

March 2, 2021

Ms. Nicole Criste
Terra Nova Planning & Research, Inc.
42635 Melanie Place, Suite 101
Palm Desert, CA 92211

SUBJECT: RANCHO MIRAGE HIGHWAY 111 DEALERSHIPS VMT SCREENING

Dear Ms. Nicole Criste:

The following vehicle miles traveled (VMT) screening assessment has been prepared for the proposed Rancho Mirage Highway 111 Dealerships Multi-Tenant development (Project) in the City of Rancho Mirage. The Project consists of five auto dealerships and a centralized service center.

Near term and long-range future traffic conditions with Project land use changes are evaluated in the Rancho Mirage Highway 111 Dealerships Multi-Tenant Development Traffic Analysis (December 18, 2020).

The Project is located southwest of Mirage Rd & State Highway 111 in Rancho Mirage. The City of Rancho Mirage recently adopted VMT screening thresholds consistent with the December 2020 County of Riverside Transportation Guidelines for VMT assessments.

VMT POLICY AND SCREENING

City of Rancho Mirage Resolution 2021-06 aligns the City's VMT analysis policy with SB 743 and the City's goals as set forth in the General Plan Update (2017). The purpose of the policy is to comply with State laws while maintaining the resort residential character of the community. The City's VMT policy establishes VMT as the metric to measure transportation impacts in conformance with CEQA.

In addition, Exhibit A of Resolution 2021-06 sets forth screening criteria under which Projects are not required to submit detailed VMT analysis. This guidance for determination of non-significant VMT impact is primarily intended to avoid unnecessary analysis and findings that would be inconsistent with the intent of SB 743. VMT screening criteria for development projects include the following:

- **Small Projects** with low trip generation based on the County Greenhouse Gas Emissions Screening Tables resulting in a 3,000 metric tons of Carbon Dioxide Equivalent per year screening level threshold. Specific examples include retail buildings with area less than or equal to 60,000 sf, general office buildings less than or equal to 165,000 sf, general light industrial buildings less than or equal to 179,000 sf, and warehouse (unrefrigerated) buildings less than or equal to 208,000 sf,

- **Projects Near High Quality Transit** within a half mile of an existing major transit stop which maintains a service interval frequency of 15 minutes or less during peak commute periods,
- **Local Serving Retail** with no single store on-site exceeding 50,00 sf and determined to be local-serving by the Engineering Department,
- **Affordable Housing** with a high percentage of affordable units as determined by the Planning and Engineering departments,
- **Local Essential Service** such as day care, police or fire facility, medical/dental office building less than 50,000 sf, government offices, or other uses deemed essential by the Engineering Department,
- **Map Based Screening** within an area of development under threshold as shown on screening map allowed by the Engineering Department, and
- **Redevelopment Projects** which replace an existing VMT-generating land use and do not result in a net overall increase in VMT.

PROJECT LOCAL SERVING RETAIL

As noted above, City of Rancho Mirage in Resolution 2021-06 includes Local Serving Retail in the list of project types which can be presumed to have non-significant VMT impacts. In effect, the introduction of new Local-serving retail has been determined to reduce VMT by shortening trips that will occur. This determination can be made for retail buildings which do not exceed 50,000 square feet.

The OPR SB 743 Technical Advisory further addresses local retail uses, as follows:

“By adding retail opportunities into the urban fabric and thereby improving retail destination proximity, local-serving retail development tends to shorten trips and reduce VMT. Thus, lead agencies generally may presume such development creates a less-than-significant transportation impact.”

The proposed Rancho Mirage Highway 111 Dealerships Multi-Tenant development adds auto sales and service opportunities for residents as well as employees and visitors to local businesses.

The Project west parcel includes one auto sales building (approximately 18,000 sf) and two auto service buildings (approximately 6,000 sf and 10,000 sf, respectively). The Project east parcel includes an auto sales building of approximately 40,000sf.

The addition of these auto retail sales and services at this location, with building sizes well under 50,000 sf, will allow residents to interact with local businesses rather than traveling farther to locate the autos they wish to purchase or to service the vehicles they own.

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In conclusion, the screening of this Project as local serving retail is appropriate. If you have any questions regarding this assessment, please contact John Kain at (949) 375-2435 or Marlie Whiteman (714) 585-0574.

Respectfully submitted,

URBAN CROSSROADS, INC.



John Kain, AICP
Principal



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