, who owns the property that will need to be acquired for these projects? Are there any city officials, current or past, that could potentially profit from this Extension Project by selling their land for one or another of the projects and could that be why this is being ramrodded through? (i.e. LaureneWeste)

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 31.4**

Implementation of the Proposed Project may require the potential acquisition of easements over public and private properties that are adjacent to the proposed alignment. Figure 2-18, Dockweiler Drive Study Area – Adjacent Properties Map (see page 2-27 of the DEIR), identifies properties in the project area that are located within or adjacent to the proposed alignment. Table 2-1 of the DEIR (see page 2-24), identifies a total of 19 of the 29 properties identified within the study area would be affected by easements and or acquisitions. The commenter does not raise a specific issue with respect to the environmental analysis presented in the DEIR, as such no further response is required.

**COMMENT 31.5**

If you have spent any time in the Canyon, you would understand what it is like already, to try and cross at 13<sup>th</sup> Street after a train (of which there are many during the day). It is not uncommon for traffic to be backed up to Placeritos and beyond, just waiting to get across the tracks and on to Railroad Avenue. How many 1000s more cars do you hope to add to the mix? And what will happen when hundreds of houses and businesses are added to the mix on the corner of 13<sup>th</sup> and Railroad?

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 31.5**

An analysis of existing traffic conditions is presented in Section 4.9, Transportation and Traffic, of the DEIR. With respect to traffic modeling, Year 2019, or opening year, traffic volumes were provided by the City of Santa Clarita using the Santa Clarita Valley Consolidated Traffic Model ("SCVCTM"). Other area projects anticipated to be constructed by Year 2019 were incorporated into the SCVCTM and account for expected growth. Future Year 2035 utilizes the traffic volume projections for the City of Santa Clarita's traffic model together with the existing traffic flow data. The traffic projections are based on the General Plan Buildout. The buildout includes construction of future roadways: Dockweiler Drive, between

Railroad Avenue and Valle Del Oro; Magic Mountain Parkway, from Railroad Avenue to Via Princessa; and Via Princessa, between Claibourne Lane and Sheldon Avenue. This also includes the proposed conceptual development of the North Newhall area (809 dwelling unit plus an approximate 11-acre commercial land use). No further analysis is required.

The Proposed Project is anticipated to reduce vehicle delays at nine of the 16 study intersections analyzed during the A.M. and P.M. peak hours for the 2019 buildout year scenario and at 12 of the 16 intersections during the A.M. and P.M. peak hours for the 2035 buildout year scenario. Overall, the Proposed Project would reduce traffic congestion on local roadways and would reduce travel time. Thus, as concluded in the DEIR, with implementation of mitigation, the Proposed Project would reduce traffic congestion in the project vicinity, and no further analysis is required.

#### **COMMENT 31.6**

Most of the City's decisions regarding this issue lack common sense, which makes the whole situation very suspect to those of us in the Canyon.

We implore you to re-think this whole project, and if it MUST [sic] be done, take a long, hard look at using Market Street instead of creating bigger issues with those of us who pay taxes for your paycheck.

Finally, our understanding is that there is a legal agreement with the residents of Placerita Canyon to keep the neighborhood rural, as it has been for decades. Perhaps that needs to be looked into as well.

Again, please re-consider this outrageous project and the impact that it will have on those who have lived here for many years.

#### **RESPONSE TO COMMENT 31.6**

The commenter has not provided any specific examples of how the Project is in conflict with the provisions of the PCSSD, which are established in Chapter 17.39. 020, of the SCMC. The DEIR included a detailed analysis evaluating the consistency of the Proposed Project to the specific applicable development standards for the PCSSD area. As analyzed in Section 4.7, Table 4.7-3, page 4.7-18, of the DEIR, the Proposed Project is in substantial compliance with the standards identified in the PCSSD. With respect to the Market Street Alternative, see also Response to Comment 12.38, above, and Section 2. Additions and Corrections, Market Street Alignment Additional Analysis. This comment letter will be included in the record and will be forwarded to the decision makers for their consideration. No further response is required.

**COMMENT LETTER No. 32**

Jeff Secor  
September 28, 2017

**COMMENT 32.1**

I have been at your 2 meetings. My wife sent comments as well. I work for a large city and understand how all this works. We chose to live here for a reason, quiet, little traffic – the 16 years we have lived here we have seen the city is not our friend and has our best interests in mind aside from Mrs West making out on her property - Common sense dictate, we don't want this connection to bring MORE traffic in – just to widen 13<sup>th</sup> Street crossing like it should be to be safe. This is BAD for use and Dockweiler residents. We don't want this – I think you got this from our well informed residents who pay taxes. [sic]

Part 2 – We are voters, you are not listening to what we as high paying taxpayers in this canyon – We are here for a reason. All this is going to do – Common sense is to bring more traffic into this canyon. Government normally doesn't listen to people who they are elected by. We don't want any bld out – Save your money – fix crossing at 13<sup>th</sup> street [sic]

Thank you

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 32.1**

For clarification purposes, the Proposed Project itself would not generate vehicle trips, as it does not include the development any residential, commercial or industrial uses. The Proposed Project is being developed to facilitate the increase in vehicles and relieve congestion in the project area as build out of the General Plan continues. This comment letter has been included in the record and will be forwarded to the decision makers for their consideration. The commenter does not raise a specific issue with respect to the environmental analysis presented in the DEIR, as such no further response is required.

**COMMENT LETTER No. 33**

Tammy Skinner  
Date: September 15, 2017

**COMMENT 33.1**

I attended the meeting last night at Masters College. This extension project could ruin the quality of life we in Placerita Canyon appreciate and pay for. I heard many people say that is the reason they purchased their homes in Placerita Canyon (a special standards district established years ago when the city did not want to pay for the road). I also heard homeowners living off Dockweiler opposed to this project because of the increase in traffic that will impact their communities.

With the build-out of Santa Clarita I've watched it change tremendously over 25 years. I don't want the traffic and major access to our community that we've fought hard to protect.

Placerita Canyon is a special place in Santa Clarita and should stay that way. We have The Masters University, Melody Ranch Studios and churches, along with homeowners here having horses, ranches, etc. I know the Disney Studios will be here soon across the 14 freeway.

The rebirth of downtown Newhall is great and I love seeing the community coming together.

The City of Santa Clarita seriously needs to reconsider this extension project to protect the Placerita Canyon residents that have lived here for decades, preserve some of our history and what brought people to Santa Clarita in the first place.

