

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

DISTRICT 4

OFFICE OF TRANSIT AND COMMUNITY PLANNING

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Governor's Office of Planning & Research

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STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

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Kevin Thompson, Assistant City
Manager/Community Development Director
Cloverdale Community Development Department
124 N. Cloverdale Blvd.,
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Baumgardner Ranch Development Project - Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration (IS/MND)

Dear Kevin Thompson:

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

Project Understanding

The applicant is proposing to construct a total of 304 housing units and related infrastructure on approximately 20.3 acres while preserving 8.52 acres of privately maintained open space on a 28.5-acre project site. Of the 304 housing units proposed, 79 units would be single-family homes, 59 rowhouses, and 166 apartments, along with 278 attached garage parking spaces and 298 street parking spaces. The project would include a 25-foot setback from the top of bank along the eastern boundary of the site. A 10-foot wide publicly accessible pedestrian path and associated fencing would be constructed along the setback of the drainage. The project would also preserve hillside areas above the 400-foot elevation level on the western portion of the project site as privately maintained open space. Regional access is provided from the US-101/South Cloverdale Blvd. interchange approximately 0.4 miles away.

Travel Demand Analysis

While Caltrans strongly recommends the Lead Agency provide a vehicle miles traveled (VMT) analysis of transportation impacts, please be advised that use of the VMT metric after July 1, 2020 is required by CEQA for land use projects per California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3, Section 15064.3(c). With the enactment of Senate Bill (SB) 743, Caltrans is focusing on transportation infrastructure that supports smart growth and efficient development to ensure alignment with State policies using efficient development patterns, innovative travel demand reduction strategies, multimodal improvements, and VMT as the primary transportation impact metric. A travel demand analysis should include:

- A vicinity map, regional location map, and site plan clearly showing project access in relation to the State Transportation Network (STN). Ingress and egress for all project components should be clearly identified. Clearly identify the State right-of-way (ROW). Project driveways, local roads and intersections, car/bike parking, and transit facilities should be mapped.
- A VMT analysis consistent with the Office of Planning and Research's Guidelines is recommended since the City of Cloverdale currently has no existing guidelines or thresholds. Projects that result in automobile VMT per capita above the threshold of significance for existing (i.e. baseline) city-wide or regional values for similar land use types may indicate a significant impact. If necessary, mitigation for increasing VMT should be identified. Mitigation should support the use of transit and active transportation modes. Potential mitigation measures that include the requirements of other agencies such as Caltrans are fully enforceable through permit conditions, agreements, or other legally-binding instruments under the control of the City.
- A schematic illustration of walking, biking and auto conditions at the project site and study area roadways. Potential safety issues for all road users should be identified and fully mitigated.
- The project's primary and secondary effects on pedestrians, bicycles, travelers with disabilities and transit performance should be evaluated, including countermeasures and trade-offs resulting from mitigating VMT increases. Access to pedestrians, bicycle, and transit facilities must be maintained.

With respect to the local and regional roadway system, project related trip generation, distribution, and assignment estimates should be included in the analysis. To ensure that queue formation does not create traffic conflicts, the

project-generated trips should be added to the existing, future and cumulative scenario traffic volumes for the intersections and freeway ramps. Potential queuing issues should be evaluated including on-ramp storage capacity and analysis of freeway segments near the project; turning movements should also be evaluated. In conducting these evaluations, it is necessary to use demand volumes rather than output volumes or constrained flow volume.

Bicycle Considerations

The Santana Drive overpass connects S. Cloverdale Blvd and Asti Road across US-101. Residents of the new development will be using S. Cloverdale Blvd and the Santana Drive overpass to access US-101, as well as bicycle and transit facilities east of US-101.

Asti Road, on the east side of US-101, is a regional bike route through Sonoma County and receives heavy bicycle use. Asti Road is also identified as an Alternative Bike Access Route along the State Highway System in the Caltrans District 4 Bike Plan. Additionally, the Cloverdale Park & Ride Lot and the future SMART Depot (Cloverdale Depot) are both located on Asti Road between the Santana Drive and Citrus Fair Drive overpasses.

Caltrans recommends that the developer add bicycle lane markings/conflict zone markings across the Santana Drive overpass ramp intersections, in conjunction with the proposed stop sign improvements (Mitigation Measure TRANS-1).

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 often 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. Such measures are critical to facilitating efficient site access. The measures listed below can 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;
- Carpool and clean-fuel parking spaces;
- Unbundled parking;
- Secured bicycle storage facilities;

- Bicycle route mapping resources;
- Aggressive trip reduction targets with Lead Agency monitoring and enforcement.

TDM programs should be documented with annual monitoring reports by a TDM coordinator to demonstrate effectiveness. If the project does not achieve the VMT reduction goals, the reports should also include next steps to take in order to achieve those targets. Also, reducing parking supply can encourage active forms of transportation, reduce regional VMT, and lessen future transportation impacts on State facilities.

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

Please identify project-generated travel demand and estimate the costs of transit and active transportation improvements necessitated by the proposed project; viable funding sources such as development and/or transportation impact fees should also be identified. We encourage a sufficient allocation of fair share contributions toward multi-modal 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.

Lead Agency

As the Lead Agency, the City of Cloverdale is responsible for all project mitigation, including any needed improvements to the 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

As stated in Mitigation Measure MM-1, the City of Cloverdale will obtain an encroachment permit from Caltrans to complete the installation of stop signs and associated markings on the approaches to the intersection of Santana Drive Overpass and US-101 North ramps consistent with Caltrans design and construction standards and approved by Caltrans traffic engineers. A Transportation Management Plan (TMP) may be required to minimize impacts to the US-101 during construction.

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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, Caltrans 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 Andrew Chan at 510-622-5433 or andrew.chan@dot.ca.gov.

Sincerely,



Mark Leong
District Branch Chief
Local Development - Intergovernmental Review

c: State Clearinghouse