

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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October 6, 2006

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County File #: PLN050045

Carl Holm
County of Monterey, Resource Management Agency
168 West Alisal Street, 2nd Floor
Salinas, CA 93901-2680

RE: 2006 MONTEREY COUNTY GENERAL PLAN

Dear Mr. Holm:

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans), District 5, has reviewed the above referenced General Plan Update (GPU4) and DEIR and offers the following comments.

GENERAL COMMENTS

1. The Department supports local development that is consistent with State planning priorities intended to promote equity, strengthen the economy, protect the environment, and promote public health and safety. We accomplish this by working with local jurisdictions to achieve a shared vision of how the transportation system should and can accommodate interregional and local travel and development.
2. In an effort to promote safety, Caltrans top priority, we suggest that any capital improvements to the county road system includes all appropriate mitigation that ensures safety is not adversely affected and existing traffic safety issues are addressed. 2-1
3. The Transportation Agency for Monterey County (TAMC) has prepared a Nexus Study, dated September 2005, for a proposed Regional Development Impact Fee Program which identifies proposed regional transportation improvements to State Highway facilities (note that this program differs from the traffic impact fee program for local roads). We recommend that Monterey County adopt the Regional Development Impact Fee Program as part of GPU4. The program is consistent with both California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) guidelines and Caltrans objectives. The enclosed letter provides details on our position with regards to the TAMC program. 2-2
4. Because Caltrans is responsible for the safety, operations, and maintenance of the State transportation system, our Level of Service (LOS) standards are used to determine the significance of the project's impact. We endeavor to maintain a target LOS *at the transition between LOS C and LOS D* on all State transportation facilities. In cases where a State facility is already operating at an unacceptable LOS, *any* additional trips added should be considered a 2-3

significant cumulative traffic impact, and should be mitigated accordingly. The methodologies used to calculate the LOS should be consistent with the methods in the current version of the *Highway Capacity Manual*. LOS calculations including relational definitions (and cut-off values) for indicators such as the volume/capacity (V/C) ratio have not been included in an appendix to the DEIR. Please make these calculations available for reference and review.

2-3 Cont.

5. Highway 1 near Moss Landing functions as a commuter route between Santa Cruz and the Monterey Peninsula. Our vision as outlined in the Transportation Concept Report (TCR) for Highway 1 (and not specifically addressed in GPU4), includes a four-lane facility in this vicinity. It is important that the transportation concept for Monterey County, as expressed in GPU4, be consistent with the transportation planning efforts of Caltrans. TCRs for all State Highways in Monterey County are available upon request (TCRs for Routes 1 and 101 are included with this letter).

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SPECIFIC COMMENTS

1. In reference to Section OS-6.3: The State Office of Historic Preservation Clearinghouse list is not consistent with the Native American Heritage Commission's list of sacred sites. Therefore, Phase I surveys should include a record of *both* facilities, and not one or the other.

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2. Some clarification of the statements in OS-4.9 (shown below) may be necessary.

"The natural shoreline processes, including bluff erosion, sand transport, and tidal flushing, shall not be adversely altered by dredging, filling, or construction of shoreline structures. Repair and maintenance of properties that have been impacted by shoreline processes shall be encouraged subject to appropriate permits."

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Since the Local Coastal Program is not being updated with GPU4, how would this policy affect the maintenance of Highway 1?

3. To prevent the blockage of roads, parking on shoulders, and unnecessary idling, we encourage the placement of roadside rest areas for truck drivers in southern Monterey County. We recommend that GPU4 reflect this need and encourage coordination with TAMC, the Association of Monterey Bay Area Governments and Caltrans to address the need. Potential solutions may also benefit from public-private partnerships.
4. Caltrans supports efforts to promote higher land-use densities in urban areas (Policies LU-2.3, LU-2.10, and LU-4.3) that reduce traffic impacts on regional facilities and encourage transit use, walking, and cycling. We recognize Monterey County's commitment in this direction as mentioned in GPU4, and suggest defining rural centers in such a way as to minimize scattered development and resulting traffic congestion.
5. We also support well-placed and appropriately sized park-and-ride lots within Monterey County (Policy C-6.5 in GPU4). These facilities can be instrumental in encouraging ridesharing, however, they should be built in a manner so as not to discourage alternative-means access to

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public transit facilities, and also should not be large enough to significantly preclude higher-density and mixed-use land development efforts.

2-9 Cont.

6. Finally, we support initiatives to improve access to Monterey County by long-distance tourists and weekend travelers (Section 4.6.2 of DEIR), with the provision that the transportation investments made encourage the use of alternative modes to the extent possible.

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District 5 staff will continue to be committed to working closely with you to achieve a shared vision of how the transportation system should and can accommodate interregional and local travel.

If you have any questions, or need further clarification on items discussed above, please do not hesitate to call David Kuperman at (805) 549-3131.

Sincerely,



DAVID MURRAY, Chief
Regional Planning/Development Review

Enclosures

cc: Nick Papadakis (AMBAG)
Debbie Hale (TAMC)