

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

DISTRICT 4

OFFICE OF TRANSIT AND COMMUNITY PLANNING

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Governor's Office of Planning & Research

APR 10 2020**STATE CLEARINGHOUSE***Making Conservation
a California Way of Life.*

April 10, 2020

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Steve Marshall
Community Development Planning Manager
City of Novato
922 Machin Avenue
Novato, CA 94945

Project - Novato 2035 General Plan Update Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR)

Dear Steve Marshall:

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for this 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 following comments are based on our review of the February 2020 DEIR.

Project Understanding

General Plan 2035 is a comprehensive update of the City's 1996 General Plan and establishes the community's vision for future development of the City through 2035. As part of the general plan process, General Plan 2035 has been reorganized and reformatted, with updated goals, policies, and programs that reflect the community's vision of Novato. Regional access is provided via US-101 and SR-37.

Landscape Architecture

Under Section 4.1.1.e, *Aesthetics- Regulatory Setting*, please note that portions of US-101 fall under the Classified Landscape Freeway status. These sections should be noted the Novato General Plan 2035 as it provides an aesthetic value along US-101 and regulates the use of outdoor advertising displays.

The locations along US-101 in Novato are as follows:

County	Highway	Start Postmile	End Postmile
Marin	US-101	19.71	19.72
		19.72	19.95
		20.09	20.30
		21.32	21.56

As stated on the Caltrans Classified Landscape Freeway Website:

*“A Classified Landscaped Freeway is a section of freeway with ornamental vegetation planting that meets the criteria established by the **“California Code of Regulations, Outdoor Advertising Regulations, Title 4, Division 6”**. This designation is used in the control and regulation of outdoor advertising displays.”*

For further information, please visit Caltrans Classified Landscape Freeways website: <https://dot.ca.gov/programs/design/lap-landscape-architecture-and-community-livability/lap-liv-b-classified-landscaped-freeways>

Park & Ride Lots

Caltrans applauds the City's support for the construction of Park and Ride (P&R) facilities to increase transit ridership and carpooling, as stated under Mobility Goal MO17. We encourage the City to coordinate with Caltrans to discuss potential partnership opportunities related to the P&R lots.

Cultural Resources

Page 4.4-1: The Regional Prehistory was drafted for the City of Windsor. Remove mention of the town of Windsor as this is a General Plan for Novato. This Regional Prehistory does not apply to this region of Marin County or the town of Novato. Please use regional prehistory specific to Marin County and the central Bay Area.

Page 4.4-17: Mitigation Measure Cul-2: Phase I cultural resources study should also include coordination with local Native American tribes using the Native American Contact List provided by the Native American Heritage Commission (NAHC) during their record search.

Page 4.15-3: Mitigation Measure TCR-1: Compliance with Native American

consultation under AB-52 alone does not qualify as mitigation. Caltrans suggests consultation with the project sponsor/city who will work to identify TCRs and to avoid or reduce project impacts.

Page 6-7, Tribal Cultural Resources (TCRs): TCRs are not limited to objects or archaeological resources that may be “unearthed” or are only impacted by excavation. Caltrans recommend re-writing this section to remove the connotation that only excavation has the potential to impact TCRs.

Utilities

Any utilities that are proposed, moved or modified within Caltrans' Right-of-Way (ROW) shall be discussed. If utilities are impacted by the project, provide site plans that show the location of existing and/or proposed utilities. These modifications require a Caltrans-issued encroachment permit.

Lead Agency

As the Lead Agency, the City of Novato 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.

Encroachment Permit

Please be advised that any permanent work or temporary traffic control that encroaches onto the ROW requires a Caltrans-issued encroachment permit. If any Caltrans facilities are impacted by the project, those facilities must meet American Disabilities Act (ADA) Standards after project completion. 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, six (6) sets of plans clearly delineating the State ROW, six (6) copies 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.

To download the permit application and to obtain more information on all required documentation, visit <https://dot.ca.gov/programs/traffic-operations/ep/applications>.

Steve Marshall, Community Development Planning Manager

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Thank you again for including Caltrans in the environmental review process. Should you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact Mark Leong at 510-2865822 or mark.leong@dot.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mark Leong". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal tail on the "g".

Mark Leong
District Branch Chief
Local Development - Intergovernmental Review
c: State Clearinghouse