

California Department of Transportation

DISTRICT 4
OFFICE OF REGIONAL AND COMMUNITY PLANNING
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Rebecca Bustos, Senior Planner
City of Santa Clara
1500 Warburton Avenue
Santa Clara, CA 95050

Re: El Camino Real Specific Plan — Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR)

Dear Rebecca Bustos:

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the El Camino Real Specific Plan. 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 is a modified version of a previous DEIR that had been considered for adoption for the area along State Route (SR)-82 located in the City of Santa Clara. The current version of the Land Use Plan includes 4,400 residential units, reduced density, and would create a low-density residential designation for townhomes. Existing commercial space would be reduced.

Travel Demand Analysis

With the enactment of Senate Bill (SB) 743, Caltrans is focused on maximizing efficient development patterns, innovative travel demand reduction strategies, and multimodal improvements. For more information on how Caltrans assesses Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) analysis for land use projects, please review Caltrans' Transportation Impact Study Guide ([link](#)).

The project VMT analysis and significance determination are undertaken in a manner consistent with the VMT policy adopted by the City of Santa Clara. Per the DEIR, this project is found to have a less than significant VMT impact, therefore working towards meeting the State's VMT reduction goals.

Multimodal Transportation Planning

In addition to mentioning the Caltrans Highway Design Manual in sections 3.4-3.5 of the Transportation Impact Analysis Report, the Specific Plan should also consider the guidance of the Caltrans Design Information Bulletin 94 Complete Streets Context Criteria ([link](#)), and Design Information Bulletin 89 Class IV Bikeway Guidance ([link](#)).

Please review and include reference to the *Caltrans District 4 Pedestrian Plan* (2021) and the *Caltrans Bay Area Bike Plan Update* (2025) in the DEIR. These two plans studied existing conditions for walking and biking along and across the State Transportation Network (STN) in the nine-county Bay Area and developed a list of location-based and prioritized needs.

Please note that any Complete Streets reference should be updated to reflect Caltrans Director's Policy 37 ([link](#)) that highlights the importance of addressing the needs of non-motorists and prioritizing space-efficient forms of mobility, while also facilitating goods movement in a manner with the least environmental and social impacts. This supersedes Deputy Directive 64-R1, and further builds upon its goals of focusing on the movement of people and goods.

Freight Planning

During roadway designs, please take into consideration the turning radius at intersections and driveways for the 5 axle trucks that deliver along SR-82 as they make up nearly 14% of truck traffic along the corridor.

Lead Agency

As the Lead Agency, the City 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.

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

For future developments planned within the specific plan, 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 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 Marley Mathews, 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,

Rebecca Bustos, Senior Planner
January 26, 2026
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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