



June 5, 2008

Mr. Courtney Grossman
Planning Manager
Community Planning and Development
City of Salinas
65 West Alisal Street
Salinas, California 93901

SUBJECT: Comments on the Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Salinas Ag-Industrial Business Park Project

Dear Mr. Grossman:

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 proposed Notice of Preparation of a Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Salinas Ag-Industrial Business Park Project.

The project involves the subdivision of 257 acres located south of Abbott Street and west of Harris Road to create six parcels for use in agricultural processing, manufacturing, agricultural support, and related commercial, retail, and office businesses, including an extension of Burton Avenue and Dayton Street. Transportation Agency staff appreciates the City's and project development team's prior coordination and discussion of this project early in the process and offers the following comments for your consideration:

Regional Road & Highway Impacts

1. With the project developing support facilities that will service agriculture-related activities in the Salinas Valley, it can be expected that the development will act as a regional draw, particularly for truck traffic, via Highway 101, State Route 156, State Route 68, and State Route 183. The traffic study for the draft Environmental Impact Report should fully consider the impacts this project will have on the aforementioned regional facilities at both site-specific and cumulative levels (including the proposed Fresh Express expansion project in the development scenarios), with special consideration given to the impacts from truck traffic. In addition to the listed study points, the traffic study should also include an analysis of the project impacts to the proposed US-101/Harris Road interchange and existing US-101/Airport Boulevard interchange, with feasible site-specific and cumulative mitigation measures identified for all impacts.

2. The Transportation Agency supports fair-share payments of the City of Salinas' comprehensive Traffic Impact Fee as contribution to mitigation for project-specific impacts to local streets and roads. Cumulative impacts will also need to be mitigated, which can be accomplished through a contribution to our agency's regional development impact fee program. Our agency is in the process of seeking approval from our member jurisdictions to implement regional fees, and the City of Salinas has indicated its support for the program. The Transportation Agency is expecting, adoption status of the fee program notwithstanding, that this project will mitigate its cumulative impacts through the regional fee program. Payment of the regional development impact fee is supported by Caltrans and allows new development to adequately mitigate cumulative impacts to state highways and regional roads while remaining California Environmental Quality Act-compliant. The document should indicate that payment of the regional development impact fees is the preferred mitigation measure for cumulative transportation impacts.
3. The traffic analysis for the draft Environmental Impact Report should include information on existing traffic volumes within the study area, especially for those roadway segments and intersections on state highways and principal arterials. This information should be based upon recent traffic counts (no more than two years old). The existing level of service for each roadway segment and intersection should also be calculated and included in the draft document.
4. When complete, the Transportation Agency requests that a copy of the traffic study for this project be provided to our agency for review along with the draft Environmental Impact Report.

Pedestrian, Bicycle, & Transit Travel

5. The Transportation Agency supports accommodation of alternative forms of transportation (rail, bus transit, bicycle and pedestrian transportation), both through the design of transportation facilities, and through the design and orientation of land uses. The Transportation Agency supports projects that seek to maintain and promote non-automotive travel within the community by providing adequate bicycle and pedestrian facilities, connecting sidewalks to surrounding developments, and ensuring sufficient right-of-way for bike lanes. With the amount of truck traffic that can be expected from this development, special consideration should be given to employees, visitors, and passers-by utilizing bicycle and pedestrian routes for access and safety:
 - a) Our agency requests that existing bicycle and pedestrian facilities, proposed facilities, and facilities that the project applicant will construct be interconnected, particularly to the existing Class II and III bike lanes on Abbott Street, Harkins Road and Hansen Street/Schilling Place as well as the proposed facility on Airport Boulevard. Also, the document should address the need for new roadways to be designed to accommodate bicycles with adequate pavement for bike travel, with specific dimensions clearly identified, particularly along major arterials.
 - b) The environmental review and development planning should place a premium on safe and accessible pedestrian access to the site from intersections and crosswalks, sidewalks, and bicycle facilities. Our agency recommends that proper striping be

included for all pedestrian crosswalks to clearly identify areas of pedestrian travel and ensure safe transitions for vehicles and pedestrians. Consideration should be given to the inclusion of intelligent crosswalks, which provide flashing notification lights when a pedestrian enters the crosswalk to increase visibility and alert drivers of their presence. The project site should also be designed with sidewalks that connect to external facilities, provide access to transit stops, and do not include the use of cul-de-sacs without a cut-through for pedestrian travel.

- c) A map depicting both existing and planned bicycle and pedestrian facilities (specifically how planned facilities will link to existing facilities in surrounding areas) with the type of facility (lane, path, or route) and cross-sections should be provided in the draft document. The map should also indicate the location of bicycle racks and lockers and our agency encourages the inclusion of adequate lighting at those locations for safety. The Transportation Agency also encourages the project developer to apply for our Bicycle Protection Program, which provides grant funding for bicycle parking facilities (racks and lockers) for local businesses, governments, and school districts.
6. Monterey-Salinas Transit is in discussion with the South County cities of Gonzales, Soledad, Greenfield, and King City on the possibility of assuming transit service in these areas. Our agency recommends that the development work closely with Monterey-Salinas Transit to ensure that the development will provide adequate access to any planned transit routes as well as to the routes that currently exist for Lines 21, 23, and 29. In addition, Monterey-Salinas Transit's *Designing for Transit* Guideline Manual should be used as a resource for accommodating any future transit access to the project site.

Thank you for the opportunity to review this document. If you have any questions, please contact Michael Zeller of my staff at (831) 775-0903.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'D. Hale', with the name 'Foe' written below it.

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 Quetin, Monterey Bay Unified Air Pollution Control District