

California Department of Transportation

DISTRICT 12
1750 East 4th Street, Suite 100 | SANTA ANA, CA 92705
(657) 328-6000 | FAX (657) 328-6522 TTY 711
<https://dot.ca.gov/caltrans-near-me/district-12>



December 15, 2023

Ms. Alexa Smittle
Community Development Director
City of Seal Beach
211 Eighth Street
Seal Beach, CA. 90740

File: LDR/CEQA
SCH:2023110425
12-ORA-2023-02430

Dear Ms. Smittle,

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the review of the Notice of Preparation (NOP) of a Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the City of Seal Beach Housing Element and Zoning Code Updates Project. The Initial Study was prepared to analyze potential impacts related to implementation of the City's Housing Element and Zoning Code Update. The Housing Element identifies 13 Housing Opportunity Sites throughout the City that have the potential for providing additional housing to meet the City's Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) allocation. The sites are broken into two categories: (a) underutilized sites that do not require zoning code changes and (b) sites where zoning modifications are proposed. Of the 13 Housing Opportunity Sites, six would require rezoning, one would be rezoned through a proposed Specific Plan, and one would require an amendment to the Main Street Specific Plan. The rezoning effort would also include the establishment of a new zoning designation, MC/RHD, which would apply to five of the Housing Opportunity Sites. This new zone district would facilitate housing for lower-income households as required by the state's RHNA allocation for the City and facilitate the inclusion of affordable units. Implementation of the Housing Element and Zoning Code Update would result in the City being able to accommodate 1,833 additional housing units pursuant to the City's RHNA allocation.

The Project site is currently comprised of 13 Housing Opportunity Sites dispersed throughout the City totaling approximately 278 acres. The City located at the northwestern edge of Orange County (County), California. It borders the City of Long Beach and Los Angeles County to the northwest, the Orange County Cities of Los Alamitos to the north, Westminster to the east, Huntington Beach to the southeast, and the Pacific Ocean to the west. The City has a land area of approximately 13 square

miles. State Routes 405, 22 and 1 reside within the project area and are owned and operated by Caltrans. Therefore, Caltrans is a responsible agency on this project, and has the following comments:

1. Caltrans supports opportunities for affordable housing, and the state mandates that cities must plan for housing needs of future residents of all incomes. Please provide an analysis and discussion that would assist in accommodating the Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) allocation per the California Department of Housing & Community Development (HCD).
2. Caltrans recognizes our responsibility to assist communities of color and under-served communities by removing barriers to provide a more equitable transportation system for all. The Department firmly embraces racial equity, inclusion, and diversity. These values are foundational to achieving our vision of a cleaner, safer, and more accessible and more connected transportation system. Please consider including a discussion on equity in the Environmental Impact Report (EIR).
3. Caltrans supports projects which provide a diversity of housing choices and destinations accessible by Active Transportation (i.e. bicycle and pedestrian) and transit users. Please consider improving multimodal connections to housing which will encourage future residents, visitors, and workers in the city to utilize all modes of transportation. Increasing multimodal transportation will lead to a reduction to congestion, Vehicle Miles Traveled, and improve air quality.
4. Caltrans seeks to promote safe, accessible, multimodal transportation. Please consider methods to reduce pedestrian and bicyclist exposure to vehicles by lessening the time that the user is in the likely path of a motor vehicle.
 - o On pdf page 100, stating "Develop citywide standards for construction and maintenance of bikeways and pedestrian walkways.", please consider Caltrans guidelines on building separated cycle tracks infrastructure (DIB 89) - <https://dot.ca.gov/-/media/dot-media/programs/design/documents/dib-89-02-final-a11y.pdf>.
 - o On the same page, it is noted that "[developing] a planned bikeway that is consistent with the County of Orange Master Plan of County-wide Bikeways, and other adopted Master Plans, to assure that local bicycle routes will be compatible with routes or neighboring jurisdictions" -- please review OCTA's regional bikeways strategy to ensure alignment with existing plans, found here: <https://www.octa.net/getting-around/active/oc-bike/bikeways-planning/overview/>

