

# California Department of Transportation

DISTRICT 4  
OFFICE OF REGIONAL AND COMMUNITY PLANNING  
P.O. BOX 23660, MS-10D | OAKLAND, CA 94623-0660  
[www.dot.ca.gov](http://www.dot.ca.gov)



August 9, 2022

Governor's Office of Planning & Research

**Aug 09 2022**

**STATE CLEARINGHOUSE**

SCH #: 2021020064  
GTS #: 04-SM-2021-00446  
GTS ID: 21933  
Co/Rt/Pm: SM/101/22.022

Billy Gross, Principal Planner  
315 Maple Avenue  
South San Francisco, CA 94083

## **Re: South San Francisco General Plan Update, Zoning Code Amendments, and Climate Action Plan Program Environmental Impact Report**

Dear Billy Gross:

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the General Plan Update, Zoning Code Amendments and Climate Action Plan 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 proposed project includes the implementation of the South San Francisco General Plan Update, Zoning Code Amendments, and Climate Action Plan which are collectively referred to as the proposed project in this document. The General Plan Update anticipates approximately 14,312 net new housing units and approximately 42,297 net new employment opportunities by 2040. The Proposed Land Use Map designates the general location, distribution, and extent of land uses within the Planning Area and identifies proposed land use designations for each parcel within the City of South San Francisco and within the City's SOI. The updated 2022 Climate Action Plan (CAP) includes a community-wide inventory of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and identifies strategies and measures to reduce GHG emissions generated by existing and future uses in the City.

### **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 ([link](#)).

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. However, due to the increased amount of projected vehicle miles traveled, this project will have significant and unavoidable impacts to the transportation network as indicated in the environmental document. The Plan presents an expected jobs to housing ratio of 3.53 by 2040. This jobs to housing ratio results in greater VMT and greenhouse gas emissions and may negatively impact local and State climate goals and the transportation network. Increasing the housing development in the two Priority Development Areas of the City (the Downtown PDA and the El Camino Real PDA) can support lower VMT and mitigate impacts from the Plan.

### **Active Transportation**

Class IV facilities, along with Class I paths, are typically the lowest-stress facilities for users of all ages and abilities. It is noted that the City currently has 0 miles of Class IV facilities. While the City emphasizes low-stress active transportation networks and connectivity in this project, Caltrans encourages prioritizing the implementation of a network of low-stress bikeways so that this number increases. Prioritization and target build horizons of Class IV facilities should be included in both policy and action in this General Plan update. Please reach out to Caltrans for coordination as needed to support this implementation.

MOB-4.1.4 and MOB-4.2 mention incorporating first/last-mile connections and micro-mobility as an innovation where feasible. Caltrans encourages a more robust prioritization of micro-mobility, which may realize more mitigation of projected VMT impacts. Scooters, bikeshare, e-bikes, e-mopeds, and infrastructure to store, dock, and support these devices can successfully shift users from single occupancy vehicle trips to non-polluting transportation modes. As with all transport, a well-established multi-modal network provides compounding positive effects. Caltrans encourages multi-modal goals, policies and projects that support safe and equitable access for all users, motorized and non-motorized, within the City's travelshed. By emphasizing micro-mobility, low-stress bikeways, and a lower jobs to housing ratio, it will help mitigate negative impacts of the projected VMT increases.

### **Transportation Operations**

Caltrans appreciates the City working with Caltrans to develop improvement measures for freeway off-ramps and adjacent intersections that help manage offramp queues related to safety. When conducting safety reviews for proposed land use projects and plans affecting the State Highway System, please refer to the [Caltrans Traffic Safety Bulletin](#).

### **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](mailto:LDR-D4@dot.ca.gov).

Sincerely,



MARK LEONG  
District Branch Chief  
Local Development Review

c: State Clearinghouse