

California Department of Transportation

DISTRICT 12
1750 East 4th Street, Suite 100 | SANTA ANA, CA 92705
(657) 328-6000 | FAX (657) 328-6522 TTY 711
<https://dot.ca.gov/caltrans-near-me/district-12>



June 23, 2025

Ms. Alexa Smittle
Community Development Director
City of Seal Beach
211 Eighth Street
Seal Beach, CA. 90740

File: LDR/CEQA
SCH: 2023110425
12-ORA-2025-02821
SR-1, SR-22, I-405, I-605

Dear Ms. Smittle,

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the review of the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for City of Seal Beach Housing Element and Zoning Code Update Project. The Project is the City's Housing Element Update and its resulting zoning code update and rezoning program. The Housing Element Update identifies Housing Opportunity Sites throughout the city that have the potential for providing additional housing to meet the City's Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA). The sites are broken into two categories: (a) underutilized sites that do not require zoning code changes and (b) sites where zoning modifications are proposed because the current capacity of these underutilized sites is not sufficient to fully accommodate the RHNA in all income categories. In addition, the sites inventory also identifies the Main Street Program, ADUs, and the Old Ranch Country Club Pipeline Project in its Housing Element Update. The Draft EIR analyzes the potential impacts from implementation of the Housing Element update and zoning code update.

The project site is the City of Seal Beach which includes eight housing opportunity sites, Main Street Program, Old Ranch Country Club Pipeline Project, and Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) throughout the city totaling approximately 259.45 acres, of which 60.05 acres are developable. The City of Seal Beach is accessed regionally by State Route (SR) 1, SR-22, Interstate 405 and Interstate 605.

State Route 1, State Route 22, Interstate 405 and Interstate 605 are all owned and operated by Caltrans. Therefore, Caltrans is a commenting agency on this project, and has the following comments:

1. Caltrans recognizes there is a strong link between transportation and land use. Development can have a significant impact on traffic and congestion on State transportation facilities. In particular, the pattern of land use can affect both local vehicle miles traveled and the number of trips. Caltrans supports collaboration with local agencies to work towards a safe, functional, interconnected, multi-modal transportation network integrated through applicable "smart growth" type land use planning and policies. Additionally, Caltrans supports the City's progress in meeting its Regional Housing Needs Assessment (RHNA) allocation, and we encourage the City to promote the development of housing units for a variety of income levels.
2. Encourage the use of transit among future residents, visitors, and workers of the proposed areas of developments. Increasing multimodal transportation will lead to a reduction to congestion, Vehicle Miles Traveled and improve air quality.
3. Caltrans encourages the design of Complete Streets that include high-quality pedestrian, bicycle, and transit facilities that are safe and comfortable for users of all ages and abilities. This may include safety measures such as physically separated sidewalks and bike lanes, pedestrian-oriented LED lighting, high-visibility continental crosswalk striping, raised crosswalks, refuge islands, wayfinding signage, and safe connections to existing and proposed bicycle facilities. Complete Streets improvements also promote regional connectivity, improve air quality, reduce congestion, promote improved first-/last-mile connections, and increase safety for all modes of transportation.
4. Bicycle parking that is well-placed, easy to find, and secure enables people to feel comfortable locking up their bicycle at a destination and encourages the use of active transportation. We recommend the provision of ample and secure bicycle parking at regionally significant destinations.
5. Please consider the addition of high visibility crosswalks and ADA curb ramps on intersections close to future project locations that currently lack one or both.
6. During any future construction, please ensure that appropriate detours and safety measures are in place that prioritize the mobility, access, and safety of bicyclists, pedestrians, and transit users.