### **RESPONSE TO COMMENT 33.1**

The commenter does not provided any specific examples of how the Proposed Project would be in conflict with the provisions of the PCSSD, which are established in Chapter 17.39. 020, of the SCMC. The DEIR included a detailed analysis evaluating the consistency of the Proposed Project to the specific applicable development standards for the PCSSD area. As analyzed in Section 4.7, Table 4.7-3, page 4.7-18, of the DEIR, the Proposed Project is in substantial compliance with the standards identified in the PCSSD. This comment letter will be included in the record and will be forwarded to the decision makers for their consideration. No further response is required.

### **COMMENT No. 34**

Thomas Soracco

Date: October 9, 2017

### **COMMENT 34.1**

As briefly discussed at the Master's College meeting, I do believe that the Dockweiler connection is fatally flawed and that another "out of the box" solution should be both considered and explored.

Fundamental Problems with Dockweiler

First, let me state that if Dockweiler did not exist, in other words if there were just an undeveloped hill there, then I do not think anyone would consider this route. It is not only extremely expensive but it is also very disruptive to existing neighborhoods.

### **RESPONSE TO COMMENT 34.1**

This comment has been noted for the record and will be forwarded to the decision makers for their consideration. The commenter does not raise a specific issue with respect to the environmental analysis presented in the DEIR, and as such no further response is required.

**COMMENT 34.2**

More fundamentally, this route does not provide the traffic relief or begin to solve the traffic issues that are being considered.

Leaving aside human or quality of life improvement goals, the end game of the Dockweiler extension would be to alleviate traffic and to smooth anticipated future circulation in the Valley.

As I will outline later, this extension not only will not ease the anticipated traffic but, if built as planned, it will actually increase traffic “friction” with added stops, delays, blockages and inconvenient routings.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 34.2**

The commenter’s claim that the Proposed Project would not relieve congestion in the project vicinity is unsubstantiated. As discussed further in Section 4.9, Transportation and Traffic, of the DEIR, the Proposed Project would add an additional east-west connector to facilitate traffic between the downtown Newhall community and the neighborhoods to the east. The Proposed Project does not include any commercial or residential land uses that would generate additional traffic. Additionally, the proposed alignment would be used by motorists to reduce travel time or otherwise avoid congested intersections in the local area. Based on an evaluation of the Proposed Project is anticipated to reduce vehicle delays at nine of the 16 study intersections analyzed during the A.M. and P.M. peak hours for the 2019 buildout year scenario and at 12 of the 16 intersections during the A.M. and P.M. peak hours for the 2035 buildout year scenario. Overall, the Proposed Project would reduce traffic congestion on local roadways and would reduce travel time. Thus, contrary to the commenter’s assertion, as concluded in the DEIR, with implementation of mitigation, the Proposed Project would reduce traffic congestion in the project vicinity and no further analysis is required.

**COMMENT 34.3**

There are non-engineering issues created as well. The purpose here is not to expand upon these, but they are important and worthy of mention:

- Very high cost of construction due to steep grades and mountain terrain.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 34.3**

This comment has been noted for the record and will be forwarded to the decision makers for their consideration. The commenter does not raise a specific issue with respect to the environmental analysis presented in the DEIR, and as such no further response is required.

**COMMENT 34.4**

- Irreversible negative impact upon wildlife (foxes, wild cats, hawks, rabbits, coyotes, deer, native snakes and such).

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 34.4**

Impacts upon wildlife were analyzed in the Biological Resources Assessment (contained in Appendix D to the Draft EIR) and summarized in Section 4.3, Biological Resources. As noted in the DEIR, the Proposed Project would not result in significant impacts to wildlife. With the incorporation of mitigation measures 4.3-1 through 4.3-7, impacts upon wildlife resources would be less than significant. No further analysis is warranted.

**COMMENT 34.5**

- Highly negative impact upon ridgeline view to the community, this will destroy the hillside ridges and contours that provide invaluable aesthetic value.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 34.5**

As disclosed in Section 4.1 Aesthetics, and shown in Figure 4.1 on page 4.1-3 of the DEIR, the eastern segment of the Dockweiler alignment was previously approved under a separate project entitlement for The Master's University in 2009, which included a Ridgeline Alteration Permit for the eastern segment of this ridgeline. The grading limits of the Proposed Project would retain the gradual elevation profile of the base of the ridgeline. Views of the altered portion of the ridgeline would be visible from limited points along the public rights-of-way along Market Street and Race Street to the south of the Project Site. As a project design feature the grading plan incorporates landform grading practices to blend the manufactured slopes and required drainage benches into the natural topography to the maximum extent feasible. Plant materials will be utilized to protect slopes from slippage and soil erosion and minimize the visual effects of grading and construction on a hillside area. With incorporation of the project design features to develop and improve a new roadway extension that is consistent with the City's roadway design standards, the Proposed Project would result in a less than significant impact with respect to the loss of an aesthetic natural feature. No further analysis is required.

**COMMENT 34.6**

- Loss of valuable open space and trails—currently there are several regularly used trails through the hills.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 34.6**

Based on the grading footprint (see Figure 2-14 on page 2-22 of the DEIR) the Proposed Project will not result in direct impacts upon existing hiking or equestrian trails. To the contrary, the Proposed Project would improve pedestrian and cycling opportunities in the project vicinity. Dockweiler Drive would include sidewalks for pedestrian use and Class II bike lanes on each side. The Proposed Project will be designed in accordance with the appropriate design features and standards required for secondary highways and railroad crossings. No further response is required.

**COMMENT 34.7**

- Significant quality of life loss in both the Placerita Canyon and in the hilltop Vistas community.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 34.7**

The commenter's opinion has been noted. The commenter does not raise a specific issue with respect to the environmental analysis presented in the DEIR, and as such, no further response is required.

**COMMENT 34.8**

- And, as the Placerita Canyon residents have voiced, there is a significant risk of impeded emergency evacuation due to the layout of the proposed extension

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 34.8**

As discussed in Section 5.1 Impacts Determined to be Less Than Significant, page 5.1-3, subheading Fire and Police Protection, of the DEIR, emergency access to the Placerita Canyon community would be facilitated through the Project's alignment, which is consistent with the City's adopted Circulation Element. The Proposed Project's alignment would be an improvement to the current access route into the Placerita Canyon community via 13<sup>th</sup> Street. As stated in Comment Letter No. 5, the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Station generally supports public improvements similar to that of the Proposed Project because these improvements result in an overall positive impact upon law enforcement patrol operations, emergency access, and response times. (See Comment Letter No. 5, above). No further analysis is warranted.

