

California Department of Transportation

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



October 18, 2023



SCH #: 2023090277
GTS #: 04-SM-2023-00536
GTS ID: 30882
Co/Rt/Pm: SM/82/11.619

Rendell Bustos, Senior Planner
City of San Mateo
330 West 20th Avenue
San Mateo, CA 94403

Re: Block 20 Mixed-Use Project Notice of Preparation (NOP) of a Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR)

Dear Rendell Bustos:

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the Block 20 Mixed-Use 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 September 2023 NOP.

Project Understanding

The proposed project would redevelop the site with a new six-story, approximately 209,955 square feet (s.f.) mixed-use building with two levels of below grade parking. The building would be approximately 75 feet in height and would consist of 137,912 s.f. of office space, approximately 1,574 s.f. of retail space, and 86 multi-family residential units. The residential units would consist of approximately 52 studio units, 25 one-bedroom units, and nine two-bedroom units. Nine of the units would be Below Market Units (BMR) in accordance with the City of San Mateo BMR Ordinance (15 percent very-low income).

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.
- Clarification of the intensity of events/receptions to be held at the location and how the associated travel demand and VMT will be mitigated.

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](#)).

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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 San Mateo 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.

Thank you again for including Caltrans in the environmental review process. Should you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact Melissa Hernandez, 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, appearing to read 'Luo Yunsheng'.

YUNSHENG LUO
Branch Chief, Local Development Review
Office of Regional and Community Planning

c: State Clearinghouse