

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

DISTRICT 4

OFFICE OF TRANSIT AND COMMUNITY PLANNING

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January 5, 2017

SCH # 2016012012

GTS # 04-SM-2016-00065

SM- 92 - R13.597

Mr. Banks
City of Foster City
610 Foster City Boulevard
Foster City, CA 94404

Foster City Levee Protection Planning improvements Project – Draft Environmental Impact Report

Dear Mr. Banks:

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the Foster City Levee Protection Planning improvements Project. In tandem with the Metropolitan Transportation Commission's (MTC) Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS), the Caltrans' mission signals a modernization of our approach to evaluate and mitigate impacts to the State Transportation Network (STN). Caltrans' *Strategic Management Plan 2015-2020* aims to reduce Vehicle Miles Travelled (VMT) by tripling bicycle and doubling both pedestrian and transit travel by 2020. Our comments are based on the Draft Environmental Impact Report dated November 2016.

Project Understanding

The purpose of the project is to provide flood protection in accordance with updated Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) guidelines and regain FEMA accreditation for its existing levee system. Current FEMA guidelines require the current levee elevation along the city's levee system to be raised to protect the city from flooding associated with levee overtopping from extreme high tides or storm surges. In addition, the improved levee system will be designed to adapt to future sea level rise while maintaining public access along the levee system and protections for sensitive species. The precise design and height of the project is not yet finalized; therefore, the environmental analysis studies two scenarios at an equal level, which would have different ranges of levee elevations/floodwall heights as needed to meet FEMA freeboard requirements and protect against future sea level rise. The two scenarios are: (1) FEMA Freeboard with Sea Level Rise for the year 2050, and (2) FEMA Freeboard with Sea

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Level rise for the year 2100. Based on currently available data, preliminary evaluations, and City Council direction, the City anticipates that the project will utilize a combination of three different levee improvement types, depending on the location along the existing levee and the adjacent site constraints: (1) sheet pile floodwall, (2) earthen levee and (3) conventional floodwall.

The project would not generate a substantial number of trips, or alter circulation patterns upon completion. Construction activity would occur between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. on weekdays unless deviations from this schedule were approved in advance by the City. Haul trucks would travel between the construction staging areas and levee access points and a nearby quarry i.e., Pilarcitos Quarry, which is located 12 miles from the project site on State Route (SR) 92 near Half Moon Bay. Haul trucks would be required to leave the project site by 4:00 p.m. to avoid traveling during the peak evening commute period (4:00 to 6:00 p.m.) when traffic volumes are the highest. Truck trips would be added to the morning commute period but they would not be added to intersections that currently operate near or over capacity during morning peak-hour. No more than 20 workers, including the haul truck drivers, would travel to/from the project sites at one time during the construction period. Workers traveling to the project site in their private vehicles would arrive just before and leave shortly after the hours of construction (8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.).

Lead Agency

As the lead agency, City of Foster City is responsible for all project mitigation, including any needed improvements to state highways. The project's fair share contribution, financing, scheduling, implementation responsibilities and lead agency monitoring should be fully discussed for all proposed mitigation measures. This includes any required improvements to the STN or reductions in VMT which should be completed prior to issuance of the Certificate of Occupancy. The Department will not issue an Encroachment Permit until our concerns are adequately addressed, we strongly recommend that the City of Foster City work with both the applicant and the Department to ensure that our concerns are resolved during the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) process, and in any case prior to submittal of a permit application. See the end of this letter for more information on the Encroachment Permit process.

Transportation Management Plan

Where vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian traffic may be impacted during the construction of the proposed project requiring traffic restrictions and detours, a Caltrans-approved Transportation Management Plan (TMP) is required. Pedestrian and Bicycle access through the construction zone must comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) regulations (see Caltrans' *Temporary Pedestrian Facilities Handbook* for maintaining pedestrian access and meeting ADA requirements during construction at:

http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/construc/safety/Temporary_Pedestrian_Facilities_Handbook.pdf

(See also Caltrans' Traffic Operations Policy Directive 11-01 "Accommodating Bicyclists in Temporary Traffic Control Zones" at: www.dot.ca.gov/trafficops/policy/11-01.pdf).

All curb ramps and pedestrian facilities located within the limits of the project are required to be brought up to current ADA standards as part of this project. The TMP must also comply with the requirements of corresponding jurisdictions. For further TMP assistance, please contact the Caltrans District 4 Office of Traffic Management Operations at (510) 286-4579. Further traffic management information is available at the following website:

www.dot.ca.gov/hq/traffops/trafmgmt/tmp_lcs/index.htm.

