

California Department of Transportation

DISTRICT 11
4050 TAYLOR STREET, MS-240
SAN DIEGO, CA 92110
(619) 709-5152 | FAX (619) 688-4299 TTY 711
www.dot.ca.gov



September 19, 2022

11-SD-78
PM 15.057
ViaWest Group
MND/SCH#2022080408

Mr. Jay Paul
Senior Planner
City of Escondido
201 North Broadway
Escondido, CA 92025

Dear Mr. Paul:

1 Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the Mitigated Negative Declaration for the ViaWest Group- 2351 Meyers Avenue (City Case No. PL20-0654) Project located near State Route 78 (SR-78). The mission of Caltrans is to provide a safe and reliable transportation network that serves all people and respects the environment. The Local Development Review (LDR) Program reviews land use projects and plans to ensure consistency with our mission and state planning priorities.

2 Safety is one of Caltrans' strategic goals. Caltrans strives to make the year 2050 the first year without a single death or serious injury on California's roads. We are striving for more equitable outcomes for the transportation network's diverse users. To achieve these ambitious goals, we will pursue meaningful collaboration with our partners. We encourage the implementation of new technologies, innovations, and best practices that will enhance the safety on the transportation network. These pursuits are both ambitious and urgent, and their accomplishment involves a focused departure from the status quo as we continue to institutionalize safety in all our work.

3 Caltrans is committed to prioritizing projects that are equitable and provide meaningful benefits to historically underserved communities, to ultimately improve transportation accessibility and quality of life for people in the communities we serve.

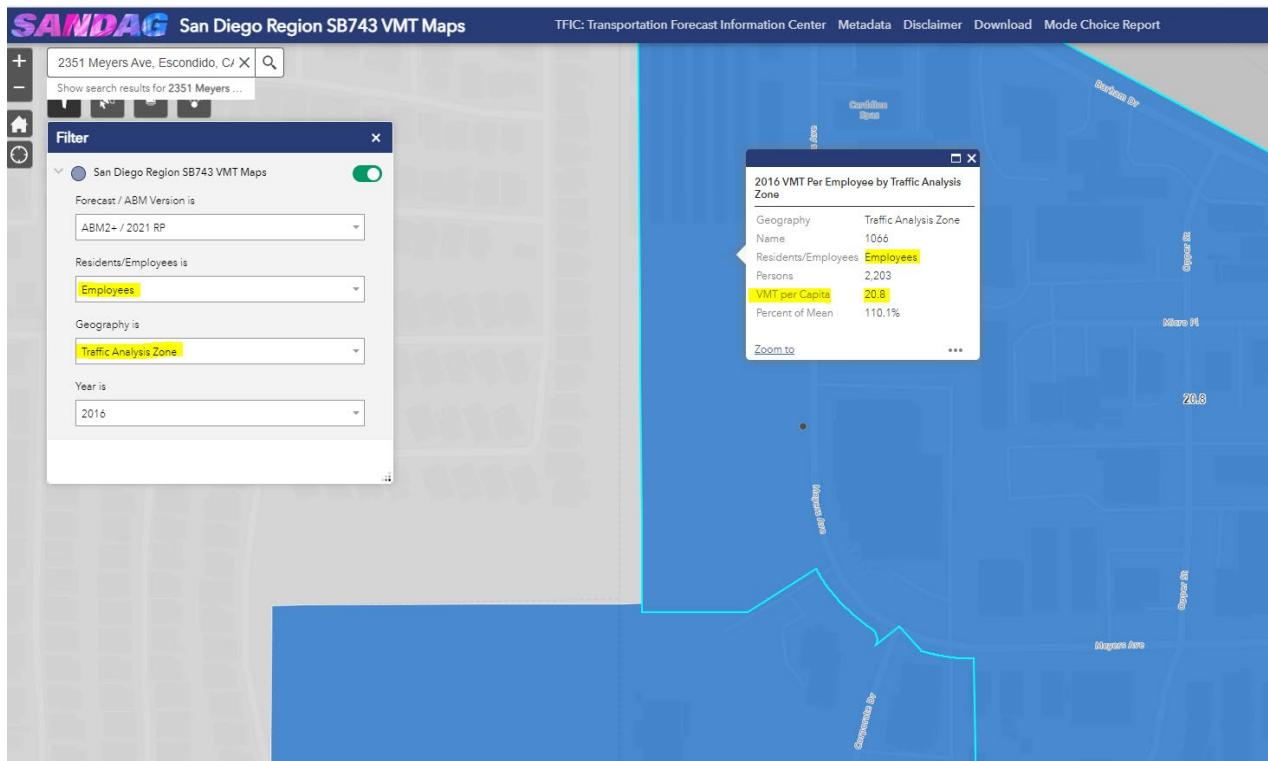
4 We look forward to working with the City of Escondido in areas where the City and Caltrans have joint jurisdiction to improve the transportation network and connections

4 cont between various modes of travel, with the goal of improving the experience of those who use the transportation system.

