CITY OF LOS ANGELES
INTER-DEPARTMENTAL CORRESPONDENCE

15481-15491 Ventura Boulevard
DOT Case No. VEN-20-108890
DOT Project ID No. 49070

Date: January 15, 2021

To: Claudia Rodriguez, Senior City Planner
Department of City Planning

From: Vicente Cordero, Transportation Engineer
Department of Transportation

Subject: **TRANSPORTATION ASSESSMENT FOR THE PROPOSED HOTEL DEVELOPMENT LOCATED AT 15481-15491 WEST VENTURA BOULEVARD (ENV-2018-2802-EAF/APCSV-2018-2801-SPE-ZV-SPP-SPR)**

The Department of Transportation (DOT) has reviewed the transportation assessment prepared by Gibson Transportation Consulting Inc., dated August 2020, and revised January 2021, for the proposed hotel development located at 15481-15491 Ventura Boulevard in the Ventura – Cahuenga Boulevard Corridor Specific Plan and the Encino –Tarzana Community Planning Area of the City of Los Angeles. On July 30, 2019, pursuant to Senate Bill (SB) 743 and the recent changes to Section 15064.3 of the State's California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, the City of Los Angeles adopted vehicle miles traveled (VMT) as the criteria by which to determine transportation impacts under CEQA. Based on the VMT thresholds established in LADOT's Transportation Assessment Guidelines (TAG), the proposed project would not result in a significant transportation impact on VMT as described below.

DISCUSSION AND FINDINGS

A. Project Description

The proposed project consists of the construction of a six-story hotel containing 159 hotel rooms with ancillary ground floor and rooftop food and beverage facilities. Project parking would be provided on-site within the ground floor and one subterranean parking level with a total of 164 parking spaces. The Project will also provide a total of 172 bicycle parking spaces, including 16 short-term and 156 long-term spaces. Bicycle parking will be located along the Project frontage on Ventura Boulevard and within the subterranean parking level. The site currently contains a 70-room motel complex which will be demolished to accommodate the development of the proposed Project. Access to the parking areas and truck loading dock will be provided via one full access driveway along Ventura Boulevard accommodating both right and left-turn ingress and egress movements. The main pedestrian and bicycle entrance would be provided along Ventura Boulevard with access to the guest lobby and elevator lobby. The project is expected to be completed by the year 2023.

B. Freeway Safety Analysis

Per the Interim Guidance for Freeway Safety Analysis memorandum issued by LADOT on May 1, 2020 to address Caltrans safety concerns on freeways, the study addressed the project's effects on vehicle queuing on freeway off-ramps. Such an evaluation measures the project's potential to lengthen a forecasted off-ramp queue and create speed differentials between vehicles exiting the freeway off-ramps and vehicles operating on the freeway mainline. The evaluation identified the number of project trips expected to be added to nearby freeway off-ramps serving the project site. It was determined that project traffic at the intersection of the I-405 Freeway Southbound Off-Ramp and Ventura Boulevard would not exceed 25 peak hour trips. Therefore, no further freeway off-ramp queuing analysis is required. Furthermore, the Project would not result in a significant safety impact, and no corrective measures at any freeway off-ramps are required.

C. CEQA Screening Threshold

A trip generation analysis was conducted to determine if the project would exceed the net 250 daily vehicle trips (DVT) screening threshold set forward by the TAG. The City of Los Angeles VMT Calculator Tool, which draws upon trip rate estimates published in the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Trip Generation Manual, 9th Edition, as well as applying trip generation adjustments when applicable, based on sociodemographic data and the built environment factors of the project's surroundings, determined that the project exceeds the net 250 DVT threshold. Therefore, a transportation assessment was required. The assessment concluded that implementation of the project would not result in a significant transportation impact. A copy of the VMT calculator-screening pages are provided in **Attachment A.** The traffic analysis included further discussion on the screening of the following CEQA transportation thresholds:

1. **Threshold T-1: Conflicting with Plans, Programs, Ordinances, or Policies**
   The transportation assessment evaluated the proposed project for conformance with the adopted City's transportation plans and policies for all travel modes. It was determined by the applicant that the project does not obstruct or conflict with the City's development policies and standards for the transportation system.

2. **Threshold T-2.1: Causing Substantial Vehicle Miles Traveled**
   Using the VMT Calculator, the assessment determined that the project would generate a 709 net increase in DVT and a 6,624 net increase in daily VMT, therefore, further analysis was required. The analysis concluded that the project would not result in a significant VMT impact as discussed below under Section C, CEQA Transportation Analysis.

