

California Department of Transportation

DISTRICT 4
OFFICE OF REGIONAL AND COMMUNITY PLANNING
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Governor's Office of Planning & Research

Oct 24, 2022

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STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

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Jeff Mitchem, Planning and Building Director
City of Calistoga
1232 Washington Street
Calistoga, CA 94515

Re: Yellow Rose Ranch Residential Project – Notice of Preparation (NOP) of a Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR)

Dear Jeff Mitchem,

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the Yellow Rose Ranch Residential 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 September 2022 NOP.

Project Understanding

The proposed project would construct 46 single-family homes, including 33 attached accessory dwelling units and 12 detached accessory dwelling units, with 2.1 acres of common area as well as 10.4 acres of open space near Napa River. This 46.3-acre project site is located directly adjacent to State Route (SR)-128.

CEQA Comments

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](#)). Please provide the Transportation Impact Study for Caltrans to review when it is available.

If the project meets the screening criteria established in the City's adopted Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) policy to be presumed to have a less-than-significant VMT impact and exempt from detailed VMT analysis, please provide justification to support the exempt status in alignment with the City's VMT policy. Projects that do not meet the screening criteria should include a detailed VMT analysis in the DEIR, which should include the following:

- VMT analysis pursuant to the City'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.
- A schematic illustration of walking, biking and auto conditions at the project site and study area roadways.
- The project's primary and secondary effects on pedestrians, bicycles, travelers with disabilities and transit performance should be evaluated, including countermeasures and trade-offs resulting from mitigating VMT increases. Access to pedestrians, bicycle, and transit facilities must be maintained.

Active Transportation

Internal sidewalks with 5 feet width would be acceptable when in conjunction with a planting strip or with 6 feet width with a curb. However, a sidewalk with 5 feet width on SR-128 is inadequate. The standard sidewalk width on a rural main street is 8 feet. The adjacent sidewalk section to the south of Mitzi Dr is not standard so it should not be used as an acceptable template. The bike lane width of 6 feet is preferred and should remain as such. There should also be appropriate signage and striping for the proposed bike lane.

A detailed plan including the locations and description of all complete street facilities should be submitted and evaluated by Caltrans before a permit is approved.

Cultural Resources

There are multiple known archaeological sites within the vicinity of the project area. There is also a high degree of geoarchaeological sensitivity indicating that archaeological sites may be present within this project area. Please follow CEQA Guidelines Section 15064.5 (c) to determine if any archaeological resources are present with the project area and their treatments.

Hydrology

Caltrans looks forward to reviewing proposed drainage systems on SR-128 to ensure potential impacts are mitigated. Such plans must be reviewed and approved by Caltrans.

Construction-Related Impacts

Potential impacts to Caltrans' 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 STN.

Lead Agency

As the Lead Agency, the City of Calistoga is responsible for all project mitigation, including any needed improvements to SR-128. 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.

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.

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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>.

Multimodal Transportation Safety Review

Caltrans aims to reduce risks to all road users and that Caltrans focuses on multimodal conflict analysis as well as access management issues. For more information, refer to the Interim Local Development Intergovernmental Review Safety Guidance (*link*). Please ensure that potential multimodal safety concerns are analyzed and mitigated to the extent feasible. We encourage the City of Calistoga to reach to Caltrans on potential safety mitigation solutions.

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