California Department of Transportation

DISTRICT 4
OFFICE OF REGIONAL AND COMMUNITY PLANNING
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December 4, 2023

SCH #: 2023110069
GTS #: 04-ALA-2023-00770
GTS ID: 31254
Co/Rt/Pm: ALA/VAR/VAR

Liz McElligott, Assistant Planning Director
County of Alameda Community Development Agency
224 Winton Avenue, Room 111
Hayward, CA 94544

Governor's Office of Planning & Research

Dec 04 2023

STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

Re: Alameda County 2023-2031 Housing Element Update – Mitigated Negative Declaration (MND)

Dear Liz McElligott:

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the Alameda County 2023-2031 Housing Element Update. 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 November 2023 MND.

Project Understanding
The proposed project consists of a complete update to the Alameda County Housing Element, which is intended to enable the County to accommodate housing in accordance with State law. The proposed project would bring the element into compliance with State legislation passed since adoption of the 2015-2023 Housing Element and with the current Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA). The MND analyzes a total number of 3,134 units by 2031 from a residential rezone program which will be implemented to adequately meet the County's assigned RHNA of 4,711 units.

Travel Demand Analysis
Caltrans commends the County regarding efforts to increase residential density, thereby reducing impacts to Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT). Per the MND, this project is

found to have a less than significant VMT impact, therefore working towards meeting the State's VMT reduction goals.

Integrated Transportation and Land Use
Transportation and housing are integrally connected. The Housing Element Update process provides a mechanism to reflect current transportation and land use policy and adopt efficient land-use strategies such as transit-oriented, infill and mixed-use developments that can potentially reduce VMT and address climate change.

Please review and include the reference to the current California Transportation Plan (CTP) in the MND. 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 encourages the County to consider and explore the potential of excess state-owned property for affordable housing development, per Executive Order N-06-19.

Caltrans supports collaboration with local agencies to work towards a safe, functional, interconnected, multi-modal transportation network integrated through efficient and equitable land use planning and policies. The County should also continue to coordinate with Caltrans to identify and implement necessary network improvements and impact mitigation.

Thank you again for including Caltrans in the environmental review process. Should you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact Llisel Ayon, 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,

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

c: State Clearinghouse

"Provide a safe and reliable transportation network that serves all people and respects the environment"