**COMMENT 34.9**

A more practical approach would mitigate all of the above WHILE providing a more effective traffic flow solution as well.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 34.9**

As disclosed in Section 4.1 of the DEIR, the Proposed Project's impacts on aesthetics including scenic vistas and visual character would be reduced to a less than significant level with implementation of mitigation measures 4.1-1 and 4.1-2. As disclosed in Section 4.3, Biological Resources, with incorporation of mitigation measures 4.3-1 through 4.3-7, impacts upon wildlife resources would be less than significant. As further discussed in Section 5.1 the Proposed Project's impact to emergency services including police and fire would be less than significant. Refer also to Responses to Comment 34.4 through 34.6 above. With respect to traffic, as concluded in Section 4.9 Transportation and Traffic, with implementation of mitigation measures 4.9-1 through 4.9-14, impacts would be less than significant. Refer to also to Response to Comment 20.3, regarding traffic flow and congestion. No further analysis is warranted.



**COMMENT 34.10**

Before I touch upon the reasons that the proposed extension will not achieve its purpose, let's state the purpose to ensure we are on the same page.

There are two potential reasons for the extension:

- One, that there is some other reason it is being done than for traffic flow mitigation, such as for expanded development in the hills or simply to finish up a dated plan from 20 years past.
- Or, to improve traffic flow and allow for the increased development along the Railroad corridor. This is not just for current traffic but for future anticipated traffic as well. This is the purpose that makes the most sense and the purpose that has been stated, so we will proceed on this path.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 34.10**

With respect to the overall purpose and objectives of the Proposed Project, please refer to Response to Comment 20.2. No further analysis is warranted.

**COMMENT 34.11**

The basic problem is that the extension to Dockweiler does not solve this and is a poor solution to the problem. It will create a number of significant “stop” points throughout the area and will lead to further slows and congestions.

These are the problematic stops:

- Dockweiler via the Placerita entrance to Sierra Highway is a very poor route for a bypass. This route does not cleanly connect any of the flow lines of the Valley, it starts at a t-intersection and stops at a t-intersection—in effect taking one from nowhere to nowhere.
- At each of these terminus points there will be a significant increase in stopped, jammed traffic. In less than a mile, along Railroad, there will now be 5 significant stops and adding this one as a major traffic outlet will add lengthy stops and delays. Then, adding the projected traffic increase, this corridor will be increasingly difficult to navigate.
- The same is true at Sierra Hwy. Adding lengthy left turn signals and extending stop times will greatly increase the slows along that vital corridor, without achieving much in the way of smoothed traffic. There will be a secondary effect at the Newhall Ave South left turn as this lane will have to be extended and its time length increased. Yet in no way does this route provide easy entrance or exit flow to any desired points, as both ends don't lead anywhere or flow easily.
- An analogy can be found in irrigation systems. Every time a turn is introduced this then creates friction, turbulence, slows and loss of pressure. The same is true in traffic, with the added caveat of introducing higher rates of accidents to the process.

- As amply discussed in the meetings, this routing will create heavy disruption and slows to the traffic flow in and out of the Placerita Canyon. Enough said.
- The Dockweiler extension itself will be a very poor flow. First is the steep grade and potential curves on the route, this never makes for smooth, flowing traffic. Second is the number of stop signs that will be required along the route, minimally these are: at the entrance and exit to Master's College and a minimum of three stop signs through the community on top of the hill (Valle del Oro intersection, apartment exit at the east end and at the Lantana community). It will be very slow going through there. Added to this is the fact that traffic will be merging at both ends from two lanes to a single lane at the top of the hill.

So, adding together the longer waits at traffic lights, the merging lanes, the multiple stop signs (or even an additional stop light) and the grades to the fact that this route is NOT convenient to any destination or flow, makes for a very expensive and ineffective plan.

#### **RESPONSE TO COMMENT 34.11**

The commenter's opinions have been noted for the record. With respect to the Proposed Project's impacts on traffic flow and congestion, please refer to Response to Comment 20.3, above. No further response is required.

#### **COMMENT 34.12**

TARGET ONE: Aside from a restricted corridor in downtown Newhall, the biggest issues lie in the number of stopping points along the way. These should be addressed and solved as a PRIMARY concern, this is low hanging fruit. Traffic that flows equates to reduced congestion and improved capacity. Proposed improvements would include:

- Reposition the bus stop in front of the Metro station. This is the lowest hanging fruit and could be accomplished by eliminating the parking there (there are lots to the rear and south), keeping a drop off zone for passengers and building a pull out for the buses. The stopped bus creates tremendous jams along that area, especially during rush hour.
- Consider eliminating the light at Market Street. Make this a right turn only intersection. Yes, this create some inconvenience, but the benefits outweigh the inconvenience. Residents can go south on Pine to exit to the East. Downtown Newhall visitors can go up to Lyons to turn left. Removing this stop will do much to keep traffic flowing. A pedestrian bridge could be built.
- The most effective move, but costly, would be to build an overpass directing all Newhall Ave traffic over the intersection and then down to the roundabout. This would eliminate any stops, other than train crossings, for the Railroad to Newhall traffic and keep that flowing. If the Dockweiler extension was not done, this would result in tremendous savings and these funds could be used for the overpass.

- There are likely other ways to smooth traffic through Downtown but that should be a priority.

TARGET TWO: This would be to find an effective bypass route to pull traffic through the area and also accommodate the increased traffic connected to the planned development along Railroad (vacant land to the west of Placerita Canyon).

The ideal here would be to find a less expensive route, to find a more effective route and to find a route that has a lessened negative impact on points mentioned earlier (such as wildlife, scenic views, neighborhood disruption, etc.). In addition, finding a route that could potentially provide traffic flow benefits above and beyond what was sought would be ideal.

The goal should not be “to build an extension” but to smoothly move traffic, and projected traffic increases, along the Sierra/Newhall–Santa Clarita Railroad Avenue path. The most effective solution would be to have a direct route between Sierra/Newhall and beyond the Downtown Newhall zone. Ideally this direct route would have a minimum of stops or intersections—an express way or bypass route.

With the future planned development along the east side of Railroad as well as the future planned connection of Via Princessa across the valley then this route should ideally facilitate flow through the future development and also connect to the Via Princessa route.

