



September 13, 2007

Mr. Larry Carrier  
Hartnell Community College  
156 Homestead  
Salinas, California 93905

**SUBJECT: Comments on the Draft Mitigated Negative Declaration for the  
Hartnell College East Campus Center for Applied Technology Project**

Dear Mr. Corley:

The Transportation Agency for Monterey County is the Regional Transportation Planning Agency and Congestion Management Agency for Monterey County. Transportation Agency staff has reviewed the draft Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Hartnell College East Campus Center for Applied Technology Project. The project proposes the construction of a 40,000 square foot building on 4.9 acres of existing campus to accommodate 750 students in the east side of the City of Salinas on Alisal Avenue.

The Transportation Agency offers the following comments for your consideration:

**Regional Road & Highway Impact**

1. The draft document, and appended traffic analysis, for the proposed project indicate that six freeway segments of U.S. 101 will operate at unacceptable levels of service under both project-specific and cumulative conditions, leading to potentially significant impacts. Mitigation for these impacts, stemming from the addition of 828 daily trips and 83 P.M. peak-hour trips, includes contribution of fair-share payments towards identified signal and intersection improvements and the City of Salinas' comprehensive traffic impact fee program. The Transportation Agency supports the proposed mitigation as a means of addressing the project-specific impacts from this new development. However, the Transportation Agency does not agree that the same project-specific mitigations will be sufficient to address the project's cumulative impacts, as the document suggests.

Considering the regional draw of an institute of higher education, as evidenced in the document's own traffic analysis, which shows significant trip distributions accessing the site both north and south of Salinas on U.S. 101 and from S.R. 68, this project needs to address the regional-nature of its impacts to the road network outside of the immediate project area. The Transportation Agency has developed a mechanism, supported by Caltrans, that allows new development to adequately mitigate cumulative impacts to state highways and regional roads, and thus remain California Environmental Quality Act-compliant. This would be accomplished through a fair-share payment of regional development impact fees on an ad hoc basis, as identified in our agency's *Nexus Study for a Regional Development Impact Fee*.

The Transportation Agency requests that this development contribute its fair share in regional fees, and further requests that this condition be included as a mitigation measure for cumulative impacts to U.S. 101 in the final document.

### **Pedestrian, Bicycle, & Transit**

2. The Transportation Agency supports accommodation of alternative forms of transportation both through the design of transportation facilities and through the design and orientation of land uses. Our agency appreciates the development's intention to encourage the use of alternative forms of transportation among the employees, students and residents accessing the proposed project. Our agency requests that the draft document include a discussion and map of proposed bicycle and pedestrian facilities for the development showing how the internal facilities will provide connections to existing and proposed facilities surrounding the development, particularly to the existing bike lanes on East Alisal Street. Also, the document should address the need for new roadways to be designed to accommodate bicycles with adequate pavement for bike travel.
3. Considering the amount of internal bicycle and pedestrian usage that the school site will likely receive, a premium should be placed on safe and accessible access to the site from intersections and crosswalks, sidewalks, and bicycle facilities. Direct access should be provided to project site entrances to avoid the need for travel through parking lots. The Transportation Agency supports and recommends, as noted in the draft document, that the project provide sidewalks along its frontage on East Alisal Street and a pathway along Entry Drive. Furthermore, our agency supports and recommends inclusion of the proposed bicycle facilities, including on-site racks and lockers that are lighted and highly-visible, oriented near main entrances, and situated to ensure safe circulation of both pedestrians and bicyclists.
4. The draft document notes that there is currently no existing transit service to the project site, but that the development could generate new transit trips. The Transportation Agency supports and reiterates the document's recommendation that the developer work with Monterey-Salinas Transit to extend service the campus. Our agency also recommends that Monterey-Salinas Transit's *Designing for Transit* Guideline Manual be used as a resource for accommodating potential transit access to the project site.

Thank you for the opportunity to review this document. If you would like to discuss these comments further, please contact Michael Zeller of my staff at (831) 775-0903.

Sincerely,



Debra L. Hale  
Executive Director

cc: Dave Murray, California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) District 5  
Ron Lundquist, Monterey County Department of Public Works  
Carl Sedoryk, Monterey-Salinas Transit  
Nicholas Papadakis, AMBAG  
Douglas Quentin, Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District