
**Los Angeles County Department of Public Works Comment on NOP;
dated September 22, 2008**



COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

"To Enrich Lives Through Effective and Caring Service"

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IN REPLY PLEASE
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September 22, 2008

TO: Mitch Glasser
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Department of Regional Planning

FROM: Steve Burger
Land Development Division
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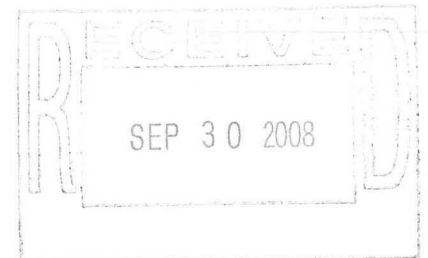
**NOTICE OF PREPARATION (NOP)
FOR AN ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT (EIR)
ONE VALLEY ONE VISION
PROJECT NO. R2007-01226**

We reviewed the NOP for the proposed subject project and concur that an EIR is required. The following comments are for your consideration and relate to the environmental document only:

Hazards—Geotechnical/Soils/Geology

All or portions of the City of Santa Clarita (including communities of Canyon Country, Newhall, Saugus, and Valencia), unincorporated communities of Stevenson Ranch, Castaic, Val Verde, Agua Dulce, and the future Newhall Ranch are located within potentially liquefiable areas per the State of California Seismic Hazard Zones Map-Whitaker Peak, Sleepy Valley, Val Verde, Newhall, Mint Canyon, Agua Dulce, Simi Valley East, Oat Mountain, and San Fernando Quadrangles. All geotechnical issues discussed in the NOP should be addressed in the EIR. Geotechnical reports should be included in the EIR as necessary.

If you have any question regarding soils and geology, please contact Jeremy Wan at (626) 458-4972.



Services–Traffic/Access

The proposed Circulation Element plans for the continued development of efficient, cost-effective, and comprehensive transportation systems, which are consistent with regional plans, local needs, and the Valley's community character. It also identifies and promotes techniques for improving mobility beyond planning for construction of new streets and highways. Below are comments on the Circulation Element pertaining to traffic studies, neighborhood traffic calming, geometric design, and traffic signal operation. We recommend that you set up a meeting with the consultant and the City of Santa Clarita in order to reconcile these comments.

- The header on the document reads as "City of Santa Clarita General Plan," which is not representative of the One Valley One Vision Valleywide General Plan concept.
- Page C-3, second bullet–Per the Los Angeles County Highway Plan, State Route 126 west of the I-5 Freeway is classified as an expressway not a freeway.
- Page C-6, Intersection Capacity–Instead of expressing level of service exclusively in terms of delay, the County expresses level of service in terms of delay for unsignalized intersections and in terms of delay or volume-to-capacity ratios for signalized intersections.
- Page C-8, second paragraph–While the Congestion Management Plan states that local jurisdictions may define acceptable levels of service up to E, the County General Plan does not specify an acceptable level of service.
- Page C-11, Arterials and Collectors in the Santa Clarita Valley–The County General Plan does not specify an acceptable level of service; thus, the list of roadways not operating at level of service E or better should be revised to a list of roadways that are operating at or exceeding capacity. A capacity of 2,800 vehicles per through lane, assuming a 50-50 directional split and excluding turn lanes, should be used when determining the roadway capacity.
- Page C-11, Major Roadway Improvements Underway as of 2007–Hasley Canyon Road at I-5 Freeway Interchange improvement project should be included in this list.

- Page C-12, Transportation Management System—Public Works recently completed a traffic signal timing analysis of the traffic signals in the unincorporated area of the Santa Clarita Valley. Traffic signals at 22 intersections along The Old Road, Stevenson Ranch Parkway, Pico Canyon Road, and Copper Hill Drive were retimed to improve the overall progression of traffic. Synchronizing the signals and improving the operation and safety of the roadway significantly reduces delay and the potential for collisions, thereby alleviating motorist frustration, reducing air pollution, and decreasing vehicle operational costs.

In addition to the above synchronized routes, Public Works is currently working on a communications analysis to install the appropriate communications device enabling the traffic signals in the unincorporated area of Santa Clarita to be monitored and controlled from our traffic signal control system located in the Traffic Management Center in Alhambra. This traffic signal control system provides for continuous monitoring of traffic conditions and will provide once-per-second monitoring of traffic signals. Traffic signal monitoring provides our engineering staff with immediate notification of signal malfunctions, thereby enabling faster and more efficient maintenance responses. The system also enables traffic signal timing to be controlled and coordinated from remote workstations to adjust to actual traffic conditions.

