

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

DISTRICT 4

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Jeanie Poling, Senior Planner
San Francisco Planning Department
1650 Mission Street, Suite 400
San Francisco, CA 94103

Balboa Reservoir Project – Draft Subsequent Environmental Impact Report (DSEIR)

Dear Jeanie Poling:

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the Balboa Reservoir Project. In tandem with the Metropolitan Transportation Commission's (MTC) Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS), Caltrans' mission signals our continuing approach to evaluate and mitigate impacts to the State's multimodal transportation network. Caltrans' Strategic Management Plan 2015-2020 aims, in part, to reduce Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) and Greenhouse Gas emissions (GHG) in alignment with state goals and policies. Our comments are based on the August 7, 2019 Draft Subsequent Environmental Impact Report (DSEIR).

Project Understanding

The proposed project would develop the site with mixed-income housing, open space, a childcare facility/community room available for public use, retail space, on- and off-street parking, and new streets, utilities, and other infrastructure. This DSEIR will analyze two different sets of options for the site's residential density to capture a range of possible development on the project site: The first is the Developer's Proposed Option (1,100 dwelling units), proposed by Reservoir Community Partners LLC. The second is the Additional Housing Option (1,550 dwelling units), developed by the City of San Francisco to fulfill the objectives of the San Francisco General Plan to maximize affordable housing and housing in transit-rich neighborhoods.

Development under each of the two options would entail the same land uses and street configurations, and similar site plans. Overall, the proposed project would construct up to approximately 1.8 million gross square feet (gsf) of uses,

including between approximately 1.3 and 1.5 million gsf of residential space (1,100 to 1,550 dwelling units plus residential amenities), approximately 10,000 gsf of community space (childcare and a community room for public use), approximately 7,500 gsf of retail, up to 550 residential parking spaces and 750 public parking spaces in the Developer's Proposed Option, and up to 650 residential parking spaces (with no public parking spaces) in the Additional Housing Option. The buildings would range in height from 25 to 78 feet in the Developer's Proposed Option and from 25 to 88 feet in the Additional Housing Option.

Approximately 4 acres would be devoted to publicly accessible open space under each option. Also, under each option, the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission would retain ownership of an 80-foot-wide strip of land located along the southern edge of the site where an underground water transmission pipeline is located. Regional access is provided from the Interstate (I-) 280 and Ocean Avenue interchange approximately 0.35 miles east of the project site.

Bicycle Considerations

The Caltrans District 4 Bike Plan identifies a "Top Tier" project at the I-280 and Ocean Avenue/Geneva Avenue interchange that would reconstruct the interchange ramps and stripe Class II buffered bike lanes. Given the anticipated increase in vehicle and bicycle traffic at this location due to the project, the project should evaluate measures to enhance bicycle safety at freeway on- and off-ramps at this location.

Construction-Related Impacts

Potential impacts to the I-280 from project-related temporary access points should be analyzed. 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, visit: <https://dot.ca.gov/programs/traffic-operations/transportation-permits>.

Coordination

As the project progress, please keep Caltrans informed of any updates with the project, including but not limited to alternative selection and scope changes.

Lead Agency

As the Lead Agency, the City of San Francisco is responsible for all project mitigation, including any needed improvements to the State Transportation Network. The project's fair share contribution, financing, scheduling, implementation responsibilities and lead agency monitoring should be fully discussed for all proposed mitigation measures.

Jeanie Poling, Senior Planner
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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 Andrew Chan at 510-622-543 or andrew.chan@dot.ca.gov.

Sincerely,



Wahida Rashid
Acting District Branch Chief
Local Development - Intergovernmental Review

c: State Clearinghouse