

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

DISTRICT 4

OFFICE OF TRANSIT AND COMMUNITY PLANNING

P.O. BOX 23660, MS-10D
OAKLAND, CA 94623-0660
PHONE (510) 286-5528
TTY 711
www.dot.ca.gov

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Governor's Office of Planning & Research

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STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

August 20, 2020

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30.628~30.777

Trevor Hawkes, Planner III
County of Napa
1195 Third Street, Suite 210
Napa, CA 94559

Inn at the Abbey – Notice of Preparation (NOP)

Dear Trevor Hawkes:

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the Inn at the Abbey. 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 2020 NOP.

Project Understanding

The proposed project would demolish three structures (a restaurant, a commercial building, and a 5-room motel) and redevelop the site with a 79-room hotel, retail, and hotel lounge space, a spa with treatment rooms, a main pool and a small plunge pool, a parking garage, a rooftop terrace, a fitness room, an outdoor lawn and gathering space, back-of-house uses, and on-site employee housing. Overall, the project would involve 10,048 square feet (s.f.) of demolition and 78,481 s.f. of new construction. Current uses on the project site have 55 employees and the project is expected to add 48 new employees for the new hotel use, for a total of 103 employees.

The 15-acre project site is located approximately one-half mile north of the City of St. Helena in unincorporated Napa County, immediately adjacent to State Route (SR)-29.

Highway Operations

Caltrans agrees with the recommendation in the Traffic Impact Study that Driveway 2 should be a Right-In, Right-Out driveway. However, please explain why this restriction does not apply to Driveway 1 in the report.

Additionally, ensure that all driveways on State routes must be constructed in accordance with Caltrans standards. Early coordination with Caltrans is strongly recommended for any mitigations to modify and/or restripe the intersection of SR-29/Lodi Lane.

Landscape Architecture

Landscaping around Lodi Lane shall adhere to Caltrans Highway Design Manual (HDM) standards for sight distance. Please refer to <https://dot.ca.gov/programs/design/manual-highway-design-manual-hdm> for more information.

Additionally, this project is located within an eligible State Scenic Highway. The development as mentioned in the NOP may affect the eligibility of this designation.

Travel Demand Analysis

Please note that a travel demand analysis that provides a Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) analysis will be required as part of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) process.) With the enactment of Senate Bill (SB) 743, Caltrans is focusing on transportation infrastructure that supports smart growth and efficient development to ensure alignment with State policies using efficient development patterns, innovative travel demand reduction strategies, multimodal improvements, and VMT as the primary transportation impact metric. The travel demand analysis should include:

- A vicinity map, regional location map, and site plan clearly showing project access in relation to the State Transportation Network (STN). Ingress and egress for all project components should be clearly identified. Clearly identify the State right-of-way (ROW). Project driveways, local roads and intersections, car/bike parking, and transit facilities should be mapped.
- A VMT analysis pursuant to the Office of Planning and Research's Guidelines. Projects that result in automobile VMT per capita above the threshold of significance for existing (i.e. baseline) city-wide or regional values for similar land use types may indicate a significant impact. If necessary, mitigation for increasing VMT should be identified. Mitigation should support the use of transit and active transportation modes. Potential mitigation measures that include the requirements of other agencies such as Caltrans are fully enforceable through permit conditions, agreements, or other legally-binding instruments under the control of the City.
- A schematic illustration of walking, biking and auto conditions at the project site and study area roadways. Potential safety issues for all road users should be identified and fully mitigated.

- The project's primary and secondary effects on pedestrians, bicycles, travelers with disabilities and transit performance should be evaluated, including countermeasures and trade-offs resulting from mitigating VMT increases. Access to pedestrians, bicycle, and transit facilities must be maintained.
- Clarification of the intensity of events/receptions to be held at the location and how the associated travel demand and VMT will be mitigated.

Vehicle Trip Reduction

Based on the Initial Study, the project is expected to have potentially significant VMT impacts due to the additional worker and commute trips and guest trips to and from the project site. To mitigate the potentially significant VMT, the project should include a robust Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Program to reduce VMT and greenhouse gas emissions. Such measures are critical to facilitating efficient site access. The measures listed below can promote smart mobility and reduce regional VMT.

- Project design to encourage walking, bicycling and transit access;
- Transit subsidies on an ongoing basis;
- Ten percent vehicle parking reductions;
- Charging stations and designated parking spaces for electric vehicles;
- Carpool and clean-fuel parking spaces;
- Designated parking spaces for a car share program;
- Unbundled parking;
- Showers, changing rooms and clothing lockers for employees that commute via active transportation;
- Emergency Ride Home program;
- Employee transportation coordination;
- Secured bicycle storage facilities;
- Fix-it bicycle repair station(s);
- Bicycle route mapping resources;
- Participation/Formation in/of a Transportation Management Association (TMA) in partnership with other developments in the area; and
- Aggressive trip reduction targets with Lead Agency monitoring and enforcement.

TDM programs should be documented with annual monitoring reports by a TDM coordinator to demonstrate effectiveness. If the project does not achieve the VMT reduction goals, the reports should also include next steps to take in order to achieve those targets. For additional TDM options, please refer to the Federal Highway Administration's *Integrating Demand Management into the Transportation Planning Process: A Desk Reference* (Chapter 8). The reference is

available online at:

<http://www.ops.fhwa.dot.gov/publications/fhwahop12035/fhwahop12035.pdf>.

Multimodal Planning

The project's primary and secondary effects on pedestrians, bicyclists, travelers with disabilities, and transit users should be evaluated in the DEIR, including countermeasures and trade-offs resulting from mitigating VMT increases. Access for pedestrians and bicyclists to transit facilities must be maintained.

Although there may not be changes to existing roads, the potential significant amount of vehicular trips adjacent to a major bike and pedestrian route (The Napa Vine Trail) would result in conflicts between motorized vehicles and pedestrian and bicyclists, which will also require mitigation.

Please note that the Napa Valley Trail Project runs adjacent to this project frontage on SR-29 and therefore, these projects will need to be coordinated during construction and as part of the final design phase. Please contact Caltrans Project Manager for Napa County, Ahmad Rahimi at ahmad.rahimi@dot.ca.gov for project coordination.

Lead Agency

As the Lead Agency, the County of Napa 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.

Caltrans recommends that the Lead Agency consider a fair share contribution to the Napa Valley Vine Trail: St. Helena to Calistoga section.

Encroachment Permit

Please be advised that any permanent work or temporary traffic control that encroaches onto the 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, six (6) sets of plans clearly delineating the State ROW, six (6) copies 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

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encroachment exception request, and/or airspace lease agreement.

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 stroke at the end.

Mark Leong
District Branch Chief
Local Development - Intergovernmental Review

cc: State Clearinghouse