The proposed route, given of course in simple terms, would avoid the Dockweiler path completely. It would follow flat land for the most part by building along the edge of the creek bed at the base of the hill which is largely flat land. This would keep the bypass route away from any new railroad crossings and out of most all neighborhoods. There are several vacant lots along Newhall Ave where this route could connect and if built properly this route could flow into and out of Newhall without any stop signs or lights. (This would require one overpass and would only allow for traffic in the most probable and heavily used directions)

The route would direct traffic into a properly sized roundabout (large enough to accommodate fire trucks and horse trailers) at the Placerita Canyon intersection. This roundabout would be well to the east of the tracks and the current stoplight, to avoid backups in that tight sector). The route would continue on into the new development and then connect into the Via Princessa future route.

There are some engineering issues, such as the need to move significant dirt as the route would pass to the east of the Metro station as well as the need for one-to-three overpasses and potentially a bridge—but all of these are doable and are significantly less expensive than connecting to Dockweiler.

The most significant plus is that this route would allow for greatly increased traffic flow and speed through the area, and would provide access to the Masters College and the newly developed area.

It would provide safer and increased emergency exit from Placerita, minimize neighborhood disruption and loss of quality of life, it would preserve a valuable piece of open space and scenic ridgelines. Ideally that saved open space could be connected to existing open spaces and further improve the area’s appeal

and outdoor access. With added trails for hikers and horses, and even an extension of our biking paths, this plus would help gain community support for the project as a whole.

Please see attached map for a general outline of the proposed alternative.

#### **RESPONSE TO COMMENT 34.12**

With respect to the commenter's suggestions for alternatives to the Proposed Project, as noted in the DEIR, the proposed connection and extension of Lyons Avenue to Dockweiler Drive is identified in the Circulation Element of the City's General Plan as one of the primary east-west arterials through the City of Santa Clarita that would provide a through connection from Sierra Highway to Railroad Avenue. The purpose of the EIR is to analyze the environmental impacts that would result from the construction and operation of the Proposed Project and analyze alternatives to the Proposed Project that may be effective in reducing or avoiding environmental impacts.

Pursuant to Section 15126.6(c) of the CEQA Guidelines, "the range of potential alternatives to the proposed project shall include those that could feasibly accomplish most of the basic objectives of the project and could avoid or substantially lessen one or more of the significant effects. Among the factors that may be used to eliminate alternatives from detailed consideration in an EIR are: (i) failure to meet most of the basic project objectives, (ii) infeasibility, or (iii) inability to avoid significant environmental impacts." CEQA Guidelines Section 15126.6(b) states that "the discussion of alternatives shall focus on alternatives to the project or its location which are capable of avoiding or substantially lessening any significant effects of the project, even if these alternatives would impede to some degree the attainment of the project objectives, or would be more costly." Thus, the consideration of feasible alternatives was focused on lessening or avoiding the Proposed Project's significant and unavoidable impacts associated with air quality and construction noise and vibration.

The alternative that the commenter is suggesting would not support the objectives of the Proposed Project, which include, primarily, the extension of Dockweiler Drive as identified in the General Plan. Objectives of the Proposed Project are discussed in Section 2 Project Description (see page 2-28), of the DEIR, and are also listed above in Response to Comment 20.2. Additionally, the alternative proposed by the commenter would have a larger footprint along Newhall Creek and require more grading and infrastructure improvements, as compared to the Proposed Project or the Alternative 2 Project, and therefore would result in increased adverse impacts. The commenter provides no substantial evidence to indicate that the suggested alternative would substantially lessen one or more of the significant effects as identified DEIR. The commenter's opinions regarding project alternatives have been included in the record and will be forwarded to the decision makers for their consideration. No further analysis is warranted with respect to the DEIR.

#### **COMMENT 34.13**

In closing, while one has always to deal with the NIMBY factor on any development project, the proposed Dockweiler extension lacks the benefits to justify its construction. It is flawed in many ways,

but most importantly in that it does not begin to address the projected traffic problems and will in fact lead to increased traffic congestion.

If the traffic flow needs to be resolved then this extension needs to be sidelined while alternative plans and routes that actually solve the problem are explored.

This is a proposed alternative that would solve the problem. Of course, I have not done feasibility or engineering studies, but this general scope is worth discussion and review.

### **RESPONSE TO COMMENT 34.13**

The commenter's opinions regarding project alternatives have been included in the record and will be forwarded to the decision makers for their consideration. No further analysis is warranted with respect to the DEIR.

### **COMMENT LETTER No. 35**

Linda Tarnoff

Date: October 16, 2017

### **COMMENT 35.1**

Unless you can convince me otherwise, I am opposed to the Dockweiler extension unless to just the proposed Masters University expansion project. In other words, I support the No Project alternative. The additional traffic proposed to be routed through our rural equestrian neighborhood would without a doubt jeopardize our community which is already anticipating impacts from the proposed new residential construction at 13<sup>th</sup> Street. As the Santa Clarita Valley gets built out, obviously there will be a need for additional roads. The success of Golden Valley Road is a prime example. But shunting traffic to an otherwise quiet community is not the solution.

### **RESPONSE TO COMMENT 35.1**

With respect to the Proposed Project's consistency with PCSSD, please refer to Response to Comment 12.3 above. The commenter's opinion has been included in the record and will be forwarded to the decision makers for their consideration. No further analysis is required.

### **COMMENT 35.2**

Each proposal referenced in the EIR is controversial and not without issues. Market Street is next to an active train station with high numbers of pedestrian traffic especially at peak travel times. No doubt this option is opposed by adjacent residents. Lyons Avenue would be the best scenario as a straight shot across if traveling east on Lyons but appears to have too many construction challenges i.e. need for elevation of existing road to traverse over train tracks and bridge construction over creek. 13<sup>th</sup> Street, though easiest for the planners is problematic for Placerita Canyon.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 35.2**

The commenter's opinions regarding the Project alternatives has been included in the record and will be forwarded to the decision maker's for their consideration. The commenter does not raise specific concerns with respect to the environmental analysis as presented in the DEIR. No further analysis is warranted.

**COMMENT 35.3**

In addition, at this time-- with the cleanup of Whitaker Bermite on the horizon for 2018 -- it would make sense to initiate the EIR process for the ultimate extension of Via Princessa through to Golden Valley Road. Regardless of which route the city ultimately chooses, the left turn queues will undoubtedly create lengthy back ups jutting into left lanes of traffic as demonstrated by the frequent half mile or more long left turn lanes on Sierra Highway to Golden Valley Road. Just imagine the scenario at a left turn lane from Railroad to Market Street if the road is extended there, on a curve no less. In fact, the left turn lane at 13<sup>th</sup> Street cannot accommodate traffic as it is at peak times.

