

California Department of Transportation

DISTRICT 4
OFFICE OF REGIONAL AND COMMUNITY PLANNING
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July 27, 2023



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Lori Price, Senior Environmental Scientist Specialist
California Department of Water Resources
1416 Ninth St
Sacramento, CA 95814

Re: Little Egbert Multi-Benefit Project – Notice of Preparation (NOP) of a Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR)

Dear Lori Price:

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the Little Egbert Multi-Benefit 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 Local Development Review (LDR) Program reviews land use projects and plans to ensure consistency with our mission and state planning priorities. The following comments are based on our review of the July 2023 NOP.

Project Understanding

The proposed project is to implement a flood system and ecosystem improvements, and recreational opportunities to the lower Yolo Bypass/Cache Slough complex to increase flood capacity and provide floodplain habitat and ecosystem benefits. Project construction will generate traffic along local roadways and access to new recreational facilities may result in increased traffic in the local area. Part of the proposed project site is located directly adjacent to State Route (SR)-84.

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.

Hydrology

Located at the southern end of the project is a section of SR-84 and the Real McCoy Ferry structure. Please clarify how overtopping and conveyance of base flood across SR-84 will be managed under the post-project conditions. SR-84 as a levee structure has a wetted eastern slope from the Sacramento River and a dry western slope facing agricultural land. The project is transitioning agricultural land to tidal wetland, please specify how the change in hydrological exposure and flow pattern on the levee will impact the stability of SR-84. Please clarify how the impact on SR-84 and the Real McCoy Ferry structure will be mitigated during the project construction activities. Additionally, please specify if such activities will cause a vertical or horizontal displacement of the SR-84 surface and Real McCoy Ferry structure. Lastly, please

consider if floating woody debris will increase during big storms or high tides and impact the operation of the Real McCoy Ferry.

Project Coordination

Caltrans is currently planning a Ferry Fender Rehabilitation project in the area which will include replacing the existing fender system, replacing both existing concrete ramps, modifying the ferry boat deck surface, and installing Traffic Operation System (TOS) elements. This will require a temporary construction easement (TCE) from the private property owner immediately north and south of the Ferry landing. For more information and coordination opportunities, please contact Caltrans Project Manager, Sindhu Kurup, at sindhu.kurup@dot.ca.gov.

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, please visit Caltrans Transportation Permits ([link](#)).

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 California Department of Water Resources 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.

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,

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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. To obtain information about the most current encroachment permit process and to download the permit application, please visit Caltrans Encroachment Permits ([link](#)).

Thank you again for including Caltrans in the environmental review process. Should you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact Katherine Pratt, LDR Coordinator/Associate Transportation Planner, via LDR-D4@dot.ca.gov.

For future early coordination opportunities or project referrals, please contact 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