3. **Threshold T-3: Substantially Increasing Hazards Due To a Geometric Design Feature or Incompatible Use**
   The project does not involve any design features that are unusual for the area or any incompatible use.

D. CEQA Transportation Analysis

The new LADOT Transportation Assessment Guidelines (TAG) provide instructions on preparing transportation assessments for land use proposals and defines the significant impact thresholds. The DOT VMT Calculator tool measures project impact in terms of Household VMT per capita, and Work VMT per employee. DOT identified distinct thresholds for significant VMT impacts for

each of the seven Area Planning Commission (APC) areas in the City. For the South Valley APC area, in which the project is located, the following threshold has been established:

- Daily Household VMT per Capita: 9.4
- Daily Work VMT per Employee: 11.6

As cited in the VMT analysis report prepared by Gibson Transportation Consulting Inc., the VMT generated by the project after applying the TDM strategies of Secure Bicycle Parking and Supply, Pedestrian Network Improvements within the Project Site and Connecting to Off-Site Pedestrian Facilities, and Bike Parking per LAMC implemented as part of the project results in 11.2 Work VMT per employee. Daily Household VMT per Capita is not applicable for this project. Therefore, it is concluded that the implementation of the proposed project will not result in a significant VMT impact.

E. Access and Circulation

The access and circulation analysis utilized two methodologies to determine the operations of the study intersections. Both analyses used Synchro software to model the traffic operations at the study intersections. The first methodology included a delay study using the Highway Capacity Manual (HCM) methodology which calculates the amount of delay per vehicle based upon the intersection traffic volumes, lane configurations, and signal timing. The second methodology consisted of a Synchro queuing analysis in order to evaluate potential issues associated with queued vehicles entering or exiting the Project site. The following intersections were included in this study:

- Firmament Avenue(North) & Ventura Boulevard (signalized)
- Firmament Avenue(South) & Ventura Boulevard (unsignalized)
- Orion Avenue & Ventura Boulevard (unsignalized)
- Interstate-405 Southbound Ramp/Sherman Oaks Avenue & Ventura Boulevard (signalized)

Existing and Cumulative Traffic Conditions

Traffic volumes reflecting existing conditions were collected by conducting manual counts at all study intersections in November 2019. Peak-hour volumes were determined individually based on the combined four highest consecutive 15-minute volumes for all vehicular movements. A one-percent per year compounded growth factor was applied to the traffic volumes to account for ambient growth.

Under the HCM methodology, level of service (LOS) at signalized and unsignalized intersections is defined based on the delay experienced per vehicle. The summary of findings at the study intersections are as follows:

1. The intersection of Firmament Avenue (North) & Ventura Boulevard operates at LOS A during the AM peak hour and LOS C during the PM peak hour under Existing (2020), Existing (2020) Plus Project, Future (2023) Without Project, and Future (2023) With Project conditions.

2. The intersection of Firmament Avenue (South) & Ventura Boulevard operates at LOS F during the AM peak hour and PM peak hour under Existing (2020), Existing (2020) Plus Project, Future (2023) Without Project, and Future (2023) With Project conditions.

3. The intersection of Orion Avenue & Ventura Boulevard operates at LOS F during the AM and PM peak hour under Existing (2020), Existing (2020) Plus Project, Future (2023) Without Project, and Future (2023) With Project conditions.

4. The intersection of Interstate-405 Southbound Ramp/Sherman Oaks Avenue & Ventura Boulevard operates at LOS C during the AM and PM peak hour under Existing (2020), Existing (2020) Plus Project, and Future (2023) Without Project. The intersection operates at LOS D during the AM peak hour and LOS C during the PM peak hour during Future (2023) With Project conditions.

DOT finds that the transportation assessment adequately evaluated potential project-related delays and level of service at the studied intersections. The results for the Existing (2020), Existing (2020) Plus Project, Future (2023) Without Project, and Future (2023) With Project Conditions delay and LOS for the study intersections as well as the Project Driveway Traffic Conditions are shown in **Attachment B.**

Queuing Analysis

A Synchro traffic model was constructed to model the project driveway and all four study intersections. DOT verified that the intersections in the queuing assessment were correctly analyzed. The queues for the lane groups on each approach were calculated and examined to evaluate potential queuing. The left-turn queues were also analyzed to determine whether storage in the median was adequate.