Change is inevitable but clearly think this one out from the impact [sic] on the local impacted communities whether it be Placerita Canyon, East Newhall or Dockweiler.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 35.3**

The commenter's opinion regarding Via Princessa has been included in the record and will be forwarded to the decision maker's for their consideration. The commenter does not raise specific concerns with respect to the environmental analysis as presented in the DEIR. No further analysis is warranted.

**COMMENT LETTER No. 36**

Valerie Thomas

Date: September 14, 2017

**COMMENT 36.1**

Deficiency in dealing with NOP concerns: In the City's summation to concerns raised at the NOP meeting, no concerns are listed relating to greenhouse gases in concerns that I raised. [sic] In the section on Air Quality, I refer to the Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 (AB 32). This act mandates statewide greenhouse gas emissions must be reduced to 1990 levels by 2020. SB 32, passed in 2016 and signed into law (before this draft EIR was released) expands that mandate to reduce greenhouse gas emissions 40 percent below 1990 levels by 2030. Both are state laws but this report makes no effort to deal with how additional congestion can be dealt with to comply with state law.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 36.1**

Overall, the Proposed Project would reduce traffic congestion on local roadways. Thus, the Proposed Project would not result an increase in emissions. Nonetheless, with respect to the AB 32, Global

Warming Solutions Act of 2006, the City of Santa Clarita adopted a Climate Action Plan (CAP), which provides policies and identifies actions intended to reduce GHG emissions within the City and assist in the fight against climate change. Overall the goal of the CAP is to reduce Santa Clarita's community-wide GHG emissions below the 2005 baseline emissions by 2020. Implementation of the strategies identified in the CAP would also exceed the City's goal to reduce 2020 GHG emissions to a level below the 2005 GHG emissions baseline by 4 percent.

**COMMENT 36.2**

LOS: PCPOA met with City staff on July 25 for a presentation on the Draft EIR. We were assured LOS levels A-F did not correspond to scholastic letter grades. The Evans Report (page 13) states "The LOS ranges from 'A' [sic] (the best) through 'F' [sic] (system breakdown)." That's very similar to scholastic grades.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 36.2**

There is no correlation between scholastic grades and the level-of-service ("LOS"). The definition for LOS can be found in Section 4.9 on page 4.9-6 of the DEIR. LOS quantitatively describes the operating characteristics of signalized intersections and the maximum delay. The level-of-service is based on the average delay of vehicles at the intersections. Table 4.9-1 provides the LOS thresholds for signalized intersections per the HCM 2010 methodology. No further response is required.

**COMMENT 36.3**

Ongoing transportation issues:

- The report posits Lyons as a three-lane avenue. While some of Lyons is three-lanes, the portion from Orchard Village to Railroad allows street parking. Merchants have long fought allowing three lanes since there is inadequate off street parking. OLPH submitted a Master Plan several years ago outlining their proposed expansion; that plan was withdrawn allowing piecemeal expansion.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 36.3**

The portion of Lyons Avenue from Walnut Street to Railroad Avenue provides three lanes of travel in each direction with no on-street parking. This comment has been noted for the record, no further response is required.

**COMMENT 36.4**

- The transportation section proposes two left turn lanes, one right turn lane and one straight ahead lane at Lyons where it meets Railroad; where is this additional lane coming from? What provisions are made at this intersection for the traffic from the substantial under-construction parking structure? Or the Laemmle Theater?

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 36.4**

As discussed above in Response to Comment 36.3, the portion of Lyons Avenue from Walnut Street to Railroad Avenue provides three lanes of travel in each direction with no on-street parking. As shown in Figure 2-17 Lyons Avenue Street Widening - Proposed New Crossing, of the DEIR, the intersection improvements will include widening the northbound direction to accommodate an additional left turn lane and convert a through lane to a shared through-right lane and southbound direction to accommodate an additional left turn lane and convert the right turn lane to a shared through-right turn lane. The north and southbound directions will include two left turn lanes, a through lane, and a shared through-right turn lane. The eastbound direction will provide a left turn lane, a through lane, and a shared through-right turn lane. The westbound direction will provide a left turn lane, two through lanes and a right turn lane. Traffic improvements consider the additional build out of the General Plan as further discussed in Section 4.9, Transportation and Traffic, of the DEIR. No further response is required.

**COMMENT 36.5**

- Peak hour numbers do not allow for Metro train traffic. Please adjust the report.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 36.5**

Traffic counts were compiled for the existing railroad crossings at 13<sup>th</sup> Street, Market Street, and Newhall Avenue. A.M. and P.M. peak hour traffic counts included the existing vehicles, pedestrians, and bicycle volumes. Refer to Tables 4.9-8 through 4.9-10 on pages 4.9-30 and 4.9-31, respectively, of the DEIR. No further analysis is required.

**COMMENT 36.6**

- How does the closer proximity to Newhall Metro station affect crossing safety/timing at this intersection?

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 36.6**

The Proposed Project would include a new at-grade crossing at the proposed extension of Lyons Avenue from Railroad Avenue. The Proposed Project would include the closure of the existing at-grade crossing at 13<sup>th</sup> Street and Railroad Avenue. The new crossing would be located approximately 0.25 mile north of the existing at-grade crossing located at Market Street. Similar to existing conditions, the Proposed Project would not provide access between Dockweiler Drive to Market Street. Therefore, in the event that railroad gates are in a down position at the new crossing at Lyons Avenue, when a train is stopped at the Metrolink station to the south, the traffic on Market Street would remain unaffected by the new at-grade crossing. Under the Alternative 2 Project, the 13<sup>th</sup> Street at-grade crossing would remain and no at-grade crossing would occur at Lyons Avenue and Railroad Avenue. As such, future conditions would be similar to existing conditions at 13<sup>th</sup> Street under the Alternative 2 Project. Further, the Proposed Project and Alternative 2 Project are subject to SCRRRA approval, and as such, the Proposed Project and Alternative 2 Project would comply with all applicable operational rail crossing safety improvements with respect to



control point locations, crossing signals and gates to minimize disruptions to both vehicular, pedestrian and train circulation. No further analysis of this issue is warranted at this time.

**COMMENT 36.7**

- What provisions are made for circulation during construction? Nighttime construction is not an answer with a road being raised six feet or more. (The City is already in a mess with three major construction projects: Railroad, Orchard Village and McBean.) [sic] Simply posting signs “Use alternate routes” is not sufficient, particularly when the City has made no effort to adjust the timing of the affected signals. How will traffic get to Lyons from either direction?