5. Caltrans encourages the design of Complete Streets that include high-quality pedestrian, bicycle, and transit facilities that are safe and comfortable for users of all ages and abilities. This may include safety measures such as physically separated sidewalks and bike lanes, pedestrian-oriented LED lighting, high-visibility continental crosswalk striping, raised crosswalks, refuge islands, wayfinding signage, and safe connections to existing and proposed bicycle facilities. Complete Streets improvements promote regional connectivity, improve air quality, reduce congestion, and increase safety for all modes of transportation. (see Caltrans' Director's Policy on Complete Streets here <https://dot.ca.gov/-/media/dot-media/programs/esta/documents/dp-37-complete-streets-all.pdf>)
6. For guidance on providing functional bike parking, see the attached "Essentials of Bike Parking" guidance created by the Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals (link to online PDF: <https://www.apbp.org/Publications>).
7. During future construction, please ensure appropriate detours, signage, and safety measures are planned that prioritize and ensure the safety and mobility of pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit users.
8. Ensure that truck parking, ingress and egress, and staging will not interfere with vehicle parking, pedestrian paths, or bicycle lanes/bicycle parking. Work with community representatives to mitigate any truck traffic routing onto residential streets or conflicting with other road users, including and especially bicyclists and pedestrians.
9. Please identify the existing transit services for local and regional bus services including the connectivity to rail services from the nearest train stations provided by Metrolink and/or Amtrak Pacific Surfliner. Also, please provide adequate wayfinding signage to transit stops within all the project vicinity and local roadways.
10. Consider how many individual packages will be delivered daily to individual residences within the areas identified for increased housing production. Shared drop-off locations can help reduce the amount of driving done by delivery trucks and can increase the efficiency of deliveries in densely developed areas. Similarly, high-density residential developments should consider automated parcel systems (i.e., Amazon Lockers) so that deliveries can be made with one truck stop instead of multiple stops to individual residences.

11. Consider accounting for off-street truck parking to help free up on-street space for other modes, such as city traffic, walking, and bicycling. Similarly, utilize alley space or similar areas, if available, to reduce the need for on-street parking which may conflict with highway/street flows.
12. If truck parking (i.e., for home deliveries) is to be on-street, ensure the width of the parking lane is wide enough for freight trucks without encroaching on bicycle lanes or street lanes.
13. Please consider designated on-street freight-only parking and delivery time windows to reduce the need for double parking. This strategy also helps prevent street traffic congestion.
14. Please note that this project should not present adverse impacts to the overall transportation system including: traffic circulation and the local State Highway Systems (SHS). Caltrans is requesting a Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) that focuses on the State facilities that would be impacted by future developments.
15. The TIA will also need to assess and address new developments, the City's rezoning requirements, and multi-modal impacts. The results of these impacts will need to include an investigation and discussion of signal timing upgrades in order to accommodate the increase of both vehicular and pedestrian traffic.
16. A section of the TIA will also need to focus on how future developments could impact the Senior population as well as local pedestrian facilities that cater to this population.
17. When analyzing the proposed projects potential short- and long-term traffic impacts with respect to regional vehicle miles traveled (VMT's), please use the Governor's Office of Planning and Research Guidance to identify VMT related impacts and add the analysis results to the TIA.
18. Any project work proposed in the vicinity of the State Right-of-Way (ROW) would require an encroachment permit and all environmental concerns must be adequately addressed. If the environmental documentation for the project does not meet Caltrans's requirements for work done within State ROW, additional documentation would be required before approval of the encroachment permit. Please coordinate with Caltrans to meet requirements for any work within or near State ROW. For specific details for Encroachment Permits procedure, please refer to the Caltrans's Encroachment Permits Manual at: <http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/traffops/developserv/permits/>

19. Additional information regarding encroachment permits may be obtained by contacting the Caltrans Permits Office at (657) 328-6553 or D12.permits@doct.ca.gov. Early coordination with Caltrans is strongly advised for all encroachment Permits. For specific details on Caltrans Encroachment Permits procedure and any future updates regarding the application process and permit rates, please visit the Caltrans Encroachment Permits homepage at <https://dot.ca.gov/programs/traffic-operations/ep>.

Caltrans' mission is to provide a safe, sustainable, equitable, integrated, and efficient transportation system to enhance California's economy and livability. Please continue to coordinate with Caltrans for any future developments that could potentially impact State transportation facilities. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Julie Lugaro at Julie.lugaro@dot.ca.gov.

Sincerely,



Scott Shelley
Branch Chief,
LDR-Climate Change-Transit Planning
Caltrans, District 12