1. Project Driveway Study Intersection:
The Project would generate a maximum of 95 vehicles to the Project driveway during a one-hour period (afternoon peak hour). The queuing analysis estimates that the Project trips would result in an eastbound left-turn queue of less than one vehicle length within the two-way left-turn median. Thus, the eastbound left-turn queue could be adequately stored within the median and would not extend to Firmament Avenue or spillover into the through traffic lanes along Ventura Boulevard.

PROJECT REQUIREMENTS

A. CEQA-Related Mitigation
No CEQA-related mitigation measures are required for this project; however, Secure Bicycle Parking and Supply, Pedestrian Network Improvements within the Project Site, and Connecting to Off-Site Pedestrian Facilities, and Bike Parking will be implemented as part of the project.

B. Corrective Measures (Non-CEQA Analysis)
As required per the adopted TAG and pursuant to the City's Site Plan Review Authority (L.A.M.C. 16.05 and relevant code sections), the analysis included a review of current deficiencies and potential future deficiencies that may result from this project. No deficiencies were identified resulting from this project that would require corrective action by the applicant.

C. Project Impact Assessment (PIA) Fee

Pursuant to Section 11 of the Specific Plan, the applicant shall pay or guarantee to pay a PIA Fee to DOT before the issuance of any building permit. The gross PIA Fee for this project is calculated below and can be paid in either a single payment or through a deferred payment plan. The gross PIA fee has been reduced based upon evidence provided by the applicant that a legally-permitted use was existing for a minimum of one year between November 9, 1985, and the date of this letter. The PIA Fee shall be indexed annually; therefore, the PIA Fee may change depending on the actual date when payment is made.

Land Use	Category	Community	Floor Area (sq. ft)	PIA Fee Rate ($ per sq. ft)	Total PIA Fee (Floor Area x PIA Fee Rate)
Proposed Project					
Hotel	B	Encino	78,962	$3.75	$296,107.50
Existing Use					
Hotel	B	Encino	26,261	$3.75	98,478.75
Net PIA Fee (proposed-existing)					**$197,628.75**

D. Construction Impacts

DOT recommends that a construction worksite traffic control plan be submitted to DOT's Citywide Temporary Traffic Control Section for review and approval before the start of any construction work. Refer to http://ladot.lacity.org/what-we-do/plan-review to determine which section to coordinate review of the worksite traffic control plan. The plan should 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. DOT also recommends that construction-related traffic be restricted to off-peak hours to the extent possible.

E. Highway Dedication and Street Widening Requirements

Per the new Mobility Element of the General Plan, **Ventura Boulevard** is designated as a Boulevard II roadway which would require a 40-foot half-width roadway within a 55-foot half-width right-of-way. The project is required to provide a five-foot dedication along the project frontage on Ventura Boulevard. The applicant should check with the Bureau of Engineering's Land Development Group to determine if there are any other applicable highway dedication, street widening, and/or sidewalk requirements for this project.

F. Parking Requirements

The traffic study indicated that a total of 164 parking spaces will be provided on-site within the ground floor and one subterranean parking level. Additionally, the Project will provide 156 long-term and 16 short-term bicycle parking spaces. The applicant should check with the Department of Building and Safety on the number of Code-required parking spaces needed for the project.

G. Transportation Demand Management Plan

The Applicant shall comply with the Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Program (L.A.M.C.

12.26J). The updated ordinance, which is currently progressing through the City's approval process, will:

- Expand the reach and application of TDM strategies to more land uses and neighborhoods.
- Rely on a broader range of strategies that can be updated to keep pace with technology.
- Provide flexibility for developments and communities to choose strategies that work best for their neighborhood context.

The TDM program would be subject to review and approval by the City of Los Angeles (Department of Planning and Department of Transportation).

H. Driveway Access and Circulation

Vehicle access to the project would be via one driveway on Ventura Boulevard located 275 feet east of Firmament Avenue that accommodates all turning movements as illustrated in **Attachment C**. The review of this study does not constitute approval of the existing driveway dimensions, access, and circulation scheme concerning this project. Those elements require separate review and approval and should be coordinated with DOT's Valley Planning Coordination Section (6262 Van Nuys Boulevard, Room 320, @ 818-374-4699). To minimize and prevent last-minute design changes, the applicant should contact DOT before the commencement of building or parking layout design efforts, for driveway width and internal circulation requirements. New driveways should be Case-2, designed with a recommended width of 30 feet for two-way operations, or 16 feet for one-way operations, or to the satisfaction of DOT.

