



THE  
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GROUP

EMC  
research

Near Neighbor and  
Santa Clara Resident  
Focus Groups

# Methodology

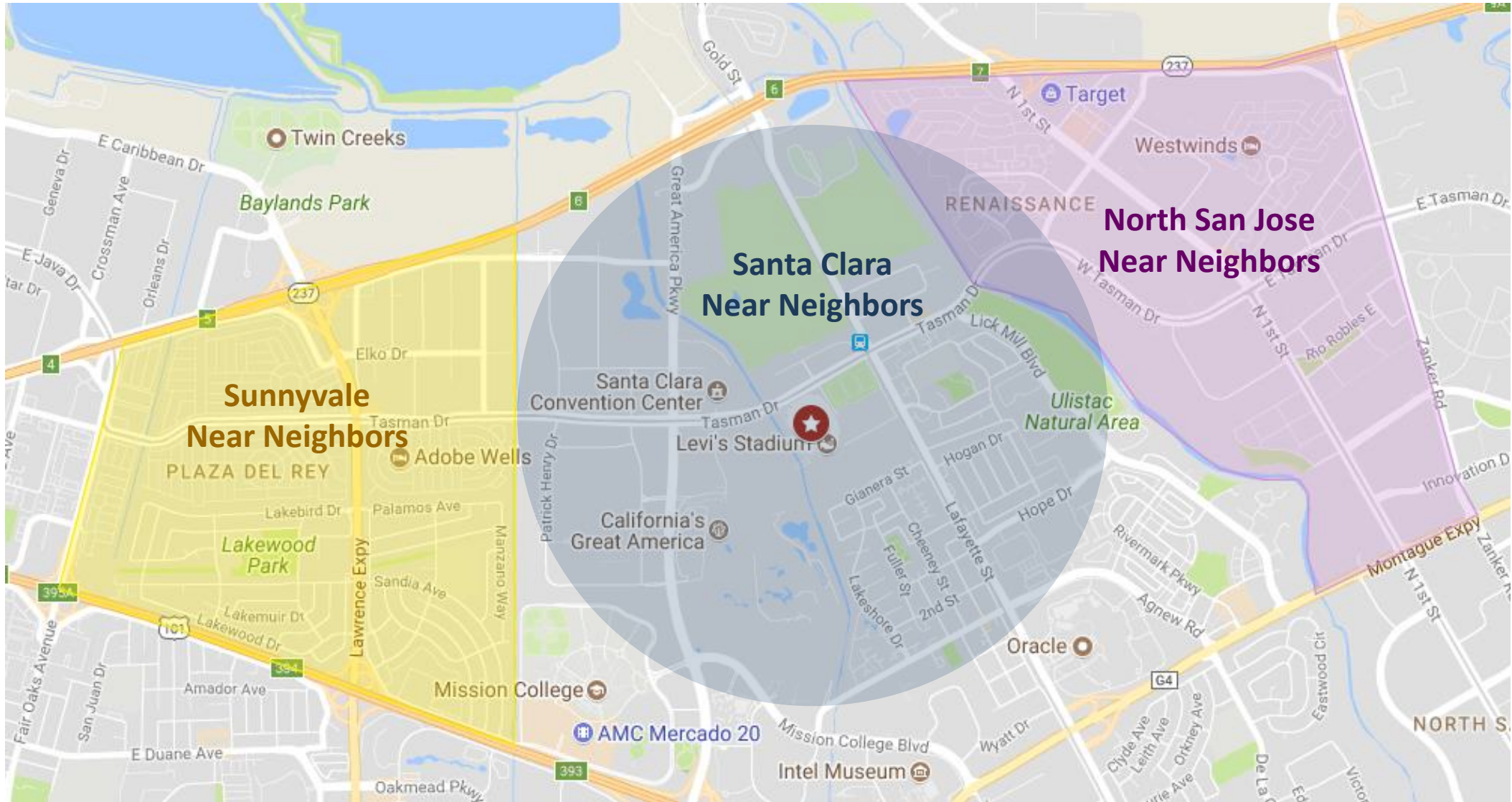
- ▶ Four focus groups held in Sunnyvale on April 25<sup>th</sup> and 26<sup>th</sup>, 2018
- ▶ Focus group participants were Santa Clara, San Jose and Sunnyvale residents

