

California Department of Transportation

DISTRICT 12
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September 15, 2026

Ms. So Kim
Community Development Director
City of Aliso Viejo
12 Journey Suite 100
Aliso Viejo, CA 92656

File: LDR/CEQA
SCH: 2026081110
12-ORA-2026-03221
SR 73, PM 14.133

Dear Ms. Kim,

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the review of the Mitigated Negative Declaration for the Freedom Lane Residential Development Project for the City of Aliso Viejo. The mission of Caltrans is improving lives and communities through transportation.

The proposed project constructing a total of 71 residential units within a series of three-story single and duplex buildings on approximately 7.06 acres. Regional access to the site is provided by State Route 73 (SR 73). 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. The project is adjacent or close to several existing and planned bicycle facilities. Therefore, Caltrans recommends the inclusion of secure and functional short-term bike parking pursuant to CALGreen code. Short-term bike parking should be placed on the ground floor in visible areas that are close to main entrances and should be installed at least 24" away from walls and other objects (e.g.

trash cans, plants, etc.). With the increasing popularity of electric bikes and cargo/utility bikes, bike parking should also be designed to accommodate different styles, sizes, and weights of bikes (e.g. cargo bike, bike with trailer, adult tricycle, etc.).

- For additional guidance on providing functional bike parking, see the attached "Essentials of Bike Parking" guidance created by the Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals (link to online PDF: <https://www.apbp.org/Publications>).
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, 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.
 4. Please consider the addition of high visibility crosswalks and ADA curb ramps on intersections in or adjacent to the project location that currently lack one or both.
 5. Consider adding pedestrian scale lighting along sidewalks within or adjacent to project limits to improve pedestrian safety.
 6. Consider installing or planning for zero- or near zero-emission infrastructure (e.g. EV charging stations for delivery vehicles) to support California's transition to clean freight and reduce local air quality impacts.
 7. Please ensure that all ingress/egress driveways and internal circulation routes are designed to accommodate the turning radii and maneuvering needs of large trucks and trailers, consistent with Caltrans and American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO) standards.
 8. Consider whether there is a need for short-term delivery parking or package drop-off areas to prevent double-parking or blocking of driveways and sidewalks. Encourage the use of shared package lockers to reduce the number of delivery stops and vehicle idling.
 9. Confirm that internal roads and parking areas are designed for safe truck circulation, including adequate width, turning radii, and clear signage.

Emergency access routes should be maintained and not obstructed by truck parking or event staging.

10. Assess potential conflict points between delivery vehicles and non-motorized users at site entrances, internal walkways, and adjacent sidewalks. Incorporate design features such as clear signage, marked crosswalks, and sight distance improvements to enhance safety for all users.
11. During construction phase, please ensure that appropriate detours, signage, and safety measures that prioritize the mobility, access and safety of all traffic modes, including bicyclists, pedestrians and transit users.

Please also evaluate how construction may alter wayfinding, transit signage and multimodal circulation in the immediate project area and surrounding vicinity. Given the site's proximity to nearby rail and bus service, the project should consider both temporary construction-period access and long-term access for future users, including opportunities to support transit use.

12. All construction haul vehicles accessing the State Highway System must use routes approved by Caltrans. Any transportation of heavy construction equipment and/or materials which requires use of oversized-transport vehicles on State highways will require a Caltrans transportation permit. We recommend large size truck trips be limited to off-peak commute periods for the construction and operation phases. Construction truck loads should be covered with a tarpaulin cover.
13. The applicant shall ensure that construction-related traffic does not adversely impact operations on the State Highway System. All temporary traffic control within or affecting state highways shall comply with the most current edition of the California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (CA MUTCD) and Caltrans standards. The applicant shall ensure that public safety and mobility are maintained during construction.

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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 Joseph Jamoralin at Joseph.Jamoralin@dot.ca.gov.

Sincerely,



Scott Shelley (Sep 15, 2026 18:32:21 PDT)

Scott Shelley
Branch Chief, Local Development Review/Climate Resiliency
Caltrans, District 12