I. Development Review Fees

Section 19.15 of the LAMC identifies specific fees for traffic study review, condition clearance, and permit issuance. The applicant shall comply with any applicable fees per this ordinance.

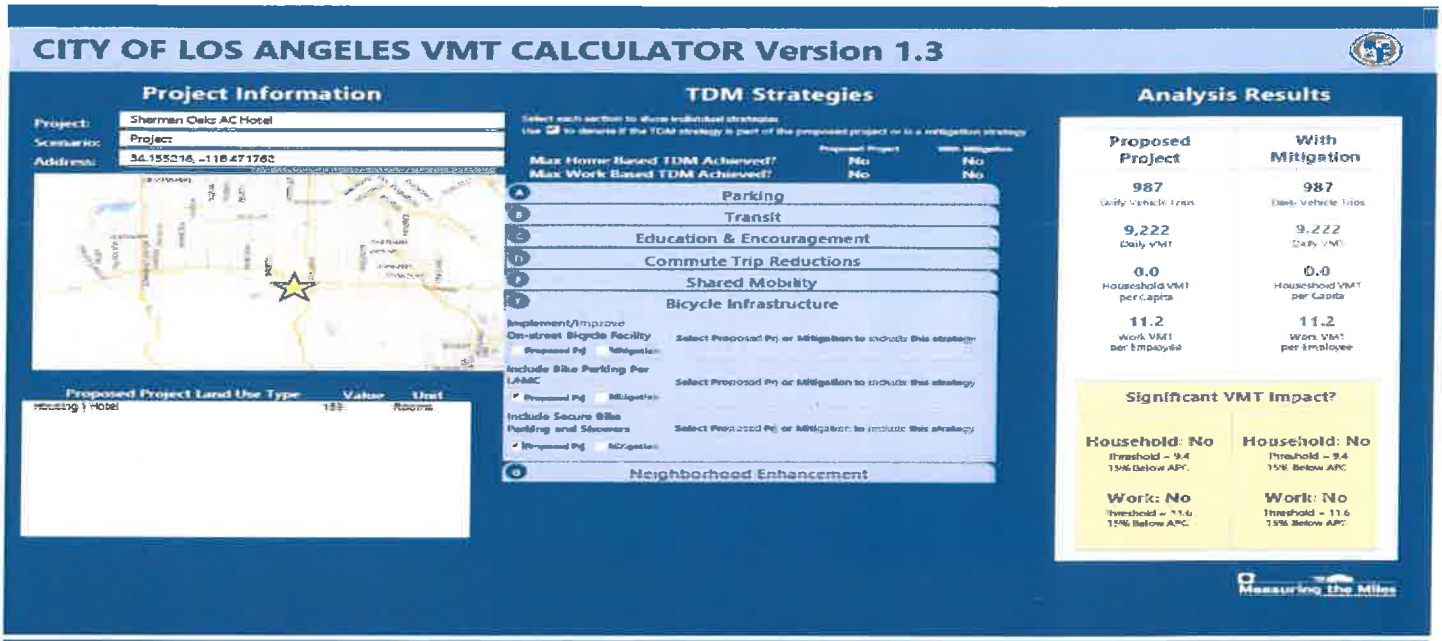
If you have any questions, please contact Brandon Wilson of my staff at (818) 374-4691.

