California Department of Transportation

DISTRICT 4
OFFICE OF REGIONAL AND COMMUNITY PLANNING
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Conor McKay, Senior Planner
City of Santa Rosa
100 Santa Rosa Avenue, Room 3
Santa Rosa, CA 95402

Re: South Santa Rosa Specific Plan — Notice of Preparation (NOP) of a Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR)

Dear Conor McKay:

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the South Santa Rosa 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 August 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 will guide the future development of a 1,900-acre area in southern Santa Rosa including facilities, ensuring equitable outreach to diverse groups, preparing an anti-displacement strategy for affordable housing, and supporting existing transit services. A policy framework will be created to support community health, balanced neighborhoods, transportation, affordable housing, economic resilience, and equity.

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*).

Please be sure to review the US 101 North Comprehensive Multimodal Corridor Plan (*link*) when developing the DEIR for applicable VMT mitigation projects.

Caltrans looks forward to reviewing the VMT analysis in the DEIR when it is available.

Multimodal Transportation Planning
Please review and include reference to the *Caltrans District 4 Pedestrian Plan* (2021) and the *Caltrans District 4 Bike Plan* (2018) 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.

Integrated Transportation and Land Use Planning
Transportation and housing are integrally connected. CTP 2050 envisions that the majority of new housing located near existing housing, jobs, and transit, and in close proximity to one another will reduce vehicle travel and GHG emissions, and be accessible and affordable for all Californians, including disadvantaged and low-income communities. The location, density, and affordability of future housing will dictate much of our future travel patterns, and our ability to achieve the vision outlined in CTP 2050. Caltrans encourages the City to consider and explore the potential of excess state-owned property for affordable housing development, per Executive Order N-06-19.

Caltrans looks forward to reviewing the DEIR that should demonstrate how the future land use development patterns support State's VMT reduction goals. Caltrans supports collaboration with local agencies to work towards a safe, functional, interconnected, multi-modal transportation network integrated through efficient and equitable land use planning and policies. The City should also continue to coordinate with Caltrans to identify and implement necessary network improvements and impact mitigation.

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.

Equity and Public Engagement
We will achieve equity when everyone has access to what they need to thrive no matter their race, socioeconomic status, identity, where they live, or how they travel. Caltrans is committed to advancing equity and livability in all communities. We look forward to collaborating with the City to prioritize projects that are equitable and provide meaningful benefits to historically underserved communities.

Caltrans encourages the City to foster meaningful, equitable and ongoing public engagement in the Specific Plan development process to ensure future transportation decisions and investments reflect community interests and values. The public engagement process should include community-sensitive and equity-focused approaches seeking out the needs of individuals from underserved, Tribal, and low-income communities, the elderly, and individuals with disabilities.

Sincerely,

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

c: State Clearinghouse