

**California Department of Transportation**

DISTRICT 4  
OFFICE OF REGIONAL AND COMMUNITY PLANNING  
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[www.dot.ca.gov](http://www.dot.ca.gov)



December 22, 2023

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GTS #: 04-SON-2023-00845  
GTS ID: 31380  
Co/Rt/Pm: SON/116/28.515

Claudette Diaz, Project Planner III  
Sonoma County  
2550 Venture Avenue  
Santa Rosa, CA 95403

**Re: PLP23-0011 Neighborhood Hardware Retail Center – Initial Study and Negative Declaration (IS/MND)**

Dear Claudette Diaz:

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the 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 November 2023 IS/MND.

**Project Understanding**

The proposed project will allow for a new neighborhood retail center consisting of a retail building of 12,260 gross square feet with an adjacent open air roofed garden supply/nursery structure of 2,984 square feet, and a separate warehouse building of 4,000 gross square feet. In addition to the two building structures there will be a trash enclosure and two fire suppression water tanks located above ground.

**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](#)).

The project VMT analysis and significance determination are undertaken in a manner consistent with the Office of Planning and Research's (OPR) Technical Advisory. Per the IS/MND, this project is found to have a less than significant VMT impact, therefore working towards meeting the State's VMT reduction goals.

Please consider a hard median rather than a painted median for the Right-in and Right-out movements to and from the site and placing driveways as far away from the intersection as possible.

Please provide Caltrans with the Transportation Impact Study that includes the traffic counts and analysis mentioned in the report.

### **Hydrology**

Based on topography, the site currently drains toward SR-116 before it could drain either directly to a creek or a creek tributary. Any runoff from the site that drains toward SR-116 and/or increases flow in the State's drainage system post-project, must be metered to pre-project levels. If any connections to State drainage facilities are proposed, plans and related drainage calculations will be required during the encroachment permit process.

### **Landscape Architecture**

Please comply with Highway Design Manual (HDM) Chapter 900: Landscape Architecture, section 904.5 Locating Trees, subsection (b) Conventional Highways ([link](#)) to ensure that large trees are not planted in the clear recovery zone.

### **Lead Agency**

As the Lead Agency, the County is responsible for all project mitigation, including any needed improvements to the State Transportation Network (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, 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](mailto: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 Melissa Hernandez, Associate Transportation Planner, via [LDR-D4@dot.ca.gov](mailto:LDR-D4@dot.ca.gov). For future early coordination opportunities or project referrals, please contact [LDR-D4@dot.ca.gov](mailto:LDR-D4@dot.ca.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Luo Yunsheng". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Luo" and last name "Yunsheng" clearly distinguishable.

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

c: State Clearinghouse