

**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

DISTRICT 4

OFFICE OF TRANSIT AND COMMUNITY PLANNING

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*Making Conservation  
a California Way of Life.***Governor's Office of Planning & Research****Apr 27 2021**

April 27, 2021

**STATE CLEARINGHOUSE**SCH #: 2021030563  
GTS #: 04-ALA-2021-00580  
GTS ID: 22404  
Co/Rt/Pm: AL/61/20.13Andrew Thomas, Director  
City of Alameda  
Planning, Building and Transportation Department  
2263 Santa Clara Avenue, Room 190  
Alameda, CA 94501**Re: Alameda General Plan 2040 + Notice of Preparation (NOP)**

Dear Andrew Thomas:

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the Alameda General Plan 2040. 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 March 2021 NOP.

**Project Understanding**

Alameda General Plan 2040 is an update to the Alameda General Plan, which was last comprehensively updated in 1991. The update does not include an update to the Housing Element, which will be updated in 2022. The General Plan and the associated policies and actions in each element provide a policy framework to guide future decisions to achieve four overarching themes: 1) to promote a healthy, equitable and inclusive city, 2) to protect the environment, respond to the climate crisis and meet regional responsibilities, 3) to enhance mobility and accessibility, and 4) to preserve and enhance Alameda's distinctive character.

**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.

Please include a Vehicle Miles Travelled (VMT) analysis pursuant to the City's guidelines. If the City has no adopted baseline presently, please use the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR)'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.

Additionally, please evaluate the project's primary and secondary effects on pedestrians, bicycles, travelers with disabilities and transit performance, including countermeasures and trade-offs resulting from mitigating VMT increases.

### **Mitigation Strategies**

Location efficiency factors, including community design and regional accessibility, influence a project's impact on the environment. Using Caltrans' *Smart Mobility 2010: A Call to Action for the New Decade*, the proposed project site is identified as a Close-In Compact Community where community design is good and regional accessibility is strong.

Given the place, type and size of the project, the DEIR should include a robust Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Program to reduce VMT and greenhouse gas emissions from future developments in the plan 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 access supporting infrastructure (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;
- Aggressive trip reduction targets with Lead Agency monitoring and enforcement;
- VMT Banking and/or Exchange program;
- Increased density;
- Increased location efficiency;
- Increased mixed-use development;
- Increased transit accessibility;
- Integration of affordable housing;
- Location of project near bicycle network;
- Pedestrian network improvements;
- Bus rapid transit.

Using a combination of strategies appropriate to the projects and the site can reduce VMT, along with related impacts on the environment and State facilities. 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 in order to achieve those targets.

Please reach out to Caltrans for further information about TDM measures and a toolbox for implementing these measures in land use projects. Additionally, 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>.

### **Lead Agency**

As the Lead Agency, the City of Alameda 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.

### **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.

Andrew Thomas, Director

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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](mailto:laurel.sears@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,

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

c: State Clearinghouse