Since the ultimate goal of a transportation management system is to enable monitoring via a traffic control system, it would be the County's desire to have all future signals connected to our system. Therefore, we would recommend that all future signal installations include the provision of communications to the County's central system. This communications could be via hardwire methods such as fiber optics or wireless radios, which are currently being deployed Countywide in other areas.

To enable both Public Works and the City to work together to coordinate the operation of their traffic signals, we have begun discussions with City staff about connecting the City's traffic control system to the County's Information Exchange Network (IEN). The IEN is an advanced traffic management system and network capable of sharing information and control of various traffic control systems and field devices between agencies. The IEN is currently being deployed Countywide and will improve regional traffic flow with the exchange of traffic signal data among multiple agencies and will provide a coordinated response to traffic congestion and incidents. This will enable the City of Santa Clarita's traffic signal data to be incorporated into the IEN and to enable the City to receive data

from other agencies currently connected to the IEN. Additionally, the City of Santa Clarita will receive data from traffic signals in the unincorporated area and the neighboring City of Los Angeles area.

- Page C-16, Level of Service Standard—While the CMP states that local jurisdictions may define acceptable levels of service up to E, the County General Plan does not specify an acceptable level of service. Instead, the County determines whether the traffic generated by a project alone or cumulatively with other related projects, when added to existing traffic volumes, exceeds certain capacity thresholds of an intersection.
- Page C-16, Standard Cross Sections—The cross sections for the City of Santa Clarita and the County do not match and a standard should be agreed upon.
- Page C-42, Street and Highway System—We recommend that the design of circulation plans for proposed schools take into account any conflicts during drop-off/pick-up hours with morning and afternoon peak-hour traffic congestion in the surrounding area. This includes a careful review of a school's location to ensure that bicycle and pedestrian access are encouraged and if vehicles are anticipated to be used for drop-off/pick-up that the queuing created does not conflict with overall circulation.
- Page C-43, Objective C 2.2—We recommend that consistent standards are adopted in the implementation of Americans with Disabilities Act requirements such as curb ramp design, accessible pedestrian signal, etc.
- Page C-44, Objective C 2.2—We recommend the design plans for traffic signal modifications or new installations include the upgrade of poles for future left-turn phasing when warranted and the installation of a time base unit for future coordination.
- Page C-44, Objective C 2.3—Policy C2.3.4 is mislabeled as Policy C2.4.3.
- Page C-46, Objective C 3.2—Policy C3.2.3 is mislabeled as Policy C3.3.3.
- Page C-50, Objective C 6.1—We recommend the use of commuter bikeway signage.

- Page C-51, Objective C 7.1—We do not recommend the use of refuge islands for medians 4 feet wide or less.
- The County also has a program to reduce cut-through traffic through neighborhood streets. The information is available on Public Works' website at http://dpw.lacounty.gov/TNL/NTMP/Page_01.cfm.
- We also agree that a priority should be given to provide a healthy and safe circulation system to address safe pedestrian walkways and bikeways. Given this priority, typical roadway cross sections recommended by the City of Santa Clarita with wider pedestrian paths (Figures 4.4-3 and 4.4-4) are preferred. Other traffic-calming measures such as bulb outs, raised medians, narrower streets, pedestrian islands for wide roadways, and road diet-type of improvements should be considered for implementation to reduce pedestrian crash risk.

If you have any further questions regarding traffic/access, please contact Ron Matsuoka of our Traffic Studies Section at (626) 300-4709.

Services-Sewage Disposal

- The draft EIR should include discussion for the collection and disposal of the waste water that would be generated by the proposed project, especially its potential impact on the available capacity of the existing local sewer lines for both peak dry and wet weather flows pursuant with Statewide General Waste Discharge Requirements, Order No. 2006-0003. The draft EIR should also include discussion on the impact of the proposed project on the existing local and trunk sewer facilities.
- The City of Santa Clarita owns and Public Works' Consolidated Sewer Maintenance District is responsible for the operation and maintenance of the local sewer collection system within the City and the unincorporated Los Angeles County. All sewer construction within the project area shall comply with Public Works' Sewer Design standards.