Truck Traffic Congestion

Please address the following concerns with regards to construction trips:

- Draft Environmental Impact report (DEIR): Page 386; Figure V.K-4: Please provide intersection analysis and 95th percentile queuing analysis using demand volumes with the added truck trips for these intersections:
 - Fashion Island Boulevard/SR 92 Eastbound off-ramp
 - Edgewater Blvd / SR 92 Westbound off-ramp
 - If the two on-ramps at "Chess Drive/ Westbound SR 92, and Fashion Island Boulevard/ Eastbound SR 92" are the only access to SR 92 the project needs to provide ramp analysis. Otherwise, how do hauling trucks access SR 92 to go to their destination at Pilacitos Quarry in Half Moon Bay?
 - Chess Drive/SR 92 Westbound off-ramp, during AM peak hour:
 - If the result of analysis shows that truck hauling activity impacts these ramps during AM peak hours, the hauling impacts must be mitigated.
 - Metro Center Boulevard/SR 92 Eastbound off ramp, during AM peak hours:
 - If the result of analysis shows that truck hauling activity impacts these ramps during AM peak hours, the hauling impacts must be mitigated.
- For intersections near the SR 92 / Foster City Blvd interchange, the simulation results from the Vissim Micro Simulation Model do not accurately replicate the actual traffic conditions at the four intersections. Our data shows that these ramps are congested during peak hours. The model must use demand volumes instead of output volumes to replicate the existing condition at these intersection.

- The project should provide freeway segment analysis for the entire truck route shown on figure V.K-4. Figure V.K-4 shows the truck hauling route starts at beginning of San Mateo Bridge and continues on to and from Pilarcitos Quarry in Half Moon Bay.
- For the construction duration of the project, the project-generated truck trips along SR 92 should occur between the hours of 9:30 AM and 2:30 PM only. This is to avoid causing an impact on SR 92 during the morning and evening commute periods.

Cultural Resources

Caltrans disagrees with City of Foster City's finding of "Less-than-Significant" (Draft EIR Section D.4.b, page 251) for the Foster City Levee System. The Foster City Levee System is eligible for inclusion in the California Register of Historical Resources under both Criteria 1 and 3. This project will re-engineer the levee, increasing its height by 33%-95% along its entirety. Following the project, the original engineering of the levee will no longer be discernable and therefore it appears that the project will significantly affect the historical integrity of the levee system and it will likely no longer be eligible for inclusion of the California Register of Historical Resources. It would appear the project will have a Substantial Adverse Change on the Foster City Levee System. It is recommended that the City of Foster City conduct additional analysis of the project's potential to have a Substantial Adverse Change on the Foster City Levee System and revise Section D.4.b accordingly.

It is also recommended that follow up phone calls be placed to the Native American tribes and individuals that the City of Foster City has already contacted for the project as the use of multiple forms of contact is the professional standard for ensuring that Native American groups and individuals are provided adequate opportunities to respond. Although the project area contains no known archaeological sites, it has a moderate to high potential for submerged archaeological sites. According to the Draft EIR, the sheet piles used for the levee will be driven approximately 10 to 20 feet deep. It is recommended that the City of Foster City considers subsurface testing for submerged archaeological resources along the levee where sheet piles will be installed.

Transportation Permit

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, a completed Transportation Permit application with the determined specific route(s) for the shipper to follow from origin to destination must be submitted to:

Caltrans Transportation Permits Office
1823 14th Street
Sacramento, CA 95811-7119.

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See the following website for more information about Transportation Permits:

<http://www.dot.ca.gov/trafficops/permits/index.html>

Encroachment Permit

Please be advised that any work or traffic control that encroaches onto the State right-of-way (ROW) requires an Encroachment Permit that is issued by Caltrans. Traffic-related mitigation measures should be incorporated into the construction plans prior to the encroachment permit process. To apply, a completed Encroachment Permit application, the adopted environmental document, and five (5) sets of plans clearly indicating State ROW must be submitted to the address below. Traffic-related mitigation measures should be incorporated into the construction plans prior to the encroachment permit process.

David Salladay, District Office Chief
Office of Permits, MS 5E
California Department of Transportation, District 4
P.O. Box 23660
Oakland, CA 94623-0660

See the following website for more information:

<http://www.dot.ca.gov/trafficops/ep/index.html>

Thank you again for including Caltrans in the environmental review process. Should you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact Jannette Ramirez at 510-286-5535 or jannette.ramirez@dot.ca.gov.

Sincerely,



PATRICIA MAURICE
District Branch Chief
Local Development - Intergovernmental Review

c: State Clearinghouse