7. The Draft EIR (DEIR) does not discuss the location or function of regional freight corridors near the City of Seal Beach, such as SR-22, I-405, or the nearby freight rail corridor (UPRR/Ports complex). While the project is a Housing Element update, the addition of up to 1,303 residential units could impact or be impacted by existing freight routes. Please identify and map the proximity of the Housing Opportunity Sites to the state highways and regional truck corridors in the EIR. Also, please incorporate a freight context narrative to assess potential land use conflicts or constraints on freight reliability.
8. Several housing opportunity sites are located near commercial or industrial zones, but the EIR lacks evaluation of potential freight-sensitive use conflicts—such as exposure to truck noise, emissions, and vibration. This is particularly important near the Leisure World area and adjacent arterial corridors with potential freight activity. Please use the Caltrans Freight-Land Use Compatibility Matrix to evaluate potential land use conflicts and add your finding in the EIR. Also, where necessary, apply mitigation strategies (e.g., buffers, building orientation, noise walls) to preserve both housing habitability and freight operability.
9. The DEIR omits analysis of how increased residential density may affect truck routes, delivery access, or curbside loading conflicts in mixed-use or commercial zones. This could lead to unplanned friction between residential uses and freight-related operations in corridors like Seal Beach Blvd and Pacific Coast Highway. Please include a discussion in the EIR of how residential infill and mixed-use development will coexist with ongoing truck access needs. Also, consider design guidelines that support safe truck circulation and minimize conflict with pedestrian or bicycle networks.
10. Seal Beach is in a coastal zone, vulnerable to sea-level rise and storm surge, yet the DEIR does not consider how emergency goods movement or freight continuity might be preserved during disruptions. Please add a freight resilience section in the EIR to address redundancy, critical access routes, and emergency delivery corridors in the context of climate adaptation.
11. The DEIR does not evaluate how proposed residential site allocations or policies align with regional freight goals in SCAG's Connect SoCal 2024 or Caltrans Freight Mobility Plan 2020. Please include a policy consistency review in the EIR which addresses freight-supportive and freight-

compatible development. This is essential to protect the region's goods movement competitiveness while meeting housing mandates.

12. Please note that future projects should not present adverse impacts to the overall transportation system including traffic circulation and the local State Highway Systems (SHS). If future developments disrupt or impede traffic circulation or the local State Highway System, Caltrans will request a Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) of these assets. The TIA will also need to include existing and future average daily traffic volumes, traffic generation including peak hour, traffic distribution, Highway Capacity Manual (HCM) intersection analysis along with current and projected capacities of local street, and state highways or freeways including ramps that might be impacted.
13. When analyzing future proposed projects, please note potential short- and long-term traffic impacts with respect to regional vehicle miles traveled (VMT's), please use the Governor's Office of Planning and Research Guidance to identify VMT related impacts.
14. If future impact analysis leads to findings of significance on State facilities, please coordinate with Caltrans District 12 Local Development on development of a Traffic Mitigation Agreement or similar effort.
15. Any work performed within Caltrans right-of-way (R/W) will require discretionary review and approval by Caltrans and an encroachment permit will be required for any work within the Caltrans R/W prior to construction. Prior to submitting to Caltrans Permit's branch, applicant should fill out Applicant's Checklist to Determine Applicable Review Process (QMAP List) Form TR-0416 to determine if project oversight/coordination with Caltrans Project Manager is needed. Applicant must submit a signed Standard Encroachment Permit application form TR-0100 along with a deposit payable to Caltrans. Deposit amount will be dependent on when the application is submitted. Public corporations are legally exempt from encroachment permit fees. However, contractors working for public corporations are not exempt from fees. Please note that all utility work should be disclosed prior to permit submittal, and utility companies are to apply for separate permits for their corresponding work.
16. Project plans and traffic control plans must be stamped and signed by a licensed engineer. For all plans, including traffic control plans, Caltrans R/W lines should be clearly labeled, which includes existing and proposed

(if there are any changes to Caltrans R/W), the north arrow, the edge of pavement, and edge of the sidewalk, if applicable. When submitting the application, please include final Environmental Clearance Documentation, relevant design details including design exception approvals and construction and drainage plans, traffic control plans, traffic management plan and traffic impact study if proposed traffic delay of 30 minutes above normal recurring traffic delay is anticipated, any Caltrans R/W certifications if needed, maintenance agreement as needed, shoring plans for any excavation 5-feet or more, ADA certification, and any letter of authorizations.

17. Please submit all applications and associated documents/plans via email to D12.Permits@dot.ca.gov until further notice. Caltrans Encroachment Permits will be transitioning to an online web portal base for all applications in Fall 2023. Further details to be announced on the Caltrans Encroachment Permits homepage. Additional information regarding encroachment permits may be obtained by contacting the Caltrans Permits Office at (657) 328-6246. For specific details on Caltrans Encroachment Permits procedure and any future updates regarding the application process and permit rates, please visit the Caltrans Encroachment Permits homepage at <https://dot.ca.gov/programs/traffic-operations/ep>.

Caltrans' mission is to improve lives and communities through transportation. Please continue to coordinate with Caltrans for any future developments that could potentially impact State transportation facilities. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Julie Lugaro at Julie.lugaro@dot.ca.gov.

Sincerely,



[Scott Shelley \(Jun 23, 2025 15:45 PDT\)](#)

Scott Shelley
Branch Chief,
Local Development Review - Climate Change - Transit Grants
Caltrans, District 12