

California Department of Transportation

DISTRICT 4
OFFICE OF REGIONAL AND COMMUNITY PLANNING
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January 23, 2026

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Tess Byler, Senior Project Manager
San Francisquito Creek Joint Powers Authority
750 Menlo Avenue, Suite 250
Menlo Park, CA 94025

Re: Strategy to Advance Flood Protection, Ecosystems and Recreation along San Francisco (SAFER) Bay Project — Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR)

Dear Tess Byler:

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the SAFER Bay Project. 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 December 2025 DEIR.

Please note this correspondence does not indicate an official position or approval by Caltrans on this project and is for informational purposes only.

Project Understanding

The proposed project includes construction of levees, floodwalls and other flood protection features, tidal salt marsh restoration, and new sections of the Bay Trail along approximately 7 miles of shoreline between O'Connor Street in East Palo Alto at San Francisquito Creek and Redwood City near the Menlo Park city boundary to the northwest. The purpose of the project is shoreline protection, restoration, and enhancement of recreational features. The project area includes the Dumbarton Bridge west approach and other sections of State Route (SR) 84.

Hydrology

Please ensure that any increase in storm water runoff to State Drainage Systems or Facilities be treated, contained on project site, and metered to preconstruction levels. Any floodplain impacts must be documented and mitigated.

The proposed flood protection measures, such as floodwalls and levees, may conflict with existing State drainage facilities. The proposed work at SR 84 and Ravenswood Slough will likely require concurrence by Caltrans. Please ensure existing State and local drainage facilities are surveyed, identified, and shown on project plans. Proposed drainage and flooding design changes will need to address any drainage-related conflicts. The Office of Hydraulic Engineering looks forward to reviewing proposed drainage solutions and helping to resolve potential drainage concerns and conflicts.

The general explanation of how flood protection facilities will be maintained and by whom appears to be sufficiently addressed in this DEIR. However, please also provide a more comprehensive explanation of agency/partner commitments and resources (e.g., funding and personnel) to be allocated to regular maintenance of the proposed flood protection facilities as part of a flood protection management plan to ensure better clarity and transparency of flood protection responsibilities.

Air Quality and Noise

Please address the following comments from the Caltrans District 4 Air Quality and Noise Branch:

Chapter 3.3 Air Quality, Existing Ambient Air Quality (page 3.3-6): Regarding the statement, "As shown in Table 3.1-1, the state 1-hour ozone standard of parts per million (ppm) and the state/federal 8-hour ozone standard of 0.07 ppm was exceeded in Redwood City on days 1 and 3, respectively," please clarify whether this means two days in 2019 and one day in 2020 per Table 3.3-1.

Chapter 3.13 Noise and Vibration, Table 3.13-11 (page 3.13-23): Please explain the use of impact pile driver for grading.

Chapter 3.13 Noise and Vibration, Tech Campus Reach (page 3.13-24): Please clarify why the impact remains significant if the noise reduction is less than 10dBA after mitigation.

Chapter 3.13 Noise and Vibration, Operation and Maintenance (page 3.13-30): Please provide an explanation demonstrating that the projected increase in truck traffic over existing volumes does not cause a significant rise in noise levels.

Climate Change/Sea Level Rise

The Dumbarton Bridge west approach and sections of SR 84 included in the project area are vulnerable to sea level rise. The Caltrans District 4 Climate Change Planning Branch is already coordinating with the San Francisquito Creek Joint Powers Authority (SFCJPA), the cities of Menlo Park and East Palo Alto, and other stakeholders in

identifying solutions to achieve project objectives. Caltrans will continue to participate in regular interagency coordination meetings for the SAFER Bay Project.

Construction-Related Impacts

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, please visit Caltrans Transportation Permits ([link](#)).

Prior to construction, coordination may be required with Caltrans to develop a Transportation Management Plan (TMP) to reduce construction traffic impacts to the State Transportation Network (STN).

Equitable Access

If any Caltrans facilities are impacted by the project, those facilities must meet Americans with 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 temporary or permanent work including traffic control that encroaches in, under, or over any portion of the State highway Rights-of-Way (ROW) requires a Caltrans-issued encroachment permit.

The Office of Encroachment Permits requires 100% complete design plans and supporting documents to review and circulate the permit application package. The review and approval of encroachment projects is managed through the Encroachment Permits Office Process (EPOP) or the Project Delivery Quality Management Assessment Process (QMAP), depending on project scope, complexity, and completeness of the application. Please use the following resources to determine the appropriate review process:

- TR-0416 Applicant's Checklist ([link](#))
- Caltrans Encroachment Projects Processes – Information Video ([link](#))
- Flowchart, Figure 1.2 in Section 108, Overview of the Encroachment Review Process, of Chapter 100 – The Permit Function, Caltrans Encroachment Permit Manual ([link](#))

The permit approval typically takes less than 60 days, but may take longer depending on the project scope, size, complexity, completeness, compliance with applicable laws, standards, policies, and quality of the permit package submitted. Projects

Tess Byler, Senior Project Manager
January 23, 2026
Page 4

requiring exceptions to design standards, exceptions to encroachment policies, or external agency approvals may need more time to process.

To obtain more information and 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 Luana Chen, Associate Transportation Planner, via LDR-D4@dot.ca.gov. For future early coordination opportunities or project referrals, please visit Caltrans LDR website ([link](#)) or contact LDR-D4@dot.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Luo Yunsheng'.

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

c: State Clearinghouse