Caltrans has the following comments:

Traffic Impact Study

- Caltrans previously requested (on 9/13/2022) missing Synchro files, all traffic study appendices (inclusive of Appendix C), and all traffic counts.
 - Section 4.3 VMT, Year 2016 from SANDAG, provide an explanation on why the Census Tract was used instead of the Transportation Analysis Zone. It makes a big difference, as the use of the Transportation Analysis Zone yields a VMT of 20.6 and exceed the region's standard of 18.9. What is the City's requirement? (See clipped picture below).
- <https://sandag.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=bb8f938b625c40cea14c825835519a2b>
- 5 • Provide queue report showing the 95% queue length for the westbound exit ramp at Nordahl Road for existing, existing plus project and cumulative.
 - Provide Synchro file used to analyze traffic impact.
 - Provide all appendices associated with the Traffic Study for a complete review, some of the appendices are missing.



"Provide a safe and reliable transportation network that serves all people and respects the environment"

Complete Streets and Mobility Network

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Caltrans views all transportation improvements as opportunities to improve safety, access and mobility for all travelers in California and recognizes bicycle, pedestrian and transit modes as integral elements of the transportation network. Caltrans supports improved transit accommodation through the provision of Park and Ride facilities, improved bicycle and pedestrian access and safety improvements, signal prioritization for transit, bus on shoulders, ramp improvements, or other enhancements that promotes a complete and integrated transportation network. Early coordination with Caltrans, in locations that may affect both Caltrans and the City of Escondido is encouraged.

To reduce greenhouse gas emissions and achieve California's Climate Change target, Caltrans is implementing Complete Streets and Climate Change policies into State Highway Operations and Protection Program (SHOPP) projects to meet multi-modal mobility needs. Caltrans looks forward to working with the City to evaluate potential Complete Streets projects.

Maintaining bicycle, pedestrian, and public transit access during construction is important. Mitigation to maintain bicycle, pedestrian, and public transit access during construction is in accordance with Caltrans' goals and policies.

Land Use and Smart Growth

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Caltrans recognizes there is a strong link between transportation and land use. Development can have a significant impact on traffic and congestion on State transportation facilities. In particular, the pattern of land use can affect both local vehicle miles traveled and the number of trips. Caltrans supports collaboration with local agencies to work towards a safe, functional, interconnected, multi-modal transportation network integrated through applicable "smart growth" type land use planning and policies.

The City should continue to coordinate with Caltrans to implement necessary improvements at intersections and interchanges where the agencies have joint jurisdiction.

Environmental

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Caltrans welcomes the opportunity to be a Responsible Agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), as we have some discretionary authority of a portion of the project that is in Caltrans' R/W through the form of an encroachment

permit process. We look forward to the coordination of our efforts to ensure that Caltrans can adopt the alternative and/or mitigation measure for our R/W.

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An encroachment permit will be required for any work within the Caltrans' R/W prior to construction. As part of the encroachment permit process, the applicant must provide approved final environmental documents for this project, corresponding technical studies, and necessary regulatory and resource agency permits. Specifically, CEQA determination or exemption. The supporting documents must address all environmental impacts within the Caltrans' R/W and address any impacts from avoidance and/or mitigation measures.

We recommend that this project specifically identifies and assesses potential impacts caused by the project or impacts from mitigation efforts that occur within Caltrans' R/W that includes impacts to the natural environment, infrastructure including but not limited to highways, roadways, structures, intelligent transportation systems elements, on-ramps and off-ramps, and appurtenant features including but not limited to lighting, signage, drainage, guardrail, slopes and landscaping. Caltrans is interested in any additional mitigation measures identified for the project's draft Environmental Document.

Broadband

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Caltrans recognizes that teleworking and remote learning lessen the impacts of traffic on our roadways and surrounding communities. This reduces the amount of VMT and decreases the amount of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and other pollutants. The availability of affordable and reliable, high speed broadband is a key component in supporting travel demand management and reaching the state's transportation and climate action goals.

Right-of-Way

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- Per Business and Profession Code 8771, perpetuation of survey monuments by a licensed land surveyor is required, if they are being destroyed by any construction.
- Any work performed within Caltrans' R/W will require discretionary review and approval by Caltrans and an encroachment permit will be required for any work within the Caltrans' R/W prior to construction.

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Additional information regarding encroachment permits may be obtained by contacting the Caltrans Permits Office at (619) 688-6158 or emailing D11.Permits@dot.ca.gov or by visiting the website at <https://dot.ca.gov/programs/traffic-operations/ep>. Early coordination with Caltrans is strongly advised for all encroachment permits. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Kimberly Dodson, LDR Coordinator, at (619) 985-1587 or by e-mail sent to Kimberly.Dodson@dot.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Maurice A. Eaton

MAURICE EATON
Branch Chief
Local Development Review