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 36.7**

As discussed in Response to Comment 6.3, in response to LASD’s concerns regarding construction, the Proposed Project will require a Construction Management Plan, which shall be submitted to the City of Santa Clarita Public Works Department (Traffic and Transportation Division) and LASD Santa Clarita Valley Station for review and approval prior to the commencement of any construction. The plans shall show the location of any roadway or sidewalk closures, traffic detours, haul routes, hours of operation, protective devices, warning signs and access to abutting properties, and if applicable, the location of off-site staging areas for haul trucks and construction vehicles, and provide one or more emergency lane through the Project site at all times. See Section 2, Additions and Corrections; and Section 4, Mitigation Monitoring Program. No further response is required.

**COMMENT 36.8**

- Dockweiler parking: The EIR shows Dockweiler as two lanes in each direction. Much of the road by the condos and apartments has been used for years as supplemental parking. What provisions are being made for these vehicles? Many of the units are within 10 feet of the existing roadway; how will the quality of life for these residents (safety, noise, pollution) be maintained?

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 36.8**

The existing portion of Dockweiler Drive, referenced by the commenter, is outside the project limits of the Proposed Project. Nonetheless, the construction of Tract No. 32365 in which the commenter is referring to includes the construction of Dockweiler Drive as a secondary highway with a 73-foot right-of-way. While Dockweiler Drive currently terminates at the western limits of Tract No. 32365, it was designed to continue westward as a major roadway consistent with the City’s Circulation Element. As noted in the City’s Circulation Element, in order to accommodate future traffic volumes, the portion of Dockweiler Drive between Leonard Tree Lane and Sierra Highway would be re-striped from two lanes to four lanes. It is not anticipated that traffic volumes would increase such that re-striping would be necessary; however, should re-striping to four lanes be necessary, notification and public outreach will be conducted prior to re-striping.

This comment will be included in the record and forwarded to the decision makers for their consideration. No further analysis with respect to the environmental analysis for the DEIR is required.

**COMMENT 36.9**

- If federal funds are sought for any portion of this construction, does that mean the City will have to allow heavy traffic on Dockweiler? What safety provisions will be made for locals to protect them from trucks barreling down that grade?

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 36.9**

The Proposed Project would be designed in accordance with the appropriate design features and safety standards (such as speed limits, light signals and striping) required for secondary highways and railroad crossings and would be subject to the site plan review requirements of the City of Santa Clarita. No further analysis is required.

**COMMENT 36.10**

- Roundabout not safe or adequate for truck traffic or horse trailers.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 36.10**

In the event “Option B, as identified in the DEIR (See Figure 2-12) is selected, the traffic circle would be designed in accordance with the appropriate design features and standards and would be subject to the site plan review requirements of the City of Santa Clarita. No further analysis is required.

**COMMENT 36.11**

Think outside the Box

1. Take Traffic up to Circle J. Nice to keep your promises to them, but Placerita has promises written into the General Plan and our Special Standards District to protect our rural equestrian way of life. No part of this proposal is compatible with a rural equestrian lifestyle.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 36.11**

As analyzed in Section 4.7, Table 4.7-3, page 4.7-18, of the DEIR, the Proposed Project is in substantial compliance with the standards identified in the PCSSD. The proposed connection of Lyons Avenue to Dockweiler Drive would not conflict with or alter any equestrian facilities or trails. To the contrary, the Proposed Project would increase access in the PCSSD, as the proposed alignment of Dockweiler Drive would include a Class II Bike Route and pedestrian walkways on the east side.

**COMMENT 36.12**

2. Flyover at 15<sup>th</sup> Street.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 36.12**

As noted in the DEIR, the proposed connection and extension of Lyons Avenue to Dockweiler Drive is identified in the Circulation Element of the City's General Plan as one of the primary east-west arterials through the City of Santa Clarita that would provide a through connection from Sierra Highway to Railroad Avenue. The purpose of the EIR is to analyze the environmental impacts that would result from the construction and operation of the Proposed Project and analyze alternatives to the Proposed Project that may be effective in reducing or avoiding environmental impacts

Pursuant to Section 15126.6(c) of the CEQA Guidelines, "the range of potential alternatives to the proposed project shall include those that could feasibly accomplish most of the basic objectives of the project and could avoid or substantially lessen one or more of the significant effects. Among the factors that may be used to eliminate alternatives from detailed consideration in an EIR are: (i) failure to meet most of the basic project objectives, (ii) infeasibility, or (iii) inability to avoid significant environmental impacts."

The commenter does not provide substantial evidence to support the rationale of a flyover at 15<sup>th</sup> Street as a viable alternative. To the contrary, a flyover at this intersection would not support the objectives of the Proposed Project, which include, primarily, the extension of Dockweiler Drive as identified in the General Plan. Objectives of the Proposed Project are discussed in Section 2 Project Description (see page 2-28), of the DEIR, and are also listed above in Response to Comment 20.2. No further response is required.

**COMMENT 36.13**

3. Bring Dockweiler to Pine Street. Extend to Market and then down to Pine across Newhall Avenue where it goes to NCWD. That avoids trains tracks altogether.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 36.13**

As disclosed in the DEIR in Section 6.1, the Market Street Alternative was rejected from further consideration due to the physical constraints associated with grading, as well as the Alternative's incompatibility with respect to public safety and local residential street standards (See Section 6.1, page 6.1-2). Specifically, this alternative was rejected from further consideration due to the resulting 11.15% gradient of the roadway profile resulting from the existing topographical gradient between Market Street and Dockweiler Drive, the relatively sharp curve at the base of an include where the alignment would connect to Market Street. A gradient of 11.15% would not meet the street standards of a secondary highway and would potentially result in unsafe roadway conditions. Additionally, Market Street is a local residential street that directly abuts and provides access to single and multi-family residential land uses. The proposed alignment of Dockweiler Drive through this existing residential neighborhood would not be

consistent with the alignment identified within the Circulation Element and would not be compatible with respect to public safety and local residential street standards. For this reason, this alternative alignment was rejected as infeasible. See also Response to Comment 12.38, above, and Section 2. Additions and Corrections, Market Street Alignment Additional Analysis. The commenter's opinion has been noted for the record and will be forwarded to the decision makers for their consideration. No further response is required.

**COMMENT 36.14**

Need more examination of 13<sup>th</sup> Street

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 36.14**

The commenter does not specify in what context 13<sup>th</sup> Street needs further examination. Impacts to 13<sup>th</sup> Street under the Proposed Project and three project alternatives is thoroughly analyzed in the DEIR. No further analysis is warranted.

