

California Department of Transportation

DISTRICT 4
OFFICE OF TRANSIT AND COMMUNITY PLANNING
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www.dot.ca.gov



Governor's Office of Planning & Research

July 22, 2022

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STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

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Jennifer Carman, Development Services Director
City of Morgan Hill
17575 Peak Avenue
Morgan Hill, CA 95037

Re: Cochrane Commons Phase II Project Subsequent Environmental Impact Report (SEIR)

Dear Jennifer Carman:

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the Cochrane Commons Phase II 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 June 2022 SEIR.

Project Understanding

The project would involve construction of Phase II of the Cochrane Commons development on the undeveloped site adjacent to the completed Phase I. The Phase II project currently proposed is different from the originally proposed Phase II that was analyzed in the 2005 EIR. The project would consist of 498 residential units, consisting of a mix of homes, townhomes, condos, and apartments; 135,000 square feet of retail space; a 140-room hotel; and amending the zoning and General Plan designation to Mixed Use Flex (MUF) for the Phase II development area. The residential uses would be located in the northern and middle portion of the project site and the hotel and commercial retail would be located in the southern portion. The project would also provide various on-site amenities for residents. A courtyard with outdoor open space would be provided near the proposed apartment units. A clubhouse, recreation hall, and swimming pool would also be provided for on-site residents. The project would include 1,367 parking spaces.

Significant and Unavoidable VMT Impacts- Mitigation

The project VMT analysis and significance determination are undertaken in a manner consistent with the Office of Planning and Research's (OPR) Technical Advisory. Per the SEIR, this project is found to have significant VMT impacts. Please consider measures to mitigate the project's VMT impacts:

- Upgrade existing Class II bike lanes to Class IV cycle tracks;
- Better bicycle access with protected bike lanes to the Caltrain station, Santa Teresa VTA light rail, and VTA Rapid Bus line 568 at the Morgan Hill Transit Center;
- Install green thermoplastic conflict markings;
- Plant shade trees along sidewalks, install pedestrian refuge islands at Cochrane Rd, and install directional curb ramps;
- Due to potential conflicts at the US-101 ramps, provide crosswalk enhancements at uncontrolled crosswalks on all ramps at the interchange of US-101 and Cochrane Road:
 - Crosswalk at NB 101 On-ramp from WB Cochrane Road.
 - Crosswalk at SB 101 On-ramp from WB Cochrane Road.
 - Crosswalk at SB 101 On-ramp from EB Cochrane Road.
 - Crosswalk at NB 101 On-ramp from EB Cochrane Road.

Construction-Related Impacts

Potential impacts to the State Right-of-Way (ROW) from project-related temporary access points should be analyzed. Mitigation for significant impacts due to construction and noise should be identified. Project work that requires movement of oversized or excessive load vehicles on State roadways requires a transportation permit that is issued by Caltrans. To apply, visit: <https://dot.ca.gov/programs/traffic-operations/transportation-permits>. Prior to construction, coordination may be required with Caltrans to develop a Transportation Management Plan (TMP) to reduce construction traffic impacts to the State Transportation Network (STN).

Lead Agency

As the Lead Agency, the City of Morgan Hill is responsible for all project mitigation, including any needed improvements to the 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.

Jennifer Carman, Development Services Director

July 22, 2022

Page 3

Encroachment Permit

Please be advised that any permanent work or temporary traffic control that encroaches onto Caltrans' ROW requires a Caltrans-issued encroachment permit. 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 package, digital set of plans clearly delineating Caltrans' ROW, digital copy 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. Your application package may be emailed to D4Permits@dot.ca.gov.

Please note that Caltrans is in the process of implementing an online, automated, and milestone-based Caltrans Encroachment Permit System (CEPS) to replace the current permit application submittal process with a fully electronic system, including online payments. The new system is expected to be available during 2022. To obtain information about the most current encroachment permit process and to download the permit application, please 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, or for future notifications and requests for review of new projects, please email LDR-D4@dot.ca.gov.

Sincerely,



MARK LEONG
District Branch Chief
Local Development Review

c: State Clearinghouse