

STATE OF CALIFORNIA—CALIFORNIA STATE TRANSPORTATION AGENCY

EDMUND G. BROWN Jr., Governor

**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION**

DISTRICT 4

P.O. BOX 23660, MS-10D

OAKLAND, CA 94623-0660

PHONE (510) 286-5528

FAX (510) 286-5559

TTY 711

<http://www.dot.ca.gov/dist4/>*Serious Drought.  
Help save water!*

July 20, 2015

**RECEIVED**

JUL 20 2015

SMGen085

SCH# 2015062054

**CITY OF MENLO PARK  
BUILDING**

Ms. Deanna Chow  
City of Menlo Park  
701 Laurel Street  
Menlo Park, CA 94025

Dear Ms. Chow:

**ConnectMenlo: City of Menlo Park General Plan (Land Use and Circulation Elements) and M-2 Area Zoning Update – Notice of Preparation**

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the project referenced above. Caltrans' new mission, vision, and goals signal a modernization of our approach to California's transportation system. The following comments are based on the Notice of Preparation. We provide these comments to promote the State's smart mobility goals that support a vibrant economy and build active communities rather than sprawl.

***Project Understanding***

The proposed project is an update to the Land Use and Circulation Elements to the City of Menlo Park's (City) General Plan and a zoning change to the M-2 Area. The City is located at the southern edge of San Mateo County. It is generally bounded by San Francisco Bay; the cities of East Palo Alto and Palo Alto and Stanford University to the southeast; Atherton, unincorporated North Fair Oaks, and Redwood City to the northwest. The City is accessed by I-280, US-101, Caltrain, and State Route (SR) 84. The M-2 Area contains major regional transportation links, including SRs 84, 114, and 109, and the Dumbarton Bridge. The proposed updates frame the type and scale of potential development that may occur over the next 20-years and their potential impact to the local, regional, and state transportation system.

***Traffic Impact Fees***

If improvements to the Caltrans ROW are proposed, please identify any Traffic Impact Fees associated with the project. The scheduling and costs associated with planned improvements on the Caltrans ROW should be listed, in addition to identifying viable funding sources.

Ms. Deanna Chow/City of Menlo Park  
July 20, 2015  
Page 2

### ***Traffic Impact Study***

The environmental document should include an analysis of the travel demand expected from the proposed project. Early collaboration leads to better outcomes for all stakeholders. We are in the process of updating our Traffic Impact Study Guide for consistency with SB 743, but meanwhile we recommend using the Caltrans' Guide for the Preparation of Traffic Impact Studies (TIS Guide) for determining which scenarios and methodologies to use in the analysis. It is available at [http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/tpp/offices/ocp/igr\\_ceqa\\_files/tisguide.pdf](http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/tpp/offices/ocp/igr_ceqa_files/tisguide.pdf). Please ensure that a Traffic Impact Study is prepared providing the information detailed below:

1. Vicinity map, regional location map, and a site plan that clearly shows project access in relation to nearby state roadways. Clearly identify the state right-of-way (ROW). Project driveways, local roads and intersections, car and bicycle parking and transit facilities should be mapped.
2. Project-related trip generation, distribution, and assignment including per capita use of transit, rideshare or active transportation modes and vehicle miles travelled (VMT) reduction factors. The assumptions and methodologies used to develop this information should be detailed in the study, should utilize the latest place based research, and should be supported with appropriate documentation.
3. Schematic illustration of walking, biking, and auto traffic conditions at the project site and study area roadways, trip distribution percentages and volumes as well as intersection geometrics, i.e. lane configurations, for AM and PM peak periods.
4. Mitigation for any roadway sections or intersection with increasing VMT should be identified. Mitigation may include contributions to a regional or local fee program as applicable and should support the use of transit and active transportation modes.
5. Impacts on pedestrians and bicyclists resulting from projected VMT increases should be analyzed. The analysis should describe any pedestrian and bicycle mitigation measures and safety countermeasures that would be needed as a means of maintaining and improving access to transit facilities and reducing vehicle trips.

We also encourage you to develop Travel Demand Management (TDM) policies to encourage usage of nearby public transit lines and reduce vehicle trips on the state highways. These policies could include lower parking ratios, car-sharing programs, bicycle parking, and providing transit passes to residents. For information about parking ratios, see the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) report *Reforming Parking Policies to Support Smart Growth* or visit the MTC parking webpage: [http://www.mtc.ca.gov/planning/smart\\_growth/parking/](http://www.mtc.ca.gov/planning/smart_growth/parking/).

Ms. Deanna Chow/City of Menlo Park  
July 20, 2015  
Page 3

***Active Transportation***

Please consider pedestrian, bicycling, and transit performance or quality of service measures and modeling as a means of estimating the project impacts to these modes and evaluating mitigation measures and tradeoffs.

Please feel free to call or email Sandra Finegan at (510) 622-1644 or [sandra.finegan@dot.ca.gov](mailto:sandra.finegan@dot.ca.gov) with any questions regarding this letter.

Sincerely,



PATRICIA MAURICE  
District Branch Chief  
Local Development – Intergovernmental Review

cc: State Clearinghouse