

California Department of Transportation



Governor's Office of Planning & Research

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STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

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Payal Bhagat, Principal Planner
701 Laurel Street
Menlo Park, CA 94025

Re: Commonwealth Building 3 Project Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR)

Dear Payal Bhagat:

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the Commonwealth Building 3 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 July 2022 draft EIR.

Project Understanding

The project proposes to construct approximately 249,500-gross-square-foot (gsf) office building, an approximately 404,000 gsf parking structure accommodating 1,340 parking spaces, and provide new landscaping and a 34,000 square feet (sf) privately owned/ publicly accessible open space (referred to in this document as Jefferson Park) as part of the Commonwealth Building 3 Project. The Project site is within a portion of the existing Commonwealth Corporate Center (Campus Property) at 162 and 164 Jefferson Drive, added to the Campus Property in 2015 as part of the Commonwealth Corporate Center Project.

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 ().

Caltrans' acknowledges that the project Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) analysis and significance determination are undertaken in a manner consistent with the Office of Planning and Research's (OPR) Technical Advisory. Due to increased amount of projected vehicle miles traveled in this Project, the VMT impacts are found to be *less than significant with mitigation*, as indicated in the environmental document.

Active Transportation and Transportation Demand Management (TDM)

To support the meaningful implementation of Transportation Demand Management (TDM) measures put forth in the TDM plan, please consider allocating and demarcating space for active transportation users wherever possible upon the paseos and paths proposed. Specifically, pathing for bicyclists can be demarcated through distinct paver color, signage, paint, or any combination of these. This strategy provides a prominent visual message that bicycling is valued and has dedicated space on-site. To the best extent possible, extend such pathing to the nearest transit, shuttle stops, and connecting bicycle facilities to underscore the active transportation network.

Consider increasing the amount of bike storage, for both Class I and Class II type storage. The Project's bike parking count currently lists existing bike parking from Building 1 and 2 as part of the Building 3 total proposed bike parking. However, if Building 3 is adding to rather than replacing employees from Buildings 1 and 2, the result may be inadequate bicycle parking/storage. Additionally, consider making supplementary Class I bike storage available to visitors, not just employees. It affords a higher sense of security to visitors and employees alike to provide more secure bike storage in plain sight and encourages more people to choose active transportation methods.

As an additional TDM measure, consider partnering with a public or private bike share program to provide shared bikes, as well as docks on premises, to encourage visitors and employees alike to bike without requirement of their own personal bicycle. This encourages use of active transportation for short-distance trips.

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To support the use of carpool as stated in TDM Plan in Appendix 3.1-2, please consider reserving and signing (via curb color and posted signs) passenger loading zones for carpools and vanpools at the main building entrance. Appendix 3.1-2 states:

“Allowing carpool participants to park near the building entrances and requiring drive-alone commuters to park further away is a common TDM measure. Preferential parking spaces for carpools provide a prominent visual message to employees that alternative transportation is valued. If the spaces are under-utilized, they may be made available to single-occupant vehicles after peak commute times.” Reserved loading zones and signs underscore this commitment.

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.

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

Sincerely,

MARK LEONG

District Branch Chief

Local Development Review

c: State Clearinghouse