



Thursday, September 2, 2021

Matt Dulcich, AICP
Director of Environmental Planning
Campus Planning and Environmental Stewardship
University of California
One Shields Avenue, Davis, CA 95616

RE: Comments on UC Davis California Hospital Tower Project Draft Environmental Impact Report

Dear Mr. Dulcich,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the California Hospital Tower Project. As an organization dedicated to improving quality of life and health equity through land use, transportation, and community development, WALKSacramento appreciates the project's intent towards improving pedestrian and bicycle circulation within the project site and to the surrounding neighborhoods. In particular, we appreciate the inclusion of the potential bicycle facility improvements on X Street listed in TRA-1a, as well as the pedestrian crossing improvements listed in TRA-1c. In reviewing the report, we would also like to offer the following recommendations to strengthen mitigation measures TRA-1b, TRA-1d, and TRA-1e to further encourage alternative transportation use among employees and students and reduce vehicle miles traveled (VMT).

- **Recommendations for TRA-1b:** We would like to better understand pedestrian flow from parking structure 5 (PS5) to the Cancer Center and California Hospital Tower. The DEIR mentions possible locations of two pedestrian promenades: one across 45th Street to connect between PS5 and the California Hospital Tower, and one connecting from PS5 to the Cancer Center. However, the proposed locations of these pedestrian promenades and pedestrian travel paths from PS5 were not identified on the site maps for the project, and TRA-1b only includes mitigation measures for the proposed pedestrian promenade between PS5 and the Cancer Center. Currently, the driveway entrances at X Street (east of the Cancer Center) and at 45th Street and Denver Drive (north of the Cancer Center) do not have clearly-defined pedestrian paths of travel to the future PS5 site. We recommend adding the proposed pedestrian promenade across 45th Street to the mitigation measures for TRA-1b, as well as identify proposed pedestrian and bicycle paths of travel to and from PS5 in order to better understand how conflicts between pedestrians, bicyclists, and vehicles can be minimized.
- **Recommendations for TRA-1d:** In addition to providing adequate capacity for shuttle operations, the relocated shuttle stops should be sited near building entrances in order to improve convenience and encourage shuttle use as a viable alternative to single-occupancy driving.
- **Recommendations for TRA-1e:** While the DEIR anticipates low VMT impact due to the project's location in a low VMT area and proximity to transit, current baseline travel patterns and estimated changes to single-occupancy vehicle use (especially given COVID-19 impacts) are unclear. Proximity to transit does not guarantee transit use, and similarly, there is no guarantee of the effectiveness of Transportation Demand Management (TDM) programs. While the TDM

mitigation measures listed under TRA-1e provide a comprehensive suite of options to mitigate potential increases in VMT, we recommend that surveys be conducted with employees and students on an annual basis to better understand baseline travel patterns and perceptions towards transportation alternatives. This can help TDM programs better meet the needs of employees and students, as well as evaluate changes in behavior and perceptions over time.

We recommend adding parking pricing with a portion of the proceeds supporting other TDM programs to the list of strategies under TRA-1e in order to incentivize transportation alternatives. Requiring employees and students to pay for single-occupancy vehicle spaces can help make the incentives for carpool and vanpool options more enticing.

Additionally, we request that the DEIR includes quantifiable VMT reduction goals and metrics by which to evaluate outcomes and effectiveness of TDM programs. For example, a target of 30% of all trips conducted by active transportation and 30% by transit and pooled shared mobility by 2030 would provide a tangible target for VMT reduction, and would be consistent with the City of Sacramento's goals as outlined in the Mayors' Commission on Climate Change Report.¹

Thank you for your consideration of our comments on the California Hospital Tower project. We hope that these recommendations can help encourage active travel and use of alternative transportation modes to reduce air quality and traffic safety impacts of single-occupancy vehicles, both within the project site and in the surrounding neighborhoods.

Sincerely,



Alicia Brown
Project Manager, WALKSacramento

¹ Local Government Commission, Mayors' Commission on Climate Change Final Report:
<https://www.lgc.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Mayors-Commission-on-Climate-Change-Final-Report.pdf>