

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>



April 20, 2026

Mr. Izzak Mireles
Senior Planner
City of San Juan Capistrano
32400 Paseo Adelanto
San Juan Capistrano, CA 92675

File: LDR/CEQA
SCH: 2026030917
12-ORA-2026-03063
SR-74, PM 0.0
I-5, PM 9.45

Dear Mr. Mireles,

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the review of the Notice of Preparation (NOP) of a Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the French Hotel. The project applicant is requesting approval to rehabilitate and develop a hotel and ancillary uses on a 1.68-acre property located at 31861-31871 Camino Capistrano in the City of San Juan Capistrano, Orange County with a proposed 70-room boutique hotel consisting of six buildings with a restaurant, event spaces, fitness center, pool area, a public gathering space, and on-site valet parking. The Project involves the restoration and rehabilitation of the Domingo Yorba and Casa Manuel Garcia Adobes, both listed on the National Register of Historic Places, for use as guest rooms and dining areas integrated within the overall hotel design.

Regional access to the Project Site would be provided by the Interstate 5 Freeway located west of the Proposed Project and would be accessed via Camino Capistrano. Interstate 5 (I-5) is located approximately .25 miles east of the Project Site and State Route 74 (SR-74) is located approximately .25 miles northeast of the Project Site. Interstate 5 and State Route 74 are under the ownership and operation of Caltrans, which acts as a commenting agency for this project. Accordingly, Caltrans has provided the following feedback:

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.

2. Caltrans supports local developments that are consistent with State planning priorities intended to promote equity, strengthen the economy, protect the environment, and promote public and health safety. This can be achieved by promoting smart growth principles in projects which provide a diversity of housing choices and destinations accessible by active transportation (i.e. bicycle and pedestrian) and transit users.
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. Improvements may include providing secure bicycle parking, pedestrian-oriented LED lighting, wayfinding signage, and comfortable connections to nearby active transportation and/or transit 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. Continue to incorporate Complete Streets in project development.
4. There are existing pedestrian, bicycle, and transit facilities near or adjacent to the site, including the San Juan Capistrano Amtrak Station, an existing Class III bike route along Camino Capistrano, and OCTA bus route 91. During 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. If sidewalks, bike lanes, or transit stops need to be closed during construction, please ensure that closures and detours are clearly signed.
5. The site is located on an OC Bus route (Route 91) and in close proximity to a stop for both OC Bus and the San Juan Capistrano Trolley. Caltrans recommends the project developer/hotel operator commits to ongoing

advertisement of the proximity to the San Juan Capistrano Metrolink/Amtrak Station (less than 1000 feet) and bus transit on their website in an effort to potentially reduce vehicle trips. Please consider providing improvements to the nearest bus stops in each direction, such as bus shelters and other amenities that OCTA and the City of San Juan Capistrano recommend. The developer could also consider adoption of the nearby bus stops for ongoing cleaning and maintenance.

6. The DEIR should quantify the expected number and type of freight trips, including linen services, housekeeping supply deliveries, food and beverage distribution, package delivery (parcel carriers, on demand delivery services), solid waste and recycling hauling, and event related deliveries for the barn/event space.
7. Evaluate whether the proposed 9'x19' loading zone shown in the site plan provides adequate dimensions for box trucks with 40 ft ramps and whether freight vehicles can maneuver internally without encroaching into pedestrian zones or backing onto Camino Capistrano. Confirm turning radii, sight distance, and internal staging needs to prevent conflicts with non-motorized users.
8. DEIR should evaluate whether delivery vehicles may queue or stage along Camino Capistrano or nearby residential/historic streets during unscheduled arrivals and whether early arriving trucks could idle near sensitive pedestrian areas, including the Mission district and nearby schools shown in the vicinity map.
9. DEIR should evaluate whether freight serving trips could affect queue storage at I-5 ramps, especially during event operations, interact with pedestrian oriented roadside activity on Camino Capistrano, and create incremental operational or safety considerations related to sight distance or turning movements.
10. Review truck route continuity, ramp adequacy, and local intersection performance under freight operations.

11. DEIR should address potential for pedestrian or bicycle conflict points at driveways, whether existing vegetation, adobe walls, or architectural features block truck sightlines, appropriate lighting levels at loading areas to ensure visibility and safety, and separation of activities when feasible (e.g., deliveries vs. valet operations).
12. The DEIR should discuss localized impacts to sensitive users. The vicinity map indicates the presence of schools, libraries, and dense pedestrian activity near the site. Evaluate noise and emissions from delivery vehicles near sensitive receptors, congestion effects of event related deliveries in the pedestrian focused Los Rios district, and mitigation such as green screening, delivery hour restrictions, and use of smaller or ZEV delivery vehicles where feasible.
13. Event loads may coincide with peak delivery times. Include emergency routing and congestion avoidance plans, ensuring freight operations do not obstruct emergency ingress/egress or block critical pathways during peak hotel/event activity periods.
14. 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. If coordination is not required, please submit an encroachment permit application package (EPAP) through the Caltrans Encroachment Permit System (CEPS - <https://ceps.dot.ca.gov/>). EPAP should include application, PE signed and stamped site-specific traffic control plan, insurance, letter of authorizations as needed, and any other relevant documents. EPAP should be submitted as early as possible to avoid any delays.
15. 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.

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 Arlo Phan at arlo.phan@dot.ca.gov.

Sincerely,



[Scott Shelley \(Apr 15, 2026 17:01:58 PDT\)](#)

Scott Shelley

Branch Chief,

Local Development Review - Climate Change - Transit Grants

Caltrans, District 12

LDR 2026030917 French Hotel NOP Comment Letter

Final Audit Report

2026-04-16

Created:	2026-04-15
By:	Arlo Phan (s161830@dot.ca.gov)
Status:	Signed
Transaction ID:	CBJCHBCAABAAxZ2XfoLMrHm5C_3w4yKa0acSJIC1ShMC

"LDR 2026030917 French Hotel NOP Comment Letter" History

-  Document created by Arlo Phan (s161830@dot.ca.gov)
2026-04-15 - 11:59:26 PM GMT - IP address: 149.136.17.251
-  Document emailed to Scott Shelley (s129812@dot.ca.gov) for signature
2026-04-15 - 11:59:52 PM GMT
-  Email viewed by Scott Shelley (s129812@dot.ca.gov)
2026-04-16 - 0:00:01 AM GMT - IP address: 32.195.113.178
-  Document e-signed by Scott Shelley (s129812@dot.ca.gov)
Signature Date: 2026-04-16 - 0:01:58 AM GMT - Time Source: server - IP address: 149.136.33.249
-  Agreement completed.
2026-04-16 - 0:01:58 AM GMT

