

**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

8/31/2020

Governor's Office of Planning &amp; Research

**Aug 31 2020**

*Making Conservation  
a California Way of Life.*

**STATE CLEARINGHOUSE**

August 31, 2020

SCH # 2020070499  
GTS # 04-NAP-2020-00205  
GTS ID: 20071  
Co/Rt/Pm: NAP/29/30.3

Jason Hade, Principal Planner  
County of Napa  
1195 Third Street, Suite 210  
Napa, CA 94559

**Ballentine Vineyards Use Permit Major Modification – Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND)**

Dear Jason Hade:

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the Ballentine Vineyards Use Permit Major Modification 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 2020 IS/MND

**Project Understanding**

The Ballentine Vineyards is located immediately adjacent to State Route (SR)-29 at 2820 St. Helena Highway in Agricultural Preserve (AP) zoning district. This project requests approval of a major modification to the previously approved use permit to allow the following activities:

- Increase maximum annual permitted wine production from 50,000 to 125,000 gallons;
- Increase daily tastings from 21 persons per day, (147 maximum per week), to 40 persons per day on weekdays and 95 persons per day on weekends (390 visitors maximum per week);
- Modify an existing visitation and marketing program from 6 events per year (325 guests) to 112 events per year (3,400 guests);
- Increase the number of employees from 11 to 15;
- Increase parking spaces from 15 to 37 spaces and provide a minimum of

- two on-site bicycle parking spaces;
- Construct a 3,500 square feet (s.f.) freestanding covered crush pad and outdoor work area; remodel the existing tasting room including the addition of a 1,200 s.f. outdoor tasting area adjacent to the tasting room; construct a 240 s.f. attached ADA compliant restroom, 215 s.f. attached private tasting room, 240 s.f. attached employee break room, and a 225 s.f. pomace bin; and
- Modify an existing visitation and marketing program.

### **Travel Demand Analysis**

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. Caltrans commends the lead agency in developing the Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Plan to reduce employee and guest VMT, therefore working towards meeting the State's goal of a 15-percent reduction. The proposed measures identified in the TDM plan should be documented with annual monitoring reports to demonstrate effectiveness.

According to the Office of Planning & Research's (OPR) Technical Advisory, projects that generate fewer than 110 trips per day may be presumed to have a less-than-significant transportation impact if there is no substantial evidence indicating a project would generate a potentially significant level of VMT, or if it is consistent with a Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS) or general plan. Per the Traffic Impact Study, because the proposed project would be expected to generate 74 net new daily trips, it may be assumed to have a less-than-significant transportation impact and therefore, potentially exempt from the VMT analysis. Caltrans encourages the Lead Agency to provide further justification for the project's exempt status in alignment with OPR Technical Advisory in the IS/MND.

### **Traffic Safety**

In addition to the proposed mitigations, the acceleration/deceleration lanes should be provided to allow trucks to safely merge onto SR-29.

### **Hydraulics**

The existing drainage pattern should be maintained. If any runoff from the project site drains toward State Right-of-Way (ROW), it should be metered to the

pre-construction level and an analysis of the pre- and post-construction flow would be required.

The IS/MND states that "The majority of the site lies within the boundaries of the 100 and 500-year flood hazard boundaries." However, based on the project site information provided, it appears that the project site is entirely within a special flood hazard area, Zone AE with a base flood elevation just below 136 feet.

### **Project Coordination**

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. Please contact Caltrans Project Manager for Napa County, Ahmad Rahimi at [ahmad.rahimi@dot.ca.gov](mailto:ahmad.rahimi@dot.ca.gov) for project coordination and further information.

### **Lead Agency**

As the Lead Agency, the County of Napa 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.

The IS/MND indicates that the additional of proposed project trips to directional peak hour volumes on SR-29 would represent a significant impact, in addition to the 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.

### **Construction-Related Impacts & Encroachment Permit**

Please be advised that any permanent work or temporary traffic control that encroaches onto the ROW requires a Caltrans-issued encroachment permit. Note that potential impacts to the State ROW from project-related temporary access points should be analyzed. Project work that requires movement of oversized or excessive load vehicles on state roadways requires a transportation permit that is issued by Caltrans. Prior to construction, coordination may be required with Caltrans to develop a Transportation Management Plan (TMP) to reduce construction traffic impacts to the STN. To apply, visit: <https://dot.ca.gov/programs/traffic-operations/transportation-permits>.

If any Caltrans facilities are impacted by the project, those facilities must meet American Disabilities Act (ADA) Standards after project completion. Any driveways on State ROW must be in accordance with Caltrans Standard Plans.

Jason Hade, Principal Planner  
August 31, 2020  
Page 4

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 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](mailto:Yunsheng.Luo@dot.ca.gov). Additionally, for future notifications and requests for review of new projects, please contact [LDIGR-D4@dot.ca.gov](mailto:LDIGR-D4@dot.ca.gov).

Sincerely,



Mark Leong  
District Branch Chief  
Local Development - Intergovernmental Review

cc: State Clearinghouse