

Let me know if any of this is unclear or there are any additional questions.

Jesse Robertson
Transportation Planning
Caltrans District 1
(707) 684-6879 (mobile)

Mendocino County

MAR 14 2024

Planning & Building Services

From: Amy@WCPlan.com <Amy@WCPlan.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 12, 2024 3:03 PM
To: pbscommissions@mendocinocounty.org
Cc: Krog Julia <krogj@mendocinocounty.gov>; ROBERTSON, JESSE GRAHAM@DOT <jesse.robertson@dot.ca.gov>; Steven Switzer <switzers@mendocinocounty.gov>
Subject: CalTrans CDP #2023-0013; sight lines

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Dear Coastal Permit Administrator,

Regarding the CalTrans proposed Gualala Shoulders & Rumble project in Gualala, CDP #2023-0013, we would like the applicant to let the public know if sight lines will be improved as the result of this project.

In particular, will sight lines at Gypsy Flat Road be improved as the result of this project?

If so, by how many feet?

If not, why was the project not extended to improve sight lines at Gypsy Flat Road?

Also, I have learned that in 2017 CalTrans added language to their Encroachment Permit review process that requires CalTrans staff to deny Encroachments that cannot meet sight line distance requirements.

There is a process to obtain a Design Standard Decision Document from CalTrans to approve an exception. However, the process to obtain such an approval is unreasonably expensive; we have received ballpark quotes from engineers of upwards of \$200,000. Submittal of a request for a DSDD gives no guarantee that approval would be granted.

In addition, a DSDD process requires that the engineer accept liability for any deaths/injuries due to accidents that may arise due to reduced sight lines. We have not been able to find any engineering firm, no matter how large, that is willing to accept such liability. Therefore, even if someone could afford the \$200K to submit a DSDD request, the liability issue makes such a request impossible to make.

On the other hand, CalTrans accepts this liability with all of their facilities. Why can't they accept liability for these additional small projects (driveways)?

As I am sure you know, Highway One (as well as Highway 20) is, for the most part, a narrow, two-lane, windy State highway.

There are numerous vacant parcels along Highway One.

Is it the intention of CalTrans to perform a regulatory taking of vacant parcels along Highway One that are otherwise developable?

If so, how will CalTrans compensate the property owners of these properties?

Steven Switzer

From: ROBERTSON, JESSE GRAHAM@DOT <jesse.robertson@dot.ca.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, March 12, 2024 5:39 PM
To: Amy@WCPlan.com; Mark Cliser
Cc: Julia Krog; Steven Switzer; Debra Lennox
Subject: RE: CalTrans CDP #2023-0013; sight lines

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Amy & Mark,

At our last meeting, the Ghamlouch (applicant) representatives labeled the four locations under consideration for developing an access to State Route 1, labeled one through four. Location number one was located at the crest-vertical curve, which lies north of the subject property boundary and was ruled out of further consideration by the applicant. Location number two is the applicant's preferred access and the historic but undeveloped access to the parcel. Caltrans has ruled out the possibility of approving a driveway at this location due to inadequate sight-distance. Access location number three is located at a pedestrian gate to the parcel and was the other location found to be acceptable to Caltrans for providing optimal sight distance for both NB and SB directions. This location was opposed by the applicant's representatives due to other site constraints. Location number four is opposite the private road approach for Gypsy Flat Road. This location was evaluated in the field in Oct/Nov 2023 but found to have inadequate sight distance for the NB direction. Caltrans' previous finding was that a licensed engineer would be needed to be retained by the applicant to prepare a Design Standard Decision Document (DSDD) to approve an encroachment that does not meet State standards for a driveway at either location number one or number three.

With a copy of the Caltrans design plans for the Gualala shoulder improvements, District 1 Design conducted a preliminary review of the suggested driveway location immediately across the street from Gypsy Flat Rd, understanding that an encroachment permit application has not yet been submitted. The review resulted in the following revised conclusion from Caltrans:

- The suggested location (location number four) appears to have adequate corner and stopping sight distance (exceeding approximately 500 feet) looking north toward southbound traffic, but should be confirmed.
- Looking south (facing northbound traffic) it appears that corner and stopping sight distances are approaching 400 feet, which would require a Design Standard Decision Document be prepared by a Civil Engineer and approved by the District Office Chief for Design.

The Caltrans shoulder-widening project, which terminates in the north at Gypsy Flat Road, will include some modest realignment of Route 1 south of Gypsy Flat Rd is expected to be advertised later this summer for construction, which would commence at the end of 2024 through the summer of 2025. If the highway improvements are made prior to the Ghamlouch driveway construction, the corner and stopping sight distances to northbound traffic could meet the 500-foot requirement, but would also need to be confirmed at that time. In other words, if the driveway is constructed after the Caltrans improvements are complete, the applicant would not be required to submit a DSDD if the 500-foot sight distance can be achieved at location number four.

Mark & Julia,

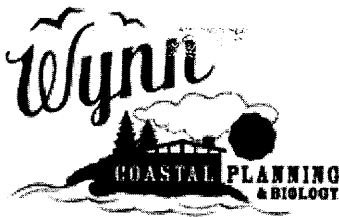
For future County applications requiring new driveway encroachments onto State routes, Caltrans requests that the County provide prospective applicants of Caltrans' sight distance/permit requirements before site plans are accepted by the County. I would be happy to work out a streamlined review process with County Planning to prevent Caltrans sight distance/permit requirements from becoming the last consideration in the planning approval process.

With the County's LCP update, there is an opportunity for the County to work closely with CalTrans to develop pathways to approving Encroachment Permits for existing parcels of record in the safest locations feasible along their roadways.

Thank you for receiving and addressing my comment during the CPA hearing on Thursday.

Best,
Amy

Amy Wynn, Principal Planner
Wynn Coastal Planning & Biology
703 North Main Street
Fort Bragg, CA 95437
ph: 707-964-2537
fax: 707-964-2622
www.WCPlan.com



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