**COMMENT 36.15**

Flooding

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 36.15**

The commenter does not provide context with respect to this comment. Nonetheless, as discussed in detail in Section 4.6 Hydrology and Water Quality, a post-Project hydraulic model was analyzed to determine the impacts of inundation and flooding (See *Hydraulic and Scour Analysis Newhall Creek at Proposed Dockweiler Road Bridge, Newhall, California*, prepared by Rivertech, Inc., dated February 2015 ("Hydraulic Report"), (See Appendix G of the DEIR). Refer also to Response to Comment 12.9. No further response is required.

**COMMENT 36.16**

Entrance traffic lined up to 14<sup>th</sup> or beyond

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 36.16**

The commenter does not raise a specific issue with respect to the environmental analysis presented in the DEIR; as such, no further response is required.

**COMMENT 36.17**

Reduces southbound to single lane

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 36.17**

The commenter does not raise a specific issue with respect to the environmental analysis presented in the DEIR; as such, no further response is required.

**COMMENT LETTER No. 37**

Robert and Teresa Todd

Date: October 16, 2017

**COMMENT 37.1**

1. Regarding the traffic study in the Draft EIR, Dockweiler is a Secondary Highway connecting with Placerita Canyon. Highways and horses do not mix, so this alignment has the potential to negate the rural equestrian lifestyle and/or violate the Special Standards District previously established.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 37.1**

As analyzed in Section 4.7, Table 4.7-3, page 4.7-18, of the DEIR, the Proposed Project is in substantial compliance with the standards identified in the PCSSD. The proposed connection of Lyons Avenue to Dockweiler Drive would not conflict with or alter any equestrian facilities or trails. To the contrary, the Proposed Project would increase access in the PCSSD, as the proposed alignment of Dockweiler Drive would include a Class II Bike Route and pedestrian walkways.

**COMMENT 37.2**

2. Dockweiler to 13<sup>th</sup> St. creates a bypass artery that avoids Downtown Newhall contrary to the economic development objective of the area (traffic study indicates a 31% decrease in Lyons traffic from 2019 to 2035 if Alternative #2 goes forward).

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 37.2**

As discussed in Section 6, Project Alternatives, of the DEIR, under the Alternative 2 Project scenario, Lyons Avenue, between Main Street and Railroad Avenue, would experience average daily traffic (ADT) of 10,400 and 14,400 vehicles for years 2019 and 2035, respectively. Under the Proposed Project scenario, Lyons Avenue, between Main Street and Railroad Avenue, would experience ADT of 12,100 and 26,600 vehicles for years 2019 and 2035, respectively. Under the No Build scenario, Lyons Avenue, between Main Street and Railroad Avenue, would experience ADT of 10,700 and 13,700 vehicles for years 2019 and 2035, respectively. Therefore, although the Alternative 2 Project results in fewer trips on this segment of Lyons Avenue when compared to the Proposed Project, the connection of Dockweiler Drive to 13<sup>th</sup> Street would still create a new connection to Old Town Newhall that would result in generally the same amount of trips for the 2019 year and an increase in trips along this portion of Lyons

Avenue for the 2035 build out year when compared to the No Build scenario. No further analysis with respect to the DEIR is warranted.

**COMMENT 37.3**

3. Dockweiler experiences a 446% increase with Lyons improvement; 272% increase with Alternative #2, yet Railroad Avenue experiences a modest 5% decrease from No Project to Alternative #2. Given the math in the traffic study, neither alternative satisfies the City's objective to reduce volume (as presented as travel time) on Newhall Avenue by nearly half.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 37.3**

To clarify, the objective of the Proposed Project is not to specifically reduce traffic volume on Newhall Avenue by half, as stated by the commenter, but rather to develop a major east-west corridor, consistent with the General Plan, to facilitate access to existing and planned development, reduce "cross valley" trip lengths and travel times, provide an alternate travel route, and support a multi-modal transportation network by reducing bus travel times in the City and providing opportunities for increased bike and pedestrian traffic.

The commenter does not provide enough context or information to support their methodology. Based on the Traffic Study, under the Proposed Project, the proposed portion of Dockweiler Drive from the extension of Lyons Avenue to the approved connection at The Master's College would experience ADT of 3,900 and 18,300 vehicles for the 2019 and 2035 years, respectively. Under the Alternative 2 Project, the proposed portion of Dockweiler Drive between 12<sup>th</sup> Street and The Master's College would experience ADT of 3,400 and 7,800 vehicles for years 2019 and 2035, respectively. Therefore, under the Proposed Project the proposed extension of Dockweiler Drive would experience approximately 15% and 140% more ADT as compared to the Alternative 2 Project for years 2019 and 2035, respectively.

With respect to Railroad Avenue, the portion of Railroad Avenue between Lyons Avenue and 13<sup>th</sup> Street would experience ADT of 34,700 vehicles for the No Build Scenario for build out year 2035. Under the Alternative 2 Project, the portion of Railroad Avenue between 13<sup>th</sup> Street and Lyons Avenue would experience ADT of 30,100 vehicles for buildout year 2035. Therefore, this portion of Railroad Avenue would experience approximately 13% less ADT under the Alternative 2 Project as compared to the No Project scenario. No further analysis with respect to the DEIR is warranted.

**COMMENT 37.4**

4. TMU has a dramatic increase in traffic load with the Lyons crossing, yet with No Project and Alternative #2 that load decreases by 10-13,000 vehicles. Question is where did those vehicles go? The traffic counts on Dockweiler and 13<sup>th</sup> do not make up for the variances in the data. The validity of the Alternative #2 traffic load is questionable given the unexplained variances.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 36.4**

As shown in the Traffic Study to the DEIR, the portion of Dockweiler Drive between The Master's College and Valle Del Oro would experience ADT of 4,300, 17,300 and 7,400 vehicles for the No Build, Proposed Project and Alternative 2 Project, respectively for the 2035 build out year. The decrease in vehicles utilizing this portion of Dockweiler Drive for the No Project and the Alternative 2 Project is the result of maintaining the existing intersection at 13<sup>th</sup> Street and Railroad Avenue. The Proposed Project would include the closure of this intersection. The portion of 13<sup>th</sup> Street between Railroad Avenue and Arch Street would experience ADT of 16,900, 0 (zero) and 17,700 vehicles for the No Build, Proposed Project and Alternative 2 Project, respectively for the 2035 build out year. The commenter's assertions with respect to the traffic analysis are unsubstantiated. No further analysis with respect to the DEIR is warranted.

