



**CITY OF NOVATO**  
CALIFORNIA

922 Machin Avenue  
Novato, CA 94945  
415/899-8900  
FAX 415/899-8213  
*novato.org*

Mayor  
Pat Eklund  
Mayor Pro Tem  
Eric Lucan  
Councilmembers  
Denise Athas  
Susan Wernick

City Manager  
Adam McGill

**DATE:** October 5, 2021

**TO:** State Clearinghouse  
1400 10th Street, Suite 222  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
(916) 445-0613

**FROM:** City of Novato

**SUBJECT:** Novato Boulevard Improvements Project  
**Notice of Availability of a Draft Environmental Impact Report  
SCH No. 2018082048**

**LEAD AGENCY:** City of Novato  
Department of Public Works  
Contact: Elisa Sarlatte, Senior Civil Engineer  
922 Machin Avenue  
Novato, California 94945  
(415) 899-8963  
[esarlatte@novato.org](mailto:esarlatte@novato.org)

**PROJECT APPLICANT:** City of Novato  
Department of Public Works

**Notice is hereby given** that the City of Novato, as the Lead Agency, has prepared a Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the proposed Novato Boulevard Improvements Project (proposed project).

**PROJECT LOCATION:** The project area consists of an approximately 0.66-mile segment of Novato Boulevard between Grant Avenue and Diablo Avenue, within the City of Novato, Marin County (County). The project site (herein also referred to as the “project area” or “project corridor”), is defined as the existing Novato Boulevard right-of-way (City right-of-way), and segments of adjacent private parcels that would need to be acquired to accommodate the proposed project (see Figures 1 and 2).

**PROJECT SITE CHARACTERISTICS AND SURROUNDING LAND USES:** Novato Boulevard is one of the major arterial streets in the City of Novato. The segment north of Diablo Avenue is called Novato Boulevard, and the segment south of Diablo Avenue to US 101 is called South Novato Boulevard. Novato Boulevard provides access to and from US 101 at De Long Avenue, Rowland Boulevard and near Redwood Boulevard, and to major commercial/retail centers, residential neighborhoods, and schools. Novato Boulevard runs mostly in a north-south orientation, but the segment between Grant Avenue and Diablo Avenue runs in a northwest and southeast orientation.

The land adjacent to the project corridor is developed with residential, office, and other commercial uses, and with public or quasi-public uses (e.g., Marin County Public library, Our Lady of Loretto Catholic Church) in Novato’s Central Neighborhood. A portion of Novato Creek is located within the project area, east of Novato Boulevard adjacent to Grant Avenue and Diablo Avenue and a portion of Warner Creek is located west of the project area.

**PROJECT BACKGROUND:** The Novato Boulevard/South Novato Boulevard corridor is the major north-south thoroughfare in Novato. It is included in the Metropolitan Transportation Commission's (MTC) Arterial Operations Program and the Transportation Authority of Marin County (TAM) Congestion Management Plan (CMP). The portion of Novato Boulevard that comprises the project corridor, from Grant Avenue to Diablo Avenue, is identified as a principal arterial in the Marin County CMP network. As defined by the City's General Plan, Novato Boulevard is subject to a minimum level of service (LOS) standard (LOS D), and its performance is monitored biennially by TAM. The Novato Boulevard project corridor has a number of existing deficiencies, which are projected to persist if no improvements are made. Over the years, the City has improved all other segments of Novato Boulevard/South Novato Boulevard. The project segment from Grant Avenue to Diablo Avenue remains the last unimproved segment of Novato Boulevard.

An Initial Study for the project, which is also available for review online, was prepared to evaluate the potential environmental impacts of the proposed project and to determine the appropriate level of additional environmental review. Based on the findings of the Initial Study, a Draft EIR was prepared for impacts that need further discussion and/or mitigation beyond that provided in the IS/MND. The Draft EIR includes an evaluation of impacts for the topics of air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, hydrology and water quality, land use and planning, noise, population and housing, transportation, and tribal cultural resources.

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:** The proposed project would include improvements to Novato Boulevard between Grant Avenue and Diablo Avenue to provide two through travel lanes (one in each direction) and a center, two-way left-turn lane between Diablo Avenue and 7th Street-Tamalpais Avenue, a second northbound through-travel lane between Boulevard Terrace and 7th Street-Tamalpais Avenue, and three through-travel lanes (two northbound and one southbound) and a center, two-way left-turn lane between 7th Street-Tamalpais Avenue and Grant Avenue. The proposed project would include other improvements such as new and reconstructed sidewalks, new bike lanes, reconstructed driveways, landscaping and water quality enhancement areas, curb and gutter improvements, and on-street parking. In addition to the proposed roadway improvements, the project would include upgrades to existing City utilities including storm drainage, signals and lighting, and other public agency utilities, such as sanitary sewer and water lines. Acquisition of portions of land along Novato Boulevard would be necessary in order to construct the proposed project. Land acquisitions would be required on the frontage of five parcels, all of which would be between Cypress Avenue and Diablo Avenue.

**PROJECT ENTITLEMENTS AND APPROVALS:** The proposed project would require the following discretionary entitlements from the City of Novato:

- EIR Certification
- Adoption of Findings and Statement of Overriding Considerations
- Use Permit; and
- Grading and Building Permits.

**RESPONSIBLE AGENCIES:** The City requests the following agencies review the analysis within the Draft EIR regarding information relevant to your agency's statutory responsibilities in connection with the proposed project, pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15086. Your agency may need to use the EIR prepared by the City when considering any permits or other approvals that your agency must issue for the proposed project.

- California Department of Fish and Wildlife
- State Water Resources Control Board
- California Regional Water Quality Control Board
- City/County Association of Governments
- Transportation Authority of Marin
- Marin County Flood Control and Water Conservation District

**HAZARDOUS WASTE SITES:** The proposed project is not located on any hazardous waste sites lists enumerated under Section 65965.5 of the Government Code.

**SIGNIFICANT ANTICIPATED ENVIRONMENTAL EFFECTS:** The Draft EIR provides an evaluation of potentially significant impacts of the proposed project and recommends mitigation measures (if necessary) to avoid or reduce impacts. The proposed project would result in a significant unavoidable cumulative impact related to noise.

**DOCUMENT AVAILABILITY:** The Draft EIR is available for review online at: <https://www.novato.org/government/public-works/public-works-projects/novato-boulevard-improvements>. In response to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, paper copies are available for review by pre-scheduled appointment only. If you'd like to make an appointment, or if you require additional assistance, please contact Elisa Sarlatte at [esarlatte@novato.org](mailto:esarlatte@novato.org).

**PUBLIC REVIEW TIMELINE:** The 45-day public review period for the Draft EIR begins on October 6, 2021 and ends on November 19, 2021. The City must receive all comments within this time period. Written comments may also be submitted to the attention of Elisa Sarlatte, Department of Public Works at the following:

City of Novato  
922 Machin Avenue  
Novato, California 94945  
Email: [esarlatte@novato.org](mailto:esarlatte@novato.org)

**QUESTIONS:** If you have any questions about this project, please contact Elisa Sarlatte, City of Novato Department of Public Works by phone at (415) 899-8963 or by email at [esarlatte@novato.org](mailto:esarlatte@novato.org).



Date October 5, 2021