

California Department of Transportation

DISTRICT 4
OFFICE OF REGIONAL AND COMMUNITY PLANNING
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August 11, 2023

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William He, Senior Planner
City of American Canyon
4381 Broadway Street, Suite 201
American Canyon, CA 94503

Governor's Office of Planning & Research

Aug 11 2023

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

Re: Residences at Napa Junction – Notice of Preparation (NOP) of a Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR)

Dear William He:

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the Residences at Napa Junction. 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 project proposes to construct 453 residential rental units, a resident community center, a commercial childcare center, indoor and outdoor amenities, and associated parking and driveways. The project site is accessed from Napa Junction Road at the south end of the property, approximately 1,000 feet east of the intersection with State Route (SR)-29.

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 either the City's adopted Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) policy or the Office of Planning and Research (OPR) VMT Technical Advisory 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 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 OPR or City guidelines; analysis should include all transportation impacts from the project to SR-29. 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 for pedestrians, bicycles, and transit facilities must be maintained.
- Clarification of the intensity of events/receptions to be held at the location and how the associated travel demand and VMT will be mitigated.

Mitigation Strategies

Location efficiency factors, including community design and regional accessibility, influence a project's impact on the environment. Using Caltrans' Smart Mobility Framework Guide 2020 ([link](#)), the proposed project site is identified as a rural area where community design is low and regional accessibility is low.

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 development in this 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:

- 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;
- Discounted transit programs;
- Increase transit service frequency;
- Provide local shuttles to increase transit outreach;

Using a combination of strategies appropriate to the project 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 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, refer to the California Air Pollution Control Officers Association (CAPCOA) Handbook for Analyzing Greenhouse Gas Emission Reductions, Assessing Climate Vulnerabilities, and Advancing Health and Equity ([link](#)).

Transportation Impact Fees

Please identify project-generated travel demand and estimate the costs of transit and active transportation improvements necessitated by the proposed project; viable funding sources such as development and/or transportation impact fees should also be identified. We encourage a sufficient allocation of fair share contributions toward multi-modal and regional transit improvements to fully mitigate cumulative impacts to regional transportation. We also strongly support measures to increase sustainable mode shares, thereby reducing VMT.

Lead Agency

As the Lead Agency, the City of American Canyon 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

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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.

Thank you again for including Caltrans in the environmental review process. Should you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact Marley Mathews, 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 cursive script that reads "Laurel Sears".

LAUREL SEARS
Acting District Branch Chief
Local Development Review

c: State Clearinghouse