

**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

DISTRICT 4

OFFICE OF TRANSIT AND COMMUNITY PLANNING

P.O. BOX 23660, MS-10D

OAKLAND, CA 94623-0660

PHONE (510) 286-5528

TTY 711

www.dot.ca.gov

Governor's Office of Planning &amp; Research

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Erik Nolthenius, Planning Manager  
City of Brentwood Community Development  
Department  
150 City Park Way  
Brentwood, CA 94513

**Project – Vineyards at Deer Creek Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR)**

Dear Erik Nolthenius:

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for this 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 July 19, 2019 DEIR.

**Project Understanding**

The project is a proposed residential community of up to 2,400 residential units within Special Planning Area (SPA) 2 of the Brentwood General Plan, at least 80% (1,920 units+/-) of which will be age-restricted active adult and a maximum of 20% (480 units+/-) will be un-restricted market-rate housing. The project site is located in unincorporated Contra Costa County, southwest of the City of Brentwood. The site is bound by Balfour Road on the south and Deer Valley Road on the west. At its closest point, the site is roughly 0.9 miles west of State Route 4. Access to State Route (SR)-4 is provided by access ramps located on Balfour Road, roughly 1.4 miles east of the site.

### **Multimodal Planning**

The project's primary and secondary effects on pedestrians, bicyclists, travelers with disabilities, and transit users should be evaluated, including countermeasures and trade-offs resulting from mitigating VMT increases. Access for pedestrians and bicyclists to transit facilities must be maintained. These smart growth approaches are consistent with MTC's Regional Transportation Plan/SCS and would help meet Caltrans Strategic Management targets.

### **Vehicle Trip Reduction**

From Caltrans' *Smart Mobility 2010: A Call to Action for the New Decade*, the project site is identified as **Place Type 4d: Suburban Communities (Neighborhoods)** where location efficiency factors, such as community design, are weak and regional accessibility varies. Given the place, type and size of the project, it should include a robust Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Program to reduce VMT and greenhouse gas emissions as the project becomes developed. Such measures are critical to facilitating efficient site access. The measures listed below will promote smart mobility and reduce regional VMT.

- Project design to encourage walking, bicycling and transit access;
- Transit and trip planning resources such as a commute information kiosk;
- Real-time transit information system;
- Ten percent vehicle parking reductions;
- Charging stations and designated parking spaces for electric vehicles;
- Carpool and clean-fuel parking spaces;
- Designated parking spaces for a car share program;
- Showers, changing rooms and clothing lockers for employees that commute via active transportation;
- Emergency Ride Home program;
- Secured bicycle storage facilities;
- Fix-it bicycle repair station(s);
- Bicycle route mapping resources;
- Participation/Formation in/of a Transportation Management Association (TMA) in partnership with other developments in the area; and
- Aggressive trip reduction targets with Lead Agency monitoring and enforcement.

Transportation Demand Management programs should be documented with annual monitoring reports by an onsite TDM coordinator to demonstrate effectiveness.

For additional TDM options, please refer to the Federal Highway Administration's *Integrating Demand Management into the Transportation Planning Process: A Desk Reference* (Chapter 8). The reference is available online at: <http://www.ops.fhwa.dot.gov/publications/fhwahop12035/fhwahop12035.pdf>.

### **Transportation Impact Fees**

As stated on page 62 of the Transportation Impact Study (TIS,) "The project is expected to worsen the delay index along the State Route 4 corridor where deficient operations are projected to occur in the near-term condition; this is considered a significant impact. Additionally, the project would contribute to worsening congestion on other segments of State Route 4 to the west of the study area not explicitly evaluated." We encourage the City to work early on with Caltrans to implement mitigation measures which include paying the fair share towards transportation network improvements. Additionally, the City should work with Caltrans to coordinate signal timing plans for Sand Creek Road and Balfour Road eastbound and westbound on-ramps.

We also encourage a sufficient allocation of fair share contributions toward multimodal and regional transit improvements to fully mitigate cumulative impacts to regional transportation. We also strongly support measures to increase sustainable mode shares, thereby reducing VMT. The Lead Agency should also consider fair share fees for shuttles that use the public curb space.

### **Construction-Related Impacts**

Potential impacts to SR-4 from project-related temporary access points should be analyzed. Mitigation for significant impacts due to construction and noise should be identified in the final EIR. 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>.

Prior to construction, coordination is required with Caltrans to develop a Transportation Management Plan (TMP) to reduce construction traffic impacts to SR-4.

### **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 Brentwood 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 work or traffic control that encroaches onto, above, or under HWY 4 requires a Caltrans-issued encroachment permit. To obtain an encroachment permit, a completed encroachment permit application, environmental documentation, six (6) sets of plans clearly indicating the State ROW, and six (6) copies of signed, dated and stamped (include stamp expiration date) traffic control plans must be submitted to: Office of Encroachment Permits, California DOT, District 4, P.O. Box 23660, Oakland, CA 94623-0660. To download the permit application and obtain more information, visit <https://dot.ca.gov/programs/traffic-operations/ep/applications>.

Thank you again for including Caltrans in the environmental review process. Should you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact Mark Leong at 510-286-1644 or mark.leong@dot.ca.gov.

Sincerely,



Wahida Rashid  
Acting District Branch Chief  
Local Development - Intergovernmental Review

c: State Clearinghouse