

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

DISTRICT 11

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August 19, 2016

Mail Log 2016-1507

The Honorable Dianne Jacob
Vice-Chairwoman, Second District
San Diego County Board of Supervisors
1600 Pacific Highway, Room 335
San Diego, CA 92101-2470

Dear Vice-Chairwoman Jacob:

The California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) received your letter dated August 15, 2016, regarding the Jamul Indian Village gaming development (JIV GD) project and related improvements proposed on State Route 94 (SR 94). Your request that Caltrans condition the opening of the JIV GD on the completion of proposed highway improvements makes it clear that there remains a misunderstanding of Caltrans' limited role related to the JIV GD. If San Diego County believed that an authority exists to place conditions on the opening of the JIV GD, the County would have exercised that authority in its Memorandum of Understanding with the Tribe and would have insisted that certain measures be complete before the casino opened.

I know we discussed this last week, but I will again clarify Caltrans' role. An agreement known as a Tribal-State Gaming Compact between the State of California and the Jamul Indian Village (Compact), originally executed on October 8, 1999, and renewed on August 4, 2016, provides the framework for the JIV GD. To proceed with the JIV GD, the Tribe prepared a Final Tribal Environmental Evaluation (FTEE) that was approved in January 2013. As part of the FTEE, transportation impacts were identified at several locations on SR 94. At these locations, mitigation measures were developed to off-set significant traffic impacts on SR 94 associated with the JIV GD. Caltrans, San Diego County, and the public had the opportunity to review and comment on the traffic analysis and proposed mitigation measures. As outlined in the Compact, the JIV must demonstrate a good faith effort to mitigate significant impacts of the project.

Caltrans, in conjunction with consultants for the JIV subsequently prepared an Environmental Impact Report (EIR) that was certified on March 28, 2016, covering the traffic impact mitigation measures on SR 94 proposed by the Tribe. The mitigation measures include access improvements directly adjacent to the JIV GD, and impacts at several other intersections on SR 94.

The improvements identified for SR 94 are outlined below:

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Access Improvements

Widen SR 94 and signalize Daisy Drive and Melody Road for access to the JIV gaming development project.

SR 94/Jamacha Boulevard Intersection

Restripe intersection to provide additional northbound right-turn lane.

SR 94/Jamacha Road Intersection

Widen SR 94 to provide additional eastbound right-turn lane. Restripe intersection to provide third northbound left-turn lane.

SR 94/Steele Canyon Road Intersection

Widen SR 94 to provide a second through lane in each direction.

SR 94/Lyons Valley Road Intersection

Install new traffic signal.

SR 94/Maxfield Road Intersection

Widen SR 94 to provide an acceleration lane for northbound Maxfield traffic heading westbound on SR 94.

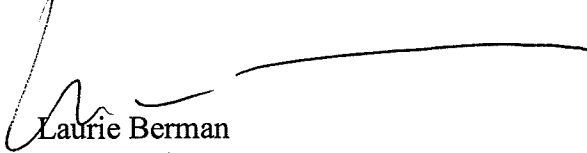
Currently, the access improvements are under construction and will be constructed in two phases. The first phase consists of the widening of SR 94 and construction of a new signalized intersection at Daisy Drive. The limits of this phase go from just south of the Melody Road intersection and extend about 1,500 feet south of Reservation Road. Construction of the first phase is anticipated to be completed in approximately 3 months. The second phase includes improvements to the Melody Road intersection, including widening of SR 94 to provide a second through lane in each direction and installation of a traffic signal. Construction of the second phase improvements is expected to begin in early 2017. The impacts at the other identified intersection locations are considered indirect impacts. Design of these improvements is currently scheduled to be completed in late 2016.

While we understand that these are sensitive issues, the accusatory tone of your letter is perplexing given the history of the County and the community seeking to impede the Tribe's efforts to acquire the right of way to build the traffic mitigation measures identified in the FTEE and EIR.

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Caltrans will continue to review the improvements proposed by JIV that provide for the safe and efficient movement of traffic on SR 94. As is done with all new operational improvements, Caltrans will also monitor the operation of the new traffic signal to optimize the system performance.

Sincerely,



Laurie Berman
District Director