

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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Governor's Office of Planning & Research

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*Making Conservation
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STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

September 14, 2020

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Christian Murdock, Senior Planner
City of Pacifica
1800 Francisco Boulevard
Pacifica, CA 94044

General Plan Update and Sharp Park Specific Plan, City of Pacifica – Notice of Preparation (NOP)

Dear Christian Murdock:

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the General Plan Update 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 NOP.

Project Understanding

The City is preparing an update to their General Plan and an additional specific plan for Sharp Park with a planning horizon of 2040. The General Plan Update will include lands in the City's sphere of influence, as yet unincorporated. This specific plan will address Sharp Park's main commercial street. The City is accessible from State Route (SR)-1, located eight miles south of Downtown San Francisco.

Caltrans commends and supports the proposed project's intention to focus on non-capacity increasing Infrastructure Improvements to SR-1. We support this stance as a means to encourage sustainable development patterns and lower greenhouse gas emissions. Caltrans also commends the focus on Diversity of Housing and planning for transit-oriented developments.

The [Caltrans Transportation Impact Study Guide \(TISG\)](#) identifies techniques that

support CEQA streamlining of housing projects, including the development of residential projects composed of 100 percent or near-100 percent affordable housing and those located in an infill location and in Transit Priority Areas are also subject to CEQA streamlining, and thus identified to have less-than-significant-impacts on VMT. We encourage the City to refer to the Caltrans TISG as a means to identify opportunities to achieve reductions in VMT.

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 requests the following:

- Clarification of how the proposed General Plan updates may result in achieving VMT reduction. If the City has not done so, VMT reduction thresholds should be established for future projects. This plan should support the use of transit and active transportation modes, using techniques such as mitigation measures. 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 in the project and study area roadways. Potential safety issues for all road users should be identified and fully mitigated.
- Description of the intensity of events to be held in this area and how the associated travel demand and VMT will be mitigated.

Multimodal Planning

The project's primary and secondary effects on pedestrians, bicyclists, travelers with disabilities, and transit users should be evaluated, including countermeasures and trade-offs resulting from mitigating VMT increases. Access for pedestrians and bicyclists to transit facilities must be maintained. These smart growth approaches should be consistent with MTC's Regional Transportation Plan/SCS and would help meet Caltrans Strategic Management Plan targets.

Vehicle Trip Reduction

From Caltrans' *Smart Mobility 2010: A Call to Action for the New Decade*, the project site is identified as **Place Type 2: Close-In Compact Communities** where location efficiency factors, such as community design and regional accessibility are moderate. Given the place, type and size of the project, the EIR should include a robust Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Program to reduce VMT and greenhouse gas emissions from future development in this area. The measures listed below have been quantified by California Air Pollution Control Officers Association (CAPCOA) and shown to have different efficiencies reducing regional VMT:

- Project design to encourage mode shift like walking, bicycling and transit access;
- Transit and trip planning resources such as a commute information kiosk;
- Real-time transit information systems;
- Transit access supports (including bus shelter improvements and sidewalk/crosswalk safety facilities);
- New development vehicle parking reductions;
- Implementation of a neighborhood electric vehicle (EV) network, including designated parking spaces for EVs;
- Designated parking spaces for a car share program;
- Unbundled parking;
- Wayfinding and 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. Also, reducing parking supply can encourage active forms of transportation, reduce regional VMT, and lessen future transportation impacts on State facilities.

We encourage the Lead Agency to reach out to us for further information about TDM measures and a Caltrans toolbox for implementing these measures in land use projects. There are also additional references on this matter, including the Federal Highway Administration's *Integrating Demand Management into the Transportation Planning Process: A Desk Reference* (Chapter 8), available here: <http://www.ops.fhwa.dot.gov/publications/fhwahop12035/fhwahop12035.pdf>.

Transportation Impact Fees

We encourage a sufficient allocation of fair share contributions toward multimodal and regional transit improvements to fully mitigate cumulative impacts to regional transportation. Caltrans welcomes the opportunity to work with the City and local partners to secure the funding for needed mitigation. Traffic mitigation- or cooperative agreements are examples of such measures.

Please identify in text and graphics existing and proposed improvements for the pedestrian, bicycle, and transit networks. The City should estimate the cost of needed improvements, expansion, and maintenance for the Plan area, as well as identify viable sources of funding, correlated with the pace of improvements, and a scheduled plan for implementation along with the DEIR.

Thank you again for including Caltrans in the environmental review process. Should you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact Laurel Sears at laurel.sears@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 extending to the right.

Mark Leong
District Branch Chief
Local Development - Intergovernmental Review

cc: State Clearinghouse