If you have any question regarding sewer, please contact May Hong at (626) 300-3382.

Other-Environmental Safety

1. Solid Waste

- Solid waste generated in the County of Los Angeles currently exceeds the available permitted daily landfill capacity. The proposed project will increase the generation of solid waste and negatively impact the Solid Waste Management infrastructure. Therefore, the proposed environmental document should identify what measures will be implemented to mitigate the impact. Mitigation measures may include waste reduction and recycling programs and development of infrastructure in the project to facilitate recycling.
- School Districts are encouraged to take advantage of special County programs to encourage waste diversion by calling 1(888) CLEAN LA or visiting www.888CleanLA.com.

2. Hazardous Waste

- The existing Hazardous Waste Management infrastructure in the County of Los Angeles is inadequate to handle the hazardous waste currently being generated. The proposed project may generate hazardous waste and/or household hazardous waste, which could adversely impact existing Hazardous Waste Management infrastructure. This issue should be addressed and mitigation measures provided. Mitigation measures may include, but are not limited to, providing new homeowners with educational materials on the proper management and disposal of household hazardous waste. The project proponent may contact Public Works for available educational materials by calling 1(888) CLEAN LA.
- If any excavated soil is contaminated, or classified as hazardous waste by an appropriate agency, the soil must be managed and disposed of in accordance with applicable Federal, State, and local laws and regulations.

3. Storage Space for Recyclables

The California Solid Waste Reuse and Recycling Access Act of 1991, as amended, requires each development project to provide an adequate storage area for collection and removal of recyclable materials. The environmental document should include/discuss standards to provide adequate recyclable storage areas for collection/storage of recyclable and green waste materials for this project.

4. Construction and Demolition Recycling Comment

Construction projects with a total value of over \$100,000 and demolition and grading projects in the County's unincorporated areas are required to recycle or reuse 50 percent of the construction and demolition debris generated per the County's Construction and Demolition Debris Recycling and Reuse Ordinance. A Recycling and Reuse Plan must be submitted to and approved by Public Works' Environmental Programs Division before a construction, demolition, or grading permit may be issued.

5. Building and Safety Issues

- The Los Angeles County Building Code, Section 110.4, requires that buildings or structures adjacent to or within 200 feet (60.96 m) of active, abandoned, or idle oil or gas well(s) be provided with methane gas protection systems. If the project site contains or lies within 200 feet of active, abandoned, or idle oil or gas wells, this issue should be addressed and mitigation measure provided, and Public Works' Environmental Programs Division must be contacted for issuance of necessary permits.
- The Los Angeles County Building Code, Section 110.3, requires that a building or structure located on or within 1,000 feet (304.8 m) of a landfill containing decomposable material must be protected against landfill gas intrusion. The project site contains landfills, so this issue should be addressed and mitigation measures provided. The discussion should include subsurface lateral migration of landfill gas, migration detection, and control and protection systems for affected enclosed buildings and structures. Public Works' Environmental Programs Division must be contacted for issuance of necessary permits.

6. Underground Storage Tanks/Industrial Waste/Stormwater Comments

- Should any operation within the subject project include the construction, installation, modification, or removal of underground storage tanks, industrial waste treatment or disposal facilities, and/or storm water treatment facilities, Public Works' Environmental Programs Division must be contacted for required approvals and operating permits.
- Food service establishments may be required to provide a grease treatment device and will be subject to review and approval by Public Works' Environmental Programs Division.

- All development and redevelopment projects which fall into one of the Standard Urban Stormwater Mitigation Plan project types, characteristics, or activities, must obtain Standard Urban Stormwater Mitigation Plan approval by the appropriate agency.

7. Supplemental Comments

A number of landfill closures have been experienced within the last few years and more closures are expected to occur in the near future. As regional disposal facilities close, there is an increasing need for regional transfer facilities to efficiently transport solid waste generated to more distant processing or disposal facilities. These transfer facilities are essential for the cities in the County of Los Angeles and the unincorporated areas to be able to properly manage solid waste in accordance with the requirements of the California Integrated Waste Management Act of 1989, also known as AB 939, provided they are found to be environmentally and technically feasible.

If you have any questions regarding environmental comments above, please contact Benjamin Cortez at (626) 458-2536.

If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact Toan Duong at (626) 458-4945.

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