

California Department of Transportation

DISTRICT 4
OFFICE OF REGIONAL AND COMMUNITY PLANNING
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Kristina Tierney, Associate Planner
City of Sonoma
No.1 The Plaza
Sonoma, CA 95476

Re: Hotel Project Sonoma – Recirculated Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR)

Dear Kristina Tierney:

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the Hotel Project Sonoma. 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 Local Development Review (LDR) Program reviews land use projects and plans to ensure consistency with our mission and state planning priorities. The following comments are based on our review of the June 2023 Recirculated DEIR.

Project Understanding

The proposed project would demolish the existing commercial buildings and develop a 62-guestroom hotel, 80-seat restaurant and bar, spa with 6 treatment rooms, raised swimming pool veranda, 130 on-site parking spaces, and an 8-unit residential building. This 1.24-acre project site is located adjacent to State Route (SR)-12.

Travel Demand Analysis

With the enactment of Senate Bill (SB) 743, Caltrans is focused on maximizing efficient development patterns, innovative travel demand reduction strategies, and multimodal improvements. For more information on how Caltrans assesses Transportation Impact Studies, please review Caltrans' Transportation Impact Study Guide ([link](#)).

The DEIR recognizes that this project would have significant and unavoidable Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) impacts. To help mitigate VMT impact, the applicant may consider developing a partnership with the city and Sonoma County Transit to provide free or discounted shuttle and transit service to visitors that would connect to most visited tourist destinations during peak periods of the year. Such partnership could also be applied to employees in combination with the employee focused VMT mitigation measures identified on page 4.13-19 and 4.13-20 to provide non-motorized vehicle commute options.

The applicant may consider providing electric bicycles for the bike share program mentioned for hotel guests. For employees, in addition to providing bicycle trip-end facilities, the applicant may also explore avenues of partnering with the city to create a rebated or discounted electric bicycle program to encourage employees to use electric bicycles for daily commute.

Construction-Related Impacts

Potential impacts to the State Right-of-Way (ROW) from project-related temporary access points should be analyzed. Mitigation for significant impacts due to construction and noise should be identified. Project work that requires movement of oversized or excessive load vehicles on State roadways requires a transportation permit that is issued by Caltrans. To apply, please visit Caltrans Transportation Permits ([link](#)).

Prior to construction, coordination may be required with Caltrans to develop a Transportation Management Plan (TMP) to reduce construction traffic impacts to the State Transportation Network (STN).

Lead Agency

As the Lead Agency, the City of Sonoma is responsible for all project mitigation, including any needed improvements to the 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 Caltrans' 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 Caltrans' 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 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 obtain information about the most current encroachment permit process and to download the permit application, please visit Caltrans Encroachment Permits ([link](#)).

Thank you again for including Caltrans in the environmental review process. Should you have any questions regarding this letter or future early coordination opportunities or project referrals, please contact LDR-D4@dot.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Luo Yunsheng". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Luo" being more prominent and the last name "Yunsheng" following in a similar style.

YUNSHENG LUO
Acting District Branch Chief
Local Development Review

c: State Clearinghouse