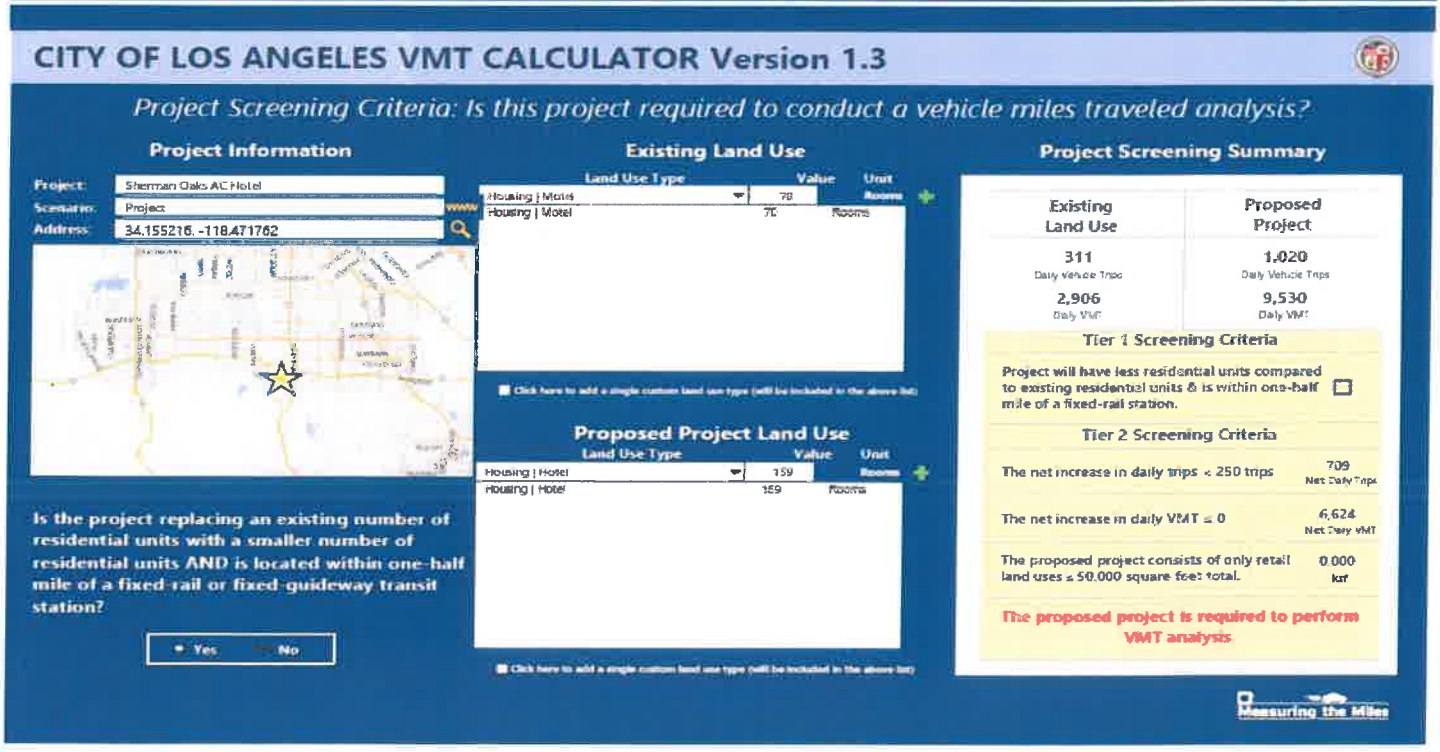
Attachments

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Andrew Jorgensen, DCP Valley Planning
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Attachment A
City of LA VMT Calculator Results





Attachment B
Summary of Delay and Levels of Service (LOS)

EXISTING WITH PROJECT CONDITIONS (YEAR 2020)
INTERSECTION LEVELS OF SERVICE

No	Intersection	Peak Hour	Existing Conditions		Existing with Project Conditions	
			Delay	LOS	Delay	LOS
1.	Firmament Ave (North) & Ventura Blvd	AM PM	8.9 20.5	A C	9.0 20.5	A C
2. [a]	Firmament Ave (South) & Ventura Blvd	AM PM	52.0 303.5	F F	52.6 322.9	F F
3. [a]	Orion Ave & Ventura Blvd	AM PM	267.5 549.2	F F	298.0 596.0	F F
4.	I-405 SB Ramps/Sherman Oaks Ave & Ventura Blvd	AM PM	26.1 23.7	C C	27.2 29.3	C C

FUTURE WITH PROJECT CONDITIONS (YEAR 2023)
INTERSECTION LEVELS OF SERVICE

No	Intersection	Peak Hour	Future without Project Conditions		Future with Project Conditions	
			Delay	LOS	Delay	LOS
1.	Firmament Ave (North) & Ventura Blvd	AM PM	8.9 21.0	A C	8.9 21.1	A C
2. [a]	Firmament Ave (South) & Ventura Blvd	AM PM	65.9 496.9	F F	67.8 532.5	F F
3. [a]	Orion Ave & Ventura Blvd	AM PM	535.5 1,356.8	F F	587.1 1,403.3	F F
4.	I-405 SB Ramps/Sherman Oaks Ave & Ventura Blvd	AM PM	34.2 31.1	C C	35.6 32.9	D C

Notes:

1. Delay is measured in seconds per vehicle.
2. A one percent per year ambient growth rate was applied to project Opening Year 2023 conditions.

Attachment C
Project Site Plan

