

**CITY OF LOS ANGELES**  
**INTER-DEPARTMENTAL CORRESPONDENCE**

333 S. La Cienega Bl  
DOT Case No. CEN 14-44054

Date: January 17, 2017

To: Luci Ibarra, Senior City Planner  
Department of City Planning



From: Wes Pringle, Transportation Engineer  
Department of Transportation

Subject: **PROPOSED MIXED-USE PROJECT AT 333 SOUTH LA CIENEGA BOULEVARD – RESPONSE TO COMMENTS**

On February 11, 2016, DOT issued a traffic assessment report summarizing the findings of a traffic analysis, dated October 20, 2015, prepared for the revised proposed mixed-use project located at 333 South La Cienega Boulevard. The revised project replaced the one submitted on March 17, 2015. The traffic study was prepared consistent with the City's traffic study policies and procedures, and consistent with how all traffic studies for projects within transit-oriented areas are processed in the City. On January 10, 2017, the Department of City Planning received a comment letter with questions about the study from the Rifkin Transportation Planning Group. The six items of concern are addressed below:

**Comment**

The traffic study misrepresented the operation of the traffic signal at 3<sup>rd</sup> Street and La Cienega Boulevard.

**Response**

The comment letter indicates that the intersection of 3<sup>rd</sup> Street and La Cienega Boulevard should have been treated as “opposed phasing” rather than as a normal signal with multiple phases. However, this signal does not operate as “opposed phasing” because that would require that two directions, either north-south or east-west, would operate one after the other and not concurrently. This signal operates the left turns at different times (“leading” and “lagging”) with the through movements concurrently. It does not operate as “opposed phasing” in terms of the calculations.

**Comment**

The trip generation is under estimated because of the use of the rate for ITE’s “Super Market” and not a trip rate specific to the proposed land use.

**Response**

Per DOT Traffic Study Guidelines, the trip generation rate was agreed upon during the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) process. It is standard practice to use ITE's Super Market rate for a study that proposes a retail land use of the type described in the study. The rate quoted in the commented letter was obtained by an independent study of a limited sample of similar land uses. Unless the proposed land use is so unique that a rate in ITE is not available, DOT does not use rates that have been independently determined. It is also possible that the proposed land use will change by the time the project is actually constructed.

**Comment**

The Level of Service (LOS) calculations for the intersection of 3<sup>rd</sup> Street and La Cienega Boulevard are incorrect because of the intersection phasing and the trip generation.

**Response**

As indicated in the responses to the first two comments, the phasing was correctly represented in the calculations as was the trip generation. Therefore, the LOS calculations are correct.

**Comment**

The traffic study should have included residential street impact analyses for streets east of the project.

**Response**

Due to the nature of the project and the project location, DOT did not see the potential for a significant impact to any residential street as a result of the project. While there is a commercial component to the project, the commercial uses would draw mostly from the community. The proposed supermarket and restaurant are not regional trip generators.

**Comment**

The use of 15% transit credit is too high for the high end nature of the development.

**Response**

The use of the 15% transit credit is in line with DOT's Traffic Study Guidelines and was approved in the MOU. The current Census tract for the area that this project is located in reports that the population has a 24.5% non-car commute mode share for the residential population. Additionally, the ITE Trip Generation Manual reports surveys from locations all over the country, some of which do not have similar transit services, and are therefore likely to be higher than this geographical location.

**Comment**

The traffic study did not properly represent the distribution of project trips.

**Response**

The project trip distribution was agreed upon during the MOU process. Most traffic studies arrive at these numbers by looking at the types of land uses in the development, the street network, and the most likely routes that traffic will use. As with any other study, these are estimations based on experience and the best information available.

If you have any questions, please call me at 213-972-8482.

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