

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

DISTRICT 4

OFFICE OF TRANSIT AND COMMUNITY PLANNING

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*Making Conservation
a California Way of Life.***Governor's Office of Planning & Research****February 23, 2021****STATE CLEARINGHOUSE**

February 23, 2021

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GTS #: 04-SCL-2020-00852

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Co/Rt/Pm: SCL/VAR/VAR

Coty Sifuentes-Winter, Senior Resource Management Specialist
Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District
330 Distel Circle
Los Altos, CA 94022

Re: Wildland Fire Resiliency Program – Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR)

Dear Coty Sifuentes-Winter:

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the 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 January 2022 Draft DEIR.

Project Understanding

The Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District proposes to implement a Wildland Fire Resiliency Program to comprehensively direct management prior to, during, and after a wildland fire event. The proposed Program would provide guidance for ecological-sensitive management of vegetation to reduce fire intensity and severity. The project area passes through multiple State highway facilities.

Landscape Architecture

Eligible and officially designated State Scenic Highways are within and adjacent to the project area. Please ensure activities implemented are compatible with scenic resource protection when possible. The project may result in unavoidable impacts to scenic areas and public views, as well as potential damage to scenic resources within or adjacent to the State Right-of-Way (ROW). Please consider the visual impacts of proposed improvements and mitigations relative to highway users.

Tree removal within the State ROW will require approval from the District Landscape Architect through the encroachment permit process. Trees within the State ROW damaged or removed during construction are required to be replaced per Caltrans Replacement Highway Planting Policy.

In addition, proposed work included in the Wildland Fire Resiliency Program appears to be adjacent to the State ROW. It is recommended to show the ROW symbol on project plans.

Construction-Related Impacts

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, visit: <https://dot.ca.gov/programs/traffic-operations/transportation-permits>. 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 Midpeninsula Regional Open Space 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.

Encroachment Permit

Please be advised that any permanent work or temporary traffic control that encroaches onto the State ROW requires a Caltrans-issued encroachment permit. If any Caltrans facilities are impacted by the project, those facilities must meet American Disabilities Act (ADA) Standards after project completion. 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 Standard Decision Document (DSDD), approved encroachment exception request, and/or airspace lease agreement. Your application package may be emailed to D4Permits@dot.ca.gov.

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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 Yunsheng Luo at Yunsheng.Luo@dot.ca.gov. Additionally, for future notifications and requests for review of new projects, please contact LDIGR-D4@dot.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark Leong". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal tail stroke.

MARK LEONG
District Branch Chief
Local Development - Intergovernmental Review

c: State Clearinghouse