

California Department of Transportation

DISTRICT 4
OFFICE OF REGIONAL AND COMMUNITY PLANNING
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June 21, 2023



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Brandon Phipps, Community & Economic Development Director
City of Sausalito
420 Litho Street
Sausalito, CA 94965

Re: City of Sausalito 6th Cycle Housing Element Programs– Notice of Preparation (NOP) of a Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR)

Dear Brandon Phipps:

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the City of Sausalito 6th Cycle Housing Element Programs. 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 May 2023 NOP.

Project Understanding

This project constitutes the actions necessary to implement Program 4 of the 6th Cycle Housing Element. Program 4 would create a total capacity for development of 908 housing units, including a capacity for 647 units based on opportunity sites that would be subject to the program of rezoning as identified in the Housing Element. This program involves the city completing rezoning or adoption of overlay zones to allow densities at identified opportunity sites.

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](#)).

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. Potential traffic safety issues to the State Transportation Network (STN) may be assessed by Caltrans via the Interim Safety Guidance ([link](#)).
- 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.

Integrated Transportation and Land Use Planning

Please review and include the reference to the current California Transportation Plan (CTP) in the DEIR. CTP 2050 envisions that the majority of new housing located near existing housing, jobs, and transit, and in close proximity to one another will reduce vehicle travel and GHG emissions, and be accessible and affordable for all Californians, including disadvantaged and low-income communities. The location, density, and affordability of future housing will dictate much of our future travel patterns, and our ability to achieve the vision outlined in CTP 2050.

Caltrans looks forward to reviewing the DEIR that should demonstrate how the proposed Housing Element Programs align with the City of Sausalito's adopted VMT policies. Caltrans encourages the City of Sausalito to consider and explore the potential of excess state-owned property for affordable housing development, per Executive Order N-06-19.

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Page 3

Climate Change Adaptation

In the 2020 Caltrans District 4 Adaptation Priorities Report, US-101 stretching through the city is identified as a high-priority Caltrans asset vulnerable to sea level rise, storm surge, and climate change impacts, including increased precipitation. Caltrans would like to be included in discussions, to stay informed as Caltrans is interested in engaging in multi-agency collaboration early and often, to find multi-benefit solutions that protect vulnerable shorelines, communities, infrastructure, and the environment. Please contact Vishal Ream-Rao, Caltrans Bay Area Climate Change Planning Coordinator, with any questions at vishal.ream-rao@dot.ca.gov.

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,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Luo Yunsheng". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

YUNSHENG LUO

Acting District Branch Chief
Local Development Review

c: State Clearinghouse