



Yana Garcia
Secretary for
Environmental Protection



Department of Toxic Substances Control

Katherine M. Butler, MPH, Director
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Gavin Newsom
Governor

SENT VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL

July 22, 2025

Guillermo Arreola
Interim Community Development Director
City of Bell
6330 Pine Avenue
Bell, CA 90201
GArreola@cityofbell.org

RE: NOTICE OF PREPARATION OF A DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT FOR THE CHELI SPECIFIC PLAN DATED JULY 1, 2024, STATE CLEARINGHOUSE NUMBER [2023030415](#)

Dear Guillermo Arreola,

The Department of Toxic Substances Control (DTSC) reviewed the Notice of Preparation (NOP) of a Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the Cheli Specific Plan (Project). The Project proposes the preparation of a Specific Plan to guide development in the Plan Area to accommodate and allow for the existing commercial, industrial, and residential uses within the City's General Plan and Zoning Code and resolve existing land use conflicts between industrial and residential development. The purpose of the Specific Plan is to establish appropriate zoning to permit the existing uses within the area; address infrastructure deficiencies and ensure appropriate infrastructure for future uses; improve accessibility and circulation for users of the area who do not have access to a motor vehicle; and improve availability of regular services for all users of the area. DTSC recommends and requests consideration of the following comments:

1. There are several areas/sites which DTSC has regulatory oversight over that are within the proposed Project site, whether they are listed as having

documented contamination, land use restrictions, are subject to a Hazardous Waste Facility Permit, or have the potential for the Project site to be included on a list of hazardous materials sites compiled pursuant to Government Code Section 65962.5. Therefore, DTSC recommends further coordination with the Department if the proposed project may impact any of the areas that may fall under DTSC's oversight. Please review the Project area in [EnviroStor](#); DTSC's public-facing database and coordinate with the Department if any suspected decisions may impact these areas of which DTSC oversees.

2. The Draft EIR should identify and determine whether current or historic uses at the Project site may have resulted in any release of hazardous waste substances. A Phase I Environmental Site Assessment is necessary to identify any recognized environmental conditions. If the Project proposes a future school, DTSC recommends environmental review under the DTSC school program oversight to ensure the school is safe for students and staff.
3. The NOP states that Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe (AT&SF) Railway and the eastern frontage of Pacific Boulevard and to the south by AT&SF. Railroad easements and rail yards are commonly impacted due to spillage of chemicals, fuels, and lubricants, and use of pesticides and herbicides along the tracks for weed control. DTSC recommends assessment/investigation and/or cleanup as necessary to confirm that no residual contamination associated with rail operation is present onsite.
4. The NOP states that the Project site is close to USARC Bell which is located within or near a Formerly Used Defense Site (FUDS) based, in part, on the United States Department of Defense ordnance maps. This FUDS site may contain abandoned munitions and explosives (collectively, ordnance) or other hazardous substances, which are considered hazardous materials as defined in section 25260 of the California Health and Safety Code. DTSC recommends assessment and/or investigation be conducted in the project area to assess potential impacts from the nearby FUDS. For further safety information please visit: [DENIX \(Department of Defense Explosives Safety\)](#).

5. All imported soil/fill material should be tested to assess any contaminants of concern meet screening levels as outlined in [DTSC's Preliminary Endangerment Assessment Guidance Manual](#). Additionally, DTSC advises referencing the [DTSC Information Advisory Clean Imported Fill Material Fact Sheet](#) if importing fill is necessary. To minimize the possibility of introducing contaminated soil/fill material, there should be documentation of the origins of the soil/fill material and, if applicable, sampling be conducted to ensure that the imported soil/fill material are suitable for the intended land use. The soil sampling should include analysis based on the source of the soil/fill and knowledge of prior land use.
6. The [Individual Food Service](#) site is within the Project site's boundary and has a [Land Use Covenant \(LUC\)](#) which prohibits the use of the site as a residence, a hospital for humans, a public or private school for persons under 18 years of age, and a day care center for children. LUC also sets forth restrictions on excavation of soil on site. If any excavation is to be carried out on site, it should be done according to a Soil Management Plan pre-approved by DTSC. However, property maintenance activities at depths no greater than 4 feet below surface grade can be performed without preparing a Soil Management Plan at which point, all results should be conveyed to DTSC.

DTSC appreciates the opportunity to comment on the NOP of a DEIR for the Cheli Specific Plan. Thank you for your assistance in protecting California's people and environment from the harmful effects of toxic substances. If you have any questions or would like clarification on DTSC's comments, please respond to this letter or via [email](#) for additional guidance.

Guillermo Arreola

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Sincerely,

Tamara Purvis

Tamara Purvis

Associate Environmental Planner

HWMP - Permitting Division – CEQA Unit

Department of Toxic Substances Control

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cc: (via email)

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