

California Department of Transportation

DISTRICT 4
OFFICE OF REGIONAL AND COMMUNITY PLANNING
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Samantha Updegrave, Community Development Director
City of Pacifica
1800 Francisco Blvd
Pacifica, CA 94044

Re: Pacifica Gateway Project – Notice of Preparation (NOP) of a Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR)

Dear Samantha Updegrave:

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the Pacifica Gateway 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 May 2025 NOP.

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 would develop a total of 195 housing units with a mix of affordability levels on a 61.86-acre project site, with a portion of the site retained as open space. Construction would include 21 single-family residences, 33 townhomes, a 100-unit apartment building, and a 41-unit apartment building, along with an internal circulation network, bioretention facilities, and landscaping. The project site is located directly adjacent to and slopes down toward State Route (SR) 1. The project also proposes construction of a new driveway on SR 1 for ingress and egress from the residential community.

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 project applicant will need to obtain an encroachment permit for work related to the proposed driveway on SR 1, the proposed drainage systems that connect to the SR 1 storm drain system, and any other work or traffic control within Caltrans ROW.

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](#)).

Cultural Resources

Please be advised that there is an archaeological site within Caltrans ROW at this project location. As the lead agency, the City will need to ensure that cultural compliance under Public Resources Code Section 5024 ([link](#)) is completed before a Caltrans encroachment permit can be issued. Please note that a previous permit application from 2022 may have been canceled because requirements to provide a cultural resource technical study and to obtain subsequent approval of the study by the Caltrans Office of Cultural Resource Studies (ORCS) were not met. Caltrans looks forward to reviewing the cultural resources analysis in the DEIR when it is available.

Hydrology

Please ensure that any increase in stormwater 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 increase of stormwater runoff from the proposed development will impact the design capacity of the State's existing drainage systems at SR 1. During the encroachment permit application stage, please include for review hydrologic and hydraulic calculations that show no increase in flow at the connection to the Caltrans drainage system and watershed maps for the pre- and post-construction conditions.

Geotechnical Design

Given the downward sloping of the project site toward SR 1 and the proposed grading activities during project construction, the Office of Geotechnical Design would like to ensure that the SR 1 roadway will not be impacted by excavation and the potential settlement due to dewatering or loading from the 5-story apartment building or other adjacent structures.

Additionally, based on review of an April 2024 Geotechnical Engineering Investigation Report provided to Caltrans by the City in May 2024, the Office of Geotechnical Design requested confirmation that the 90% relative compaction for the geo-grid reinforced fill will provide the required strength for a stable slope as commonly recommended compaction for geosynthetic-reinforced fill is 95%, which was also stated in Section 5.4.5, Fill Settlement, of the report. Clarification and/or justification for the strength parameters of the geogrid-reinforced fill in Table 3, Summary of Subsurface Strength Parameters, of the report was also requested as the values seemed to be a bit too high.

Caltrans looks forward to seeing these comments considered and incorporated in an updated geotechnical report prior to issuance of a Caltrans encroachment permit.

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](#)). Caltrans looks forward to reviewing the VMT analysis in the DEIR when it is available.

Construction-Related Impacts

Potential impacts to the State Right-of-Way (ROW) from project-related temporary access points should be analyzed. Mitigation for significant impacts due to construction and noise should be identified. 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](#)).

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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)

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.

Thank you again for including Caltrans in the environmental review process. Should you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact Luana Chen, 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,



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

c: State Clearinghouse