

TRAFFIC OPERATIONS POLICY DIRECTIVE	NUMBER: 21 - 07 - R1	PAGE: 1 of 4
DUPER TONG, DIVISION CHIEF (Signature) <i>Duper Tong</i>	DATE ISSUED: August 13, 2026	EFFECTIVE DATE: August 13, 2026
SUBJECT: Consideration of the Caltrans Strategic direction in the processing of encroachment permit projects	DISTRIBUTION ☒ All District Directors ☒ All Deputy District Directors - Traffic Operations ☐ Chief Counsel, Legal Division Headquarters Division/Program Chiefs for: ☒ Maintenance ☒ Construction ☒ Design ☒ Planning ☒ Road Safety ☒ Additional: Local Assistance	
DOES THIS DIRECTIVE AFFECT OR SUPERSEDE ANOTHER DOCUMENT? ☒ YES ☐ NO	IF YES, DESCRIBE TOPD 21-07	
WILL THIS DIRECTIVE BE INCORPORATED IN A DEPARTMENT MANUAL, GUIDELINE OR STANDARD PLAN? ☒ YES ☐ NO	IF YES, DESCRIBE Encroachment Permits Manual	

DIRECTIVE

In the processing of encroachment permit projects, according to current California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) policies and procedures, the District Permit Engineer (DPE) shall promote and consider:

- Prioritizing and expediting the processing of applications related to natural disaster preparedness and recovery for essential public infrastructure
- Improving the safety and wellbeing of everyone within the State highway right-of-way during the initiation, construction, inspection, and closing of the project
- Improving the connectivity and expansion of public utilities including broadband, renewable energy, and recycled water
- Improving Multi-modal network connectivity with local agencies and transit owners
- Active transportation improvements with local agencies and other stakeholders

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- **Initiatives for equity, accessibility, and climate action, such as complete streets, bike/pedestrian over- or under-crossings, “broadband for all”, and conversion to electric and autonomous vehicles, especially in underserved communities**
 - **The Middle Mile Broadband Initiative (MMBI) to help bridge the digital divide and provide reliable and affordable internet access to all Californians, especially in underserved communities.**
 - **Community recognition projects, transportation artwork, and litter abatement efforts undertaken by local agencies and other stakeholders**
 - **Providing excellent customer service and responsiveness to permit applicants to enable local agencies to be successful at delivering their program of projects**

IMPLEMENTATION

To ensure consistency and uniformity across the State in the issuance of a quality encroachment permit, the DPEs are responsible for determining the level of complexity of proposed permit projects, determining which applications are appropriate, and determining the appropriate involvement of the permit review team. **Projects undertaken by local agencies, or others, within the State highway right-of-way and managed through Encroachment Permits Office Process (EPOP) shall be reviewed by the DPE and the permit review team.** Permit review teams are multi-functional and consist of members from across divisions to ensure permits conform to Caltrans' policies, manuals and guidance for statewide consistency. On behalf of the District Director, DPE's have authority to make decisions that reflect the public good in alignment with Caltrans Strategic Plan's goals and objectives, except where the facility improvements are part of a Capital Project or falls under the Quality Management Assurance Process (QMAP).

DELEGATION

No new delegations of authority are created under this policy.

BACKGROUND

The DPE plays a key role of being the steward of the California State Highway System (SHS) and advocating Caltrans strategic direction in encroachment permit projects within the State highway right-of-way. On behalf of the District Director, the DPE is the final determinant of the approval or denial of an encroachment permit application in the district. Caltrans is committed to provide a safe and reliable transportation network that serves all people and respects the environment – this includes the SHS as well as local street, rail, and transit networks that cross and intersect the SHS. The safety of the traveling public, highway workers and permittees are our primary concern, and we also play a critical role in providing connectivity and access for all users on and across the SHS. Caltrans also partners with public agencies and stakeholders to promote the safe use of our highways.

Caltrans recognizes its leadership role and unique responsibility in State government to eliminate barriers to accessing the California transportation network. Caltrans vision is “a

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BACKGROUND (Cont'd)

thriving and connected California". Caltrans Mission is "improving lives and communities through transportation". Caltrans values collaboration, equity, innovation, integrity, people first, pride and stewardship. Caltrans has adopted five goals. They are: safety, equity, climate action, prosperity & employee excellence.

As good stewards of the California SHS, providers of technical assistance and customer service, supporters of efficient local transportation networks, and advocates of Caltrans strategic direction in all of its activities, DPEs review each encroachment permit application to verify Caltrans' vision, mission, values and goals are reflected in encroachments on the SHS.

TRAFFIC OPERATIONS POLICY DIRECTIVE**DEFINITIONS**

When used in this Traffic Operations Policy Directive, the text shall be defined as follows:

- 1) **Standard** – a statement of required, mandatory or specifically prohibited practice. All standards text appears in **bold** type. The verb **shall** is typically used. Standards are sometimes modified by Options.
 - 2) Guidance – a statement of recommended, but not mandatory, practice in typical situations, with deviations allowed if engineering judgment or engineering study indicates the deviation to be appropriate. All Guidance statements text appears in underline type. The verb should is typically used. Guidance statements are sometime modified by Options.
 - 3) Option – a statement of practice that is a permissive condition and carries no requirement or recommendation. Options may contain allowable modifications to a Standard or Guidance. All Option statements text appears in normal type. The verb may is typically used.
 - 4) Support – an informational statement that does not convey any degree of mandate, recommendation, authorization, prohibition, or enforceable condition. Support statements text appears in normal type. The verbs shall, should and may are not used in Support statements.
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