

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

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December 6, 2017

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GTS ID 8632

Mr. Patrick Streeter
City of Santa Rosa
Planning and Economic Development Department
100 Santa Rosa Avenue, Room 3
Santa Rosa, CA 95404

Dutton Avenue Residences (DR17-074) – Design Review

Dear Mr. Streeter:

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the above-referenced project. In tandem with the Metropolitan Transportation Commission's (MTC) Sustainable Communities Strategy (SCS), Caltrans mission signals a modernization of our approach to evaluating and mitigating 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 Design Review.

Project Understanding

The applicant requests a Design Review to construct a gated community consisting of 107 multi-family residential units on a 5.95-acre land parcel at 3150 Dutton Avenue, Santa Rosa, California. The apartment units will be circumscribed in five buildings; one two-story, three three-story, and one mixed three- and four-story buildings with vertical elevators and bridge-way connection between the buildings. The multi-family residential units will consist of 33 one-bedroom, 64 two-bedroom and 10 three-bedroom. Onsite amenities includes a leasing office/internet cafe, club house, community kitchen, wine storage, fitness center, outdoor recreation area including a swimming pool, barbecue area, fireplace, bocce ball court and a community garden. The applicant proposes 107 covered parking spaces and 136 surface parking spaces for a total of 243 parking spaces, and 102 bicycle storage spaces. The project site will be regionally accessed via the US 101/Todd Road interchange. The site is located approximately 1.2 miles northwest of the US 101/Todd Road interchange. Access to the project site will be provided via a gated driveway on Dutton Avenue.

Travel Demand Analysis

With the enactment of Senate Bill (SB) 743, Caltrans is focusing on transportation infrastructure that supports smart growth and efficient development. Recently approved guidance for incorporating SB 743 (*Local Development-Intergovernmental Review Program Interim Guidance, November 2016*) intends to ensure that development projects align with State policies through the use of efficient development patterns, innovative travel demand reduction strategies, and necessary multimodal roadway improvements.

Vehicle Trip Reduction

In Caltrans' *Smart Mobility 2010: A Call to Action for the New Decade*, this project falls under **Place 4 Suburban Communities – Neighborhoods**, which includes areas with a low level of integration of housing with jobs, retail service, poorly connected street networks, low levels of transit service, a large amount of surface parking, and inadequate walkability, residential subdivisions and complexes including housing, public facilities and low-serving commercial uses typically separated by corridors. Given this Place Type and intensification of use, which typically leads to high levels of VMT and corresponding low levels of active transportation, we encourage the City to establish a Transportation Management Association (TMA) in partnership with other developments in the area to pursue aggressive trip reduction targets with Lead Agency monitoring and enforcement. In addition, the Transportation Demand Management (TDM) elements described below should be included in the program to promote smart mobility and reduce regional VMT and traffic impacts to the STN:

- Project design to encourage walking, bicycling, and convenient transit access;
- Ten percent vehicle parking reduction;
- Commuter subsidy for transit, carpool, vanpool, and bicycle use for residents;
- Bike and car share programs;
- Transit and trip planning resources such as a commute information kiosk;
- Enhanced bus stops including bus shelters;
- Electrical vehicle (EV) charging stations and designated parking spaces for EVs and clean fuel vehicles; and
- Decrease headway times and improve way-finding on Sonoma County Transit bus routes to provide a better connection between the project, nearby Southside Community Transit Station, 2nd Street Transit Mall, and the Downtown Santa Rosa Sonoma-Marín Area Rail Transit (SMART) Station, and regional destinations.

Transportation Demand Management programs should be documented with annual monitoring reports by an onsite TDM coordinator to demonstrate effectiveness. If the project does not achieve the VMT reduction goals, the reports should also include next steps to take in order to achieve those targets. Also, reducing the parking supply can encourage active forms of transportation, reduce regional VMT, and lessen future transportation impacts on US 101 and other State facilities.

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These smart growth approaches are consistent with the MTC's Regional Transportation Plan and SCS goals and would meet Caltrans Strategic Management Plan sustainability goals.

For additional TDM options, please refer to Chapter 8 of Federal Highway Administration's *Integrating Demand Management into the Transportation Planning Process: A Desk Reference*, regarding TDM at the local planning level. The reference is available online at: <http://www.ops.fhwa.dot.gov/publications/fhwahop12035/fhwahop12035.pdf>.

For information about parking ratios, please see MTC's report, *Reforming Parking Policies to Support Smart Growth*, or visit the MTC parking webpage: http://www.mtc.ca.gov/planning/smart_growth/parking.

Multimodal Planning

The project should be conditioned to ensure connections to proposed bike lanes and multi-use trails to facilitate walking and biking to the project site, local destinations, and transit nodes. Specifically, the project should be conditioned to connect to the proposed Class II bike lanes on Dutton Avenue, as shown in the *2010 City of Santa Rosa Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan*. Providing these connections with streets configured for alternative transportation modes will reduce VMT and promote usage of nearby Sonoma County Transit bus route 42.

Moreover, the project should be condition to pay fair-share contribution toward the proposed Class II bike lanes on Dutton Avenue. Please provide justification(s) for the exceedingly high ratio of car parking spaces to apartment units. We encourage lower parking ratios which can be achieved by TDM strategies discussed above in the Vehicle Trip Reduction section.

Lead Agency

As the Lead Agency, the City of Santa Rosa is responsible for all project mitigation, including any needed improvements to the STN. The project's financing, scheduling, implementation responsibilities and monitoring should be fully discussed for all proposed mitigation measures.

Should you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact Stephen Conteh at (510) 286-5534 or stephen.conteh@dot.ca.gov.

Sincerely,



PATRICIA MAURICE
District Branch Chief
Local Development - Intergovernmental Review