

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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Governor's Office of Planning & Research

Mar 29 2021

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

March 29, 2021

11-SD-78

PM VAR

City of Vista Housing Element 2021 - 2029

NEG/SCH#2021030046

Mr. Michael Ressler
City of Vista
200 Civic Center Drive
Vista, CA 92084

Dear Mr. Ressler:

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the Negative Declaration for the City of Vista Housing Element 2021 – 2029 located near State Route 78 (SR-78). The mission of Caltrans is to provide a safe, sustainable, integrated and efficient transportation system to enhance California's economy and livability. The Local Development-Intergovernmental Review (LD-IGR) Program reviews land use projects and plans to ensure consistency with our mission and state planning priorities.

Caltrans has the following comments:

Traffic Impact Study

Section XVI Transportation/Traffic paragraph 1 under Discussion mentioned that "...all new residential development is subject to its own CEQA process....The City would continue to examine individual housing development proposals, as they are submitted, to determine whether any site-specific approaches are required to address particular traffic concerns." Caltrans would like to have an opportunity to review Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) and traffic studies for any developments near or impacting the State Highway System.

Complete Streets and Mobility Network

Caltrans views all transportation improvements as opportunities to improve safety, access and mobility for all travelers in California and recognizes bicycle, pedestrian and transit modes as integral elements of the transportation system. Caltrans supports improved transit accommodation through the provision of Park and Ride facilities, improved bicycle and pedestrian access and safety improvements, signal prioritization for transit, bus on shoulders, ramp improvements, or other enhancements that promotes a complete and integrated transportation system. Early coordination with Caltrans, in locations that may affect both Caltrans and the City of Vista is encouraged.

To reduce greenhouse gas emissions and achieve California's Climate Change target, Caltrans is implementing Complete Streets and Climate Change policies into State Highway Operations and Protection Program (SHOPP) projects to meet multi-modal mobility needs. Caltrans looks forward to working with the City to evaluate potential Complete Streets projects.

Land Use and Smart Growth

Caltrans recognizes there is a strong link between transportation and land use. Development can have a significant impact on traffic and congestion on State transportation facilities. In particular, the pattern of land use can affect both local vehicle miles traveled and the number of trips. Caltrans supports collaboration with local agencies to work towards a safe, functional, interconnected, multi-modal transportation network integrated through applicable "smart growth" type land use planning and policies.

The City should continue to coordinate with Caltrans to implement necessary improvements at intersections and interchanges where the agencies have joint or adjoining jurisdiction.

Environmental

Caltrans welcomes the opportunity to be a Responsible Agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), as we have some discretionary authority of a portion of the project that is in Caltrans' R/W through the form of an encroachment permit process. We look forward to the coordination of our

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efforts to ensure that Caltrans can adopt the alternative and/or mitigation measure for our R/W. We would appreciate meeting with you to discuss the elements of the EIR that Caltrans will use for our subsequent environmental compliance.

An encroachment permit will be required for any work within the Caltrans' R/W prior to construction. As part of the encroachment permit process, the applicant must provide approved final environmental documents for this project, corresponding technical studies, and necessary regulatory and resource agency permits. Specifically, CEQA determination or exemption. The supporting documents must address all environmental impacts within the Caltrans' R/W and address any impacts from avoidance and/or mitigation measures.

We recommend that this project specifically identifies and assesses potential impacts caused by the project or impacts from mitigation efforts that occur within Caltrans R/W that includes impacts to the natural environment, infrastructure (highways/roadways/on- and off-ramps) and appurtenant features (lighting/signs/guardrail/slopes). Caltrans is interested in any additional mitigation measures identified for the NEG.

Cultural Resources:

As part of brief background research, a review of cultural resource sensitivities was conducted. According to the results of this research; there are no sites within or near Caltrans Right of Way that the project may impact. Therefore, potential for encountering any cultural resources during construction of this project is low.

Environmental Engineering:

It is possible that conditions could vary between or beyond the data evaluated. Caltrans Environmental Engineering makes no other representation, guarantee or warranty, express or implied, regarding the services, communication (oral or written), report, opinion, or instrument of service provided.

It should be recognized that definition and evaluation of geologic and environmental conditions are a difficult and inexact science. Judgments leading to conclusions and recommendations are generally made with

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incomplete knowledge of the subsurface conditions present due to the limitations of data from field studies. Although risk can never be eliminated, more-detailed and extensive studies yield more information, which may help understand and manage the level of risk.

Right-of-Way

Per Business and Profession Code 8771, perpetuation of survey monuments by a licensed land surveyor is required, if they are being destroyed by any construction.

Any work performed within Caltrans R/W will require discretionary review and approval by Caltrans and an encroachment permit will be required for any work within the Caltrans R/W prior to construction.

Additional information regarding encroachment permits may be obtained by contacting the Caltrans Permits Office at (619) 688-6158 or by visiting the website at <https://dot.ca.gov/programs/traffic-operations/ep>. Early coordination with Caltrans is strongly advised for all encroachment permits.

If you have any questions, please contact Kimberly Dodson, of the Caltrans Development Review Branch, at (619) 985-1587 or by e-mail sent to Kimberly.Dodson@dot.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

Maurice A. Eaton

MAURICE EATON, Branch Chief
Local Development and Intergovernmental Review