

California Department of Transportation

DISTRICT 4
OFFICE OF TRANSIT AND COMMUNITY PLANNING
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Governor's Office of Planning & Research

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October 12, 2021

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

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Raymond Santiago, Principal Planner
Golden Gate Bridge Highway
and Transportation District
1011 Andersen Drive
San Rafael, CA 94901

Re: San Rafael Transit Center Replacement Project Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR)

Dear Raymond Santiago:

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the San Rafael Transit Center Replacement Project. We are committed to ensuring that impacts to the State's multimodal transportation system and to our natural environment are identified and mitigated to support a safe, sustainable, integrated and efficient transportation system. The following comments are based on our review of the August 2021 DEIR.

Project Understanding

The Golden Gate Bridge, Highway and Transportation District, in coordination with the City of San Rafael, Marin Transit, Transportation Authority of Marin (TAM), and Sonoma-Marín Area Rail Transit (SMART), proposes to replace the transit center in Downtown San Rafael. The proposed San Rafael Transit Center Replacement Project is needed primarily to preserve and enhance the functionality and effectiveness of the transit center following the implementation of the SMART Phase 2 line in Larkspur and the resulting loss of some of the transit center facilities. The new transit center would address short and long-term transit needs as well as improve transit usability for local residents and regional commuters. The project site is adjacent to US-101.

Right of Way (ROW)

The "Under the Freeway" alternative would have the most impact on State facilities and will require a ROW agreement with Caltrans. Please note that there are existing ROW use agreements for parking between 3rd and 4th streets. There is also a Park and

"Provide a safe and reliable transportation network that serves all people and respects the environment"

Ride lot from 3rd Street to Mission Avenue. This alternative may impact the State's ability to conduct future maintenance on US-101. Please clarify under this alternative if the State would have the ability to partially or completely close the transit center to facilitate maintenance activities and who would be responsible for additional costs incurred by this process.

Cultural Resources

Since significant impacts to tribal cultural resources are being reduced to "less than significant" without input from local tribes, Caltrans recommends that further outreach to local Native American tribes be conducted when drafting and implementing Cultural Resources and Tribal Cultural Resources mitigation measures. If this outreach is ongoing, Caltrans recommends details regarding outreach be included in the Cultural Resources and Tribal Cultural Resources section of the EIR.

Hydraulics

Section 3.9.1.2, Environmental Setting, Surface and Groundwater. Please note the document refers to the size of the San Rafael Creek watershed as 11 square miles, and then later as 6.5 square miles. This discrepancy should be resolved.

Lead Agency

As the Lead Agency, the Golden Gate Bridge Highway and Transportation District is responsible for all project mitigation, including any needed improvements to the State Transportation Network (STN). The project's fair share contribution, financing, scheduling, implementation responsibilities and lead agency monitoring should be fully discussed for all proposed mitigation measures.

Equitable Access

If any Caltrans facilities are impacted by the project, those facilities must meet American Disabilities Act (ADA) Standards after project completion. As well, the project must maintain bicycle and pedestrian access during construction. These access considerations support Caltrans' equity mission to provide a safe, sustainable, and equitable transportation network for all users.

Encroachment Permit

Please be advised that any permanent work or temporary traffic control that encroaches onto the ROW requires a Caltrans-issued encroachment permit. As part of the encroachment permit submittal process, you may be asked by the Office of Encroachment Permits to submit a completed encroachment permit application package, digital set of plans clearly delineating the State ROW, digital copy of signed, dated and stamped (include stamp expiration date) traffic control plans, this comment letter, your response to the comment letter, and where applicable, the following items: new or amended Maintenance Agreement (MA), approved Design

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Standard Decision Document (DSDD), approved encroachment exception request, and/or airspace lease agreement. Your application package may be emailed to D4Permits@dot.ca.gov.

To download the permit application and to obtain more information on all required documentation, visit <https://dot.ca.gov/programs/traffic-operations/ep/applications>.

Thank you again for including Caltrans in the environmental review process. Should you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact Lisel Ayon at Lisel.Ayon@dot.ca.gov. Additionally, for future notifications and requests for review of new projects, please email LDIGR-D4@dot.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark Leong". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

MARK LEONG
District Branch Chief
Local Development - Intergovernmental Review

c: State Clearinghouse