

---

# El Camino Real Specific Plan

## FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT

SCH# 2019059029

---

Prepared by



In Consultation with



April 2021

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

---

Section 1.0	Introduction .....	1
Section 2.0	Summary of Draft EIR Public Review Process.....	2
Section 3.0	Draft EIR Recipients .....	3
Section 4.0	Responses to Draft EIR Comments .....	4
Section 5.0	Draft EIR Text Revisions .....	31

Appendix A: Draft EIR Comment Letters

## **SECTION 1.0 INTRODUCTION**

---

This document, together with the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR), constitutes the Final Environmental Impact Report (Final EIR) for the El Camino Real Specific Plan project.

### **1.1 PURPOSE OF THE FINAL EIR**

In conformance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and CEQA Guidelines, this Final EIR provides objective information regarding the environmental consequences of the proposed project. The Final EIR also examines mitigation measures and alternatives to the project intended to reduce or eliminate significant environmental impacts. The Final EIR is intended to be used by the City and any Responsible Agencies in making decisions regarding the project.

Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15090(a), prior to approving a project, the lead agency shall certify that:

- (1) The Final EIR has been completed in compliance with CEQA;
- (2) The Final EIR was presented to the decision-making body of the lead agency, and that the decision-making body reviewed and considered the information contained in the final EIR prior to approving the project; and
- (3) The Final EIR reflects the lead agency's independent judgment and analysis.

### **1.2 CONTENTS OF THE FINAL EIR**

CEQA Guidelines Section 15132 specify that the Final EIR shall consist of:

- a) The DEIR or a revision of the Draft;
- b) Comments and recommendations received on the DEIR either verbatim or in summary;
- c) A list of persons, organizations, and public agencies commenting on the DEIR;
- d) The Lead Agency's responses to significant environmental points raised in the review and consultation process; and
- e) Any other information added by the Lead Agency.

### **1.3 PUBLIC REVIEW**

In accordance with CEQA and the CEQA Guidelines, the City shall provide a written response to a public agency on comments made by that public agency at least 10 days prior to certifying the EIR. The Final EIR and all documents referenced in the Final EIR are available for public review at the Planning Division office in City Hall at 1500 Warburton Avenue on weekdays during normal business hours. The Final EIR is also available for review on the City's website:

<http://santaclaraca.gov/>

## SECTION 2.0 DRAFT EIR PUBLIC REVIEW SUMMARY

---

The DEIR for the El Camino Real Specific Plan project, dated November 2020, was circulated to affected public agencies and interested parties for a 45-day review period from December 10<sup>th</sup>, 2020 through January 25<sup>th</sup>, 2021. The City of Santa Clara undertook the following actions to inform the public of the availability of the DEIR:

- A Notice of Availability of DEIR was published on the City's website (<http://santaclaraca.gov/>) and in the Santa Clara Weekly;
- Notification of the availability of the DEIR was mailed to project-area residents and other members of the public who had indicated interest in the project;
- The DEIR was sent electronically to the State Clearinghouse on December 7<sup>th</sup>, 2020, as well as sent to various governmental agencies, organizations, businesses, and individuals (see *Section 3.0* for a list of agencies, organizations, businesses, and individuals that received the DEIR); and
- The DEIR were made available on the City's website (<http://santaclaraca.gov/>).

## SECTION 3.0 DRAFT EIR RECIPIENTS

---

CEQA Guidelines Section 15086 requires that a local Lead Agency consult with and request comments on the DEIR prepared for a project of this type from Responsible Agencies (government agencies that must approve or permit some aspect of the project), trustee agencies for resources affected by the project, adjacent cities and counties, and transportation planning agencies.

The NOA for the DEIR was sent to owners and occupants adjacent to the project site and to adjacent jurisdictions. The following agencies received a copy of the DEIR from the City or via the State Clearinghouse:

- Caltrans District 4
- California Department of Fish and Wildlife Region 3
- California Department of Housing & Community Development
- County of Santa Clara Parks and Recreation Department
- Native American Heritage Commission
- Office of Historic Preservation
- San Francisco Bay Regional Water Quality Control Board
- State Water Resources Board: Water Quality
- Santa Clara Valley Water District (Valley Water) Community Projects Review Unit
- Valley Transportation Agency (VTA)
- Santa Clara Unified School District
- Fremont Union High School District
- City of Cupertino Community Development Department
- City of San José Dept. of Planning, Building & Code Enforcement
- City of Sunnyvale Community Development/Planning Department
- City of Sunnyvale Public Works Department
- City of Sunnyvale Transportation and Traffic Division
- County of Santa Clara Airport Land Use Commission
- County of Santa Clara Department of Planning & Development
- County of Santa Clara Roads and Airports Department
- Amah Mutsun Tribal Band
- Amah Mutsun Tribal Band of Mission San Juan Bautista
- Indian Canyon Mutsun Band of Costanoan
- Muwekma Ohlone Indian Tribe of the SF Bay Area
- Muwekma Ohlone Tribe of the San Francisco Bay Area
- North Valley Yokuts Tribe
- The Ohlone Indian Tribe
- MTC-ABAG

Copies of the DEIR or NOA for the DEIR were sent to the following organizations, businesses, and individuals by the City:

- Adams Broadwell Joseph & Cardozo
- Lozeau Drury, LLP
- data@publicnoticejournal.com

## **SECTION 4.0      RESPONSES TO DRAFT EIR COMMENTS**

---

In accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15088, this document includes written responses to comments received by the City of Santa Clara on the DEIR.

Comments are organized under headings containing the source of the letter and its date. The specific comments from each of the letters and/or emails are presented with each response to that specific comment directly following. Copies of the actual letters and emails received by the City of Santa Clara are included in their entirety in Appendix A of this document. Comments received on the DEIR are listed below.

<b><u>Comment Letter and Commenter</u></b>	<b><u>Page of Response</u></b>
Federal and State Agencies .....	6
A. Responses to Comment Letter A from State of California Department of Transportation (dated January 20, 2021). .....	6
Regional and Local Agencies.....	6
B. Responses to Comment Letter B from Valley Water (dated January 22, 2021) .....	6
C. Responses to Comment Letter C from County of Santa Clara Parks and Recreation Department (dated January 25, 2021). .....	8
D. Responses to Comment Letter D from Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (dated January 25, 2021). .....	8
E. Responses to Comment Letter E from Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (dated January 26, 2021). .....	8
Organizations, Businesses, and Individuals .....	12
F. Responses to Comment Letter F from Nevenka Smrdeli (dated December 14, 2020).....	12
G. Responses to Comment Letter G from Suds Jain (dated January 21, 2021) .....	13
H. Responses to Comment Letter H from Joseph Penniman (dated January 24, 2021) .....	22
I. Responses to