

APPENDIX G – *Caltrans Comment Letters*

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

50 HIGUERA STREET
SAN LUIS OBISPO, CA 93401-5415
PHONE (805) 549-3101
FAX (805) 549-3329
TDD (805) 549-3259
<http://www.dot.ca.gov/dist05>



*Flex your power!
Be energy efficient!*

December 1, 2008

Ms Jessica W. Grant
City of Santa Barbara - Transportation Planning Division
630 Garden Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

Dear Ms. Grant:

Las Positas/Mission – Circulation Options Report

We appreciate your effort in taking on this study and for giving us the opportunity to comment on your circulation options report at this time. As discussed at our meeting, a well-defined purpose and need and a funding strategy are necessary in order to begin the project development process with a Project Study Report (PSR). A PSR will provide conceptual approval for locally funded projects and used as a programming document when state funding is included. Also, your effort now to engage the community and build consensus on viable alternatives is critical prior to initiating the PSR.

We encourage any improvements to your local circulation that include over crossing without any ramp modifications to provide additional connectivity across Route 101 to reduce congestion at Las Positas and Mission Street interchanges. A traffic study would determine the location that would effectively draw traffic from these interchanges.

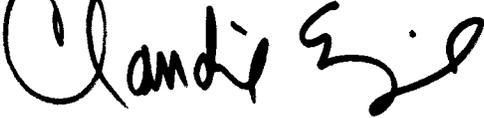
Modifying the Las Positas/US 101 interchange will need to address the existing traffic demand as well as how the redistribution of this demand will affect the local street network operations. Currently the Las Positas US101 northbound off ramp accommodates an ADT of 7200 vehicles, which could roughly mean 720 vehicles during the peak hour. Considering the demand on this ramp, Project 6 which proposes to shorten this ramp and the weaving distance by relocating the terminus to Junipero Street is not considered a viable alternative. It is not clear at this early stage to determine if any of the remaining proposals that modify the Las Positas Interchange are viable. The traffic study with more detailed design will be needed to further identify feasible alternatives.

The options observed from the public meeting that propose adding auxiliary lanes and widening the existing ramps are worth analyzing. The traffic study would identify if they can satisfy the purpose and need for the project. Option 1-1 is identical to Project 6 and this alternative is not considered viable. For the remaining options, 1-4 (Project 9) and 1-8, traffic study and detailed design would determine if they are viable.

Ms. Grant
December 1, 2008
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Thank you for this opportunity to review your study and if you have any questions please don't hesitate to contact me at (805) 549-3640.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Claudia Espino". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

CLAUDIA ESPINO, Chief
District 5, Advance Planning

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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PHONE (805) 549-3101
FAX (805) 549-3329
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*Flex your power!
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March 30, 2009

Ms Jessica W. Grant
City of Santa Barbara - Transportation Planning Division
630 Garden Street
Santa Barbara, CA 93101

Dear Ms. Grant:

Las Positas/Mission – Circulation Options Report

We appreciate your effort in taking on this study and for giving us the opportunity to comment on your circulation options report at this time. As you have noted, the outcome from the public outreach and the Joint Planning Commission/Transportation & Circulation Committee meeting, Alternative 2B is the one receiving their approval. I am centering my comments on this alternative.

We received the traffic model files and were able to review the results. The sinchro report does show that the Las Positas NB-off ramp for Alternative 2B and in other locations the average 95 percentile queue exceeds capacity and that the actual queue may be longer. Since the estimated queue exceeds the Sinchro prediction, a more detailed queue analysis is required using SimTraffic. We also request to see the average 95 percentile queue from multiple simulation runs (we prefer 20 runs but a minimum of 10 different runs at different random seed number is required). We recognize that this effort was a planning level and that a more in depth traffic study will be done with the PSR which would include the SimTraffic analysis. Please see attached technical comments.

The outreach effort you have undertaken has narrowed the alternatives from this Circulation Report for the PSR. We continue to encourage any improvements to your local circulation that include over crossing without any ramp modifications to provide additional connectivity across Route 101 to reduce congestion at Las Positas and Mission Street interchanges. During the PSR and with the more detailed traffic study new options could arise at that time. It is not clear at this early stage to determine if the remaining proposals that modify the Las Positas Interchange are viable. A project level traffic study during PSR phase with more detailed design will be needed to further identify feasible alternatives.

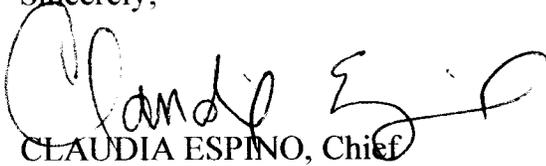
As I indicated in my last comments, a well-defined purpose and need and a funding strategy are necessary in order to begin the project development process with a Project

Ms. Grant
April 6, 2009
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Study Report (PSR). A PSR will provide conceptual approval for locally funded projects and used as a programming document when state funding is included and the traffic study required for the PSR will provide the necessary information to design improvements to the interchange that would operate. The traffic study would also identify if they can satisfy the purpose and need for the project.

Thank you for this opportunity to review your study and if you have any questions please don't hesitate to contact me at (805) 549-3640.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Claudia Espino". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "C" and a long, sweeping tail.

CLAUDIA ESPINO, Chief
District 5, Advance Planning

Enclosure:
Technical Comments

Technical Comments

We noticed that the intersection analysis consistently uses a Peak Hour Factor (PHF) of 1.0 but HCM2000 recommends the following:

- PHF = 0.92 (congested conditions), 0.88 (fairly uniform flow throughout the peak hour but a recognizable peak is observed).
- PHF cannot be 1.00, if hourly volume is used.

For Alternatives 1 and 3A, the proposed over crossing along Pueblo Street will close the Pueblo St. NB Off ramp and the volume needs to be diverted to use the Mission NB off-ramp and Las Positas NB off-ramp. This will have an impact to Mission NB ramp and Las Positas/Calle Real intersection.

For Alternatives 2B and 3B, please check the model lane configurations. We did not see a hook on- and off-ramp at the fairground main gate.

For the signal phasing in Alternative 2C, the WB should not run shared left-through with protected phasing, it is un-safe and confusing to drivers.

Our remaining general comments to the traffic study are:

1. If ramp queuing spills onto mainline, auxiliary lanes should be considered.
2. A PHF (Peak Hour Factor) of 0.92 or less must be used for intersection LOS unless actual field counts show otherwise.
3. All movements must be at LOS D or better for design year 2030.
4. All movements must be at LOS C/D cusp or better for construction year.
5. We noticed that you used the default for the signal timing plans offset and Caltrans runs offset at the beginning of yellow light.
6. Do you have existing conditions (LOS, delay, queue) for ramps?
7. If a PSR is started we will need weaving analysis, and merge and diverge analysis for the mainline.