



CITY OF CERRITOS

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OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER
ART GALLUCCI

September 6, 2019

CA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION, DISTRICT 7
Mark Archuleta, Acting Chief Deputy District Director – Construction
100 S. Main St.
Los Angeles, CA 90012

Re: Impacts of the I-5 Improvement Project (South LA County) on Cerritos and Nearby Vicinity

Dear Mr. Archuleta:

As you know, the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) began the I-5 Improvement Project in South Los Angeles County (Project) in 2011 to improve the southern segments along the I-5 between the I-605 and Orange County line. The Project also includes reconstruction of various local roadway overpasses along the I-5, including Carmenita Road, Alondra Boulevard, and Valley View Avenue. The northern and eastern boundaries of the City of Cerritos ("City") abut Alondra Boulevard, Valley View Avenue, and the I-5. As a result, the City and its residents have been severely impacted by the Project since construction began almost a decade ago.

Adverse Traffic and Infrastructure Impacts

The routine intermittent freeway closures along the I-5, as well as the prolonged road closures and/or traffic lane reductions along Carmenita Road, Alondra Boulevard, and Valley View Avenue have caused adverse traffic impacts on the City's streets. Caltrans has re-routed a significant volume of vehicular traffic through parts of the City that are not equipped to handle the sheer volume or types of vehicles traversing the City's streets. For example, Caltrans established southbound Carmenita Road, between the I-5 and Artesia Boulevard, and eastbound Artesia Boulevard, between Carmenita Road and the I-5, as a detour route. Neither stretch of Carmenita Road and Artesia Boulevard at these locations is a City-designated truck route in Cerritos. In fact, commercial vehicles over 6,000 pounds are strictly prohibited from traveling through these streets, per Cerritos Municipal Code Section 10.18.010. As a result, these arterial street segments have quickly deteriorated and are in need of resurfacing, due to the excessive weight and sheer volume of semi-trucks using the detour. In addition, traffic signalization at the affected intersections did not contemplate the staging of large semi-trucks and other commercial vehicles, so long queues have formed during peak and non-peak hours and have significantly impacted the levels of service (LOS) at these intersections. The extensive damage alone to the City's streets is estimated to cost \$5.2 million to repair. In addition to trucks, the number of other types of vehicular traffic has also significantly increased the average daily traffic (ADT) on said streets, as well as other City arterial streets. These adverse street, traffic and infrastructure impacts have been exacerbated in recent years due to the growth of electronic commerce (e-commerce) and industrial developments outside of the City that are reliant on large

semi-trucks for transporting goods from the Port of Los Angeles and the Port of Long Beach at the expense of local municipalities.

Adverse Safety Impacts

Moreover, except for a few commercially or industrially zoned properties at the most northerly and easterly ends of the City, the entire route along the aforementioned stretches of Carmenita Road and Artesia Boulevard within the City are located directly adjacent to sensitive land uses including two elementary schools and single family homes along the detour route. The increased traffic and over-proliferation of trucks and other commercial vehicles from the I-5 along these rights-of-way has increased the safety risk of school children, cyclists and other pedestrians travelling along these streets. Many of the vehicles travelling through the City as a detour from the I-5 are ignorant or unaware that said detour is located on an arterial street segment that is not suitable for truck traffic nor are they familiar with the City's speed limits, despite appropriate signage, further contributing to the increased safety risk to the school children and residents walking and biking along these routes or crossing the streets. Also, because the Project has been in place since 2011, much of the street striping has faded or become illegible, further elevating the safety concerns near the Project area. For example, the striping and "keep clear" paint along Valley View Avenue has all but disappeared in certain areas.

Adverse Air Quality Impacts

Furthermore, the Project is negatively impacting the air quality and health of the residents of the City. The increased vehicular traffic traveling through the City and idling of commercial vehicles and semi-trucks at intersections in close proximity to residents and sensitive receptors such as children have contributed to increased emissions of particulate matter and greenhouse gases within the City. Also, the construction activities for the Project require lane closures and result in further traffic congestion and delays, thereby aggravating air quality problems.

Adverse Noise Impacts

The increased volume and speed of truck traffic driving through the City streets as a detour from the I-5 have further added to the noise impacts of the Project. Residents complain of amplified noises and vibrations from the trucks driving through restricted streets, especially at night and early morning.

The Project began many years ago in 2011, and it is the City's understanding that completion of the Project has been delayed again to the end of 2021. The continual delays in completing the Project, and particularly the lane closures and reductions along Valley View Avenue at the I-5, have greatly intensified the adverse impacts on the City and its residents in the past several months. That Caltrans established an alternate route for heavy commercial traffic through non-truck-designated streets with multiple schools and primarily single-family residences – without any notification to or consultation with the City – is disappointing. Despite the fact that there has been very little communication with the City regarding the delays in Project completion, lane closures, and traffic diversion through the City's rights-of-way, the City has historically accommodated Caltrans' requests and has thus far accepted responsibility and blame for the above-mentioned impacts Caltrans has caused. However, the Project has become an increasing strain on the City's financial resources, and the City cannot endlessly accommodate the Project's adverse impacts without consideration and accountability for said impacts.

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The Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR) on the Project obligates Caltrans to coordinate with individual cities such as Cerritos to minimize adverse impacts during the construction period of the Project. (EIR, pp. 49, 127-129, 342, 249.) Caltrans has failed to do so thus far. Further lack of communication or consultation with the City, and Caltrans' failure to alleviate or effectively mitigate these adverse impacts on the City and its residents, is unacceptable.

The City hopes to partner with Caltrans to find an acceptable solution to the issues raised in this letter, but Caltrans must accept responsibility for the delays and adverse impacts affecting the residents of the City.

We are willing to meet to discuss the issues raised and hope to find a mutually agreeable solution to alleviate any further impacts to Cerritos residents and to repair the extensive damage to City streets created by the Project. Should you have any concerns, please contact me at (562) 916-1301.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Art Gallucci", with a horizontal line extending from the end of the signature.

Art Gallucci
CITY MANAGER

cc: Bob Archuleta, CA State Senator, 32nd District
Cristina Garcia, CA State Assembly Member, 58th District
Janice Hahn, Member of the LA County Board of Supervisors, 4th District
Naresh Solanki, Mayor
Frank Yokoyama, Mayor Pro Tem
Jim Edwards, Councilmember
Grace Hu, Councilmember
Mark Pulido, Councilmember
Mark Steres, City Attorney