**COMMENT 37.5**

5. Safety is a key consideration at an active rail crossing with on average 38 trains per weekday (8 freight and 30 commuter). Alternative #2 has a 92% increase in traffic between 2019 and 2035, which amplifies the risk of rail-related incidents.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 37.5**

It is unclear how the commenter is arriving at the conclusion that the Alternative 2 project results in a 92% increase in traffic between 2019 and 2035. The commenter does not provide enough context or information to support their methodology. Based on the Traffic Study, under the Alternative 2 Project, as shown in Table 6.4-3 and 6.4-4 on page 6.4-28 of the DEIR, the ADT for all three railroad crossings would be 56,420 and 76,790 vehicles for year 2019 and buildout year 2035, respectively. Therefore, under the Alternative 2 Project the ADT for all three crossings would increase by approximately 36% between 2019 and 2035. With respect to safety the Proposed Project is subject to CPSCRRRA approval and as such the Proposed Project would comply with all applicable construction-related and operational rail crossing safety requirements, including those listed Section 2, Project Description of the DEIR. Refer also to Response to Comment 3.2, above. This comment has been noted for the record and will be forwarded to the decision makers for their consideration. No further response is required.

**COMMENT LETTER No. 38**

Pat Willett  
September 14, 2017

**COMMENT 38.1**

Traffic: I'm concerned about emergency access in and out of the canyon with all the additional traffic at the 13<sup>th</sup> St. crossing.

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 38.1**

As discussed in Section 5.1 Impacts Determined to be Less Than Significant, page 5.1-3, subheading Fire and Police Protection, of the DEIR, emergency access to the Placerita Canyon community would be facilitated through the Project's alignment, which is consistent with the City's adopted Circulation Element. The Project's alignment would be an improvement to the current access route into the Placerita Canyon community via 13<sup>th</sup> Street. As stated in Comment Letter No. 5, the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Station generally supports public improvements similar to that of the Proposed Project because these improvements typically result in an overall positive impact upon law enforcement patrol operations, emergency access, and response times. (See Comment Letter No. 5, above). No further analysis is warranted.

**COMMENT 38.2**

What is stopping us from adding a Lyons/Dockweiler crossing and simply keeping or improving the 13<sup>th</sup> St crossing?

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 38.2**

This alternative was identified in the DEIR as the Alternative 1 Project (see Section 6.3-1 of the DEIR). The Alternative 1 Project would involve the development of the proposed roadway alignment and associated infrastructure, which would include a new at-grade crossing and a secondary east-west arterial roadway connecting Lyons Avenue to the proposed Dockweiler Drive extension that would connect Dockweiler Drive to a new five-leg intersection at the Arch Street/12<sup>th</sup> Street/Placerita Canyon intersection. The Alternative 1 Project would leave the existing at-grade crossing at the intersection of 13<sup>th</sup> Street and Railroad Avenue as is instead of removing the crossing, as proposed by the Proposed Project. The proposed alignment of Dockweiler Drive under Alternative 1 is illustrated in Figure 6.3-1 of the DEIR. The commenter's opinion will be forwarded to the decision makers for their consideration. No further analysis is required.

**COMMENT LETTER No. 39**

Jong Yoon

Date: October 23, 2017

**COMMENT 39.1**

I am out of country until at the end of November. [sic]

I did not have a chance to response about this project formally.

I am not sure that I can use this mail [sic] as a formal response or not.



My main concern is to reduce the traffic on Placerita Canyon Road. The main traffic is to the Master's University. Since I purchase my house, 22011 Placerita Cyn. Rd., 4-years ago, the traffic has been increased almost 3-times on Placerita Cyn. Rd. due to the Master Univ. I am eagle to see the major reduction of traffic on Placerita Canyon Road. [sic]

I, as the owner of 22011 Placerita Canyon Road, formally support the original project from Lyons to Dockweiler Extension Project, not the 3rd Street to Dockweiler Extension. [sic]

Please let me know the correct email address If this mail is no good for a formal response. [sic]

#### **RESPONSE TO COMMENT 39.1**

Overall, the Proposed Project would reduce traffic congestion on local roadways and would reduce travel time. Thus, as concluded in the DEIR, with implementation of mitigation, the Proposed Project would reduce traffic congestion in the project vicinity. Refer also to Response to Comment 20.3, above. This comment letter has been included in the record and will be forwarded to the decision makers for their consideration. No further analysis is warranted.

#### **COMMENT LETTER No. 40**

Zamora

Date: September 14, 2017

#### **COMMENT 40.1**

13<sup>th</sup> does not work now and never will I have been here 60 years I know. [sic]

#### **RESPONSE TO COMMENT 39.1**

This comment letter has been included in the record and will be forwarded to the decision makers for their consideration. The commenter does not raise a specific issue with respect to the environmental analysis presented in the DEIR; as such, no further response is required.

#### **COMMENT LETTER No. 41**

France Zamora

September 28, 2017

#### **COMMENT 41.1**

Please look at Market St. it makes more sense would like to be able to walk down to the Winery. I love that idea... Do what's right and make it happen. Lets Bring Money into down town. And by the way lets get busy and repave Newhall Rd – and add some trees [sic]

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 41.1**

This comment letter has been included in the record and will be forwarded to the decision makers for their consideration. The commenter does not raise a specific issue with respect to the environmental analysis presented in the DEIR; as such, no further response is required.

**COMMENT No. 42**

Dawn and John Zirbel

Date: October 12, 2017

**COMMENT 42.1**

The expansion of Arch St to Dockweiler is not in the best interests of the residents of Placerita Canyon. My house sits on Placerita Canyon, close to Arch St. I do not see how bringing unnecessary traffic onto our rural streets will in any way improve our neighborhood. When the residents of Happy Valley complained to the city about excessive traffic on Valley St due to the gate at Calgrove being available to the Hidden Valley residents via a gate card, the city SHUT down a road that was on the master plan as a public road. So to tell us the Arch St-Dockweiler expansion “has” to be done because it is on the master plan is false. The ONLY person who wants this road is oddly a City Council member with property that might be of value to the city. Makes one wonder who the City is “serving” Certainly NOT the vast majority of Placerita canyon residents. We would prefer the third option; DO NOTHING. Perhaps the City should finally expand Via Pricessa [sic]. That’s been promised for years and would actually improve traffic flow in Santa Clarita

**RESPONSE TO COMMENT 42.1**

This comment letter has been included in the record and will be forwarded to the decision makers for their consideration. The commenter does not raise a specific issue with respect to the environmental analysis presented in the DEIR, as such no further response is required.