Wednesday, April 25 <sup>th</sup>	Group 1	Santa Clara Non-Neighbors, 15+ years in SC (1+ miles from stadium)
	Group 2	Santa Clara Non-Neighbors, <15 years in SC (1+ miles from stadium)
Thursday, April 26 <sup>th</sup>	Group 3	Santa Clara Near Neighbors (<1 mile from stadium)
	Group 4	Sunnyvale & San Jose Near Neighbors

- ▶ Each group had 8-10 participants
- ▶ Groups were moderated by Andrew Thibault from EMC Research

*Note: Due to the nature of qualitative research, the following findings reflect only the attitudes and opinions of the participants in the focus groups, and cannot be reliably projected across the larger population*

# Near-Neighbor Regions





# General Attitudes About Santa Clara

# General Attitudes

- ▶ For the most part, participants had positive feelings about living in Santa Clara/the region
- ▶ Santa Clara residents had largely positive views of City government and the job it is doing

## Top Positives Expressed:

- Small town feel
- Location/easy access to many attractions and other communities
- Weather
- Diversity
- City services/amenities

## Top Negatives Expressed:

- Traffic
- Development of housing faster than services
- Cost of living
- Lack of a downtown area



# Levi's Stadium Awareness and Overall Attitudes

# Awareness

- ▶ Awareness of current stadium issues is low—most did not recall seeing or hearing anything recently regarding the stadium
- ▶ Among those who remembered hearing something, details were spotty
- ▶ A handful recalled hearing something about youth soccer field issues, revenue disputes, the cancelled Ed Sheeran concert, or the college football championship

“I heard something about someone owes some money. I don't know what, I can't remember it was so long ago.”  
– Santa Clara Non-Neighbor Resident

“There's some kind of issue with soccer fields.” – Santa Clara Non-Neighbor Resident

# Overall Attitudes

- ▶ Newer Santa Clara residents and those in Sunnyvale and North San Jose tended to have positive views of the stadium
- ▶ Santa Clara near-neighbors and long-time residents were more critical and more concerned with perceived negative impacts, but still saw positives
- ▶ The stadium is seen as an attraction that brings benefits and people to the City, including generating business for local hotels, shops, and restaurants
- ▶ Some more concerned residents acknowledged that, as problematic as stadium events may be for them, events aren't that frequent

"It's putting Santa Clara on the map, in terms of 'Oh! This is a place to go'... But at the same time, it does bring more people in, and it does raise the cost of living. So, it's good and bad."  
– Santa Clara Near-Neighbor Resident

"It's a horror, but only for a very small amount of the time. The other time, it's just dead."  
– Santa Clara Non-Neighbor Resident



# The Stadium as a Neighbor

- ▶ Because San Jose Airport and Great America cause more constant disturbances, some consider the stadium to be a better neighbor in terms of neighborhood disruptions and impacts
- ▶ However, the stadium is seen as unresponsive to concerns and complaints and many do not feel residents' grievances are listened to
- ▶ While few are clear on the distinction between ManCo and the Stadium Authority, those who live close to the stadium tend to have lower trust in the private side

"I think the stadium is a better neighbor than Great America, just based on the noise... Great America is just more noisy, more often."  
– Santa Clara Near-Neighbor Resident

"The stadium does not pick up their phones, and the city should know the stadium isn't responsive."  
– Santa Clara Near-Neighbor Resident

# Perceived Relationship with the City

- ▶ While most did not know specifics, participants shared a general perception that the relationship between the City and the stadium is tense
- ▶ There is a great deal of uncertainty about the specific revenue situation between the stadium and City of Santa Clara, but many felt the City was getting less revenue than had been originally promised
- ▶ Many had heard the stadium was supposed to give money to local schools but were unsure if they were following through

“I read that Santa Clara and the 49ers have fallen out... There's no longer a love connection, they're fighting and stuff. I think it's some kind of payment issue.” – Santa Clara Non-Neighbor Resident

“I would like to see Santa Clara be firmer with the stadium people and not let the stadium say ‘Oh, we know we owe you money because so and so stayed past curfew,’ and they have to wait a quarter or two quarters in order to get paid for it.”  
– Santa Clara Near-Neighbor Resident



# Levi's Stadium Issues & Solutions

# Parking

- ▶ Participants identified parking as the central issue caused by the stadium; other issues (e.g. traffic) are made worse by the stadium but have other primary sources
- ▶ Stadium-goers parking in neighborhoods also lead to other problems, including litter, noise, public urination and other disturbances from foot traffic

“The parking [is an issue]. The walking of the people around me. My kids play outside, and on game days, I don't feel safe because of the people that were walking around.”

– Santa Clara Near-Neighbor Resident

“People are parking in your apartment building's parking spots, you don't have a place to park...and the people that are walking to and from the events... just with everything in life, there's some not-so-nice people.” – Santa Clara Near-Neighbor Resident

# Parking Solutions

- ▶ Reactions to the permit proposal were mixed, though many supported enforcement if limited to event days
  - Some felt the program wasn't needed or worried it would push the problem into other neighborhoods
- ▶ Other ideas expressed by participants:
  - More stadium parking for lower cost
  - Use more corporate lots and have more frequent shuttles to/from lots
  - Better-scheduled public transportation

“Instead of trying to force people out of their cars first and onto public transit, it's like, make it convenient enough and timely enough that people will want to or realize it's much easier.”

– Santa Clara Near-Neighbor

“Have a parking permit but only enforce it on game days. So on other days, anybody can park there, like if you're having a party or your friends come, fine. But on game days, the cops can check and see who has the permit.” – Santa Clara Near-Neighbor

# Curfew and Noise

- ▶ Most knew of the curfew but did not know the specifics
- ▶ While noise is not seen to be as large an issue as parking, there was opposition to eliminating the curfew outright, particularly among near-neighbors in Santa Clara
  - Reactions to allowing limited exceptions were mixed
  - Although some lived within earshot of the stadium, Sunnyvale and San Jose near-neighbors were more supportive of easing the curfew than Santa Clara near-neighbors
- ▶ Some respondents pointed out that noise is generated not just within the stadium during events, but also by eventgoers passing through neighborhoods before and after

## **Ideas Suggested by Participants for Noise Issues:**

- Rebates for double-paned windows and air conditioning for impacted neighbors
- Begin events earlier or turn down the volume after a certain time

- ▶ Traffic is viewed as a general problem in the area that is exacerbated by the stadium
- ▶ Although there was near unanimous recognition that stadium events cause worse traffic jams, most are habituated to planning around traffic on event days and don't see it as a problem badly in need of solving

## **Ideas Expressed by Participants for Event Traffic Issues:**

- Incentivize using public transit to get to and from events
- Offer discounted parking fees for carpooling
- Parking further from stadium with frequent shuttle service
- Better access points through street closures to neighborhoods for residents

# Other Solutions Suggested by Groups

- ▶ More obvious stadium outreach to near-neighbors
- ▶ Free or discounted tickets for near-neighbors
- ▶ More portable toilets outside stadium to limit public urination

“I've never been to the stadium, and I would really like to go, and I know that I would have a more positive feeling about it in general, if I had had fun there at some point, so if everyone in the neighborhood is given like one ticket a year or something, I think I would enjoy it if I just had more positive, I think I would be more accepting.”

– Santa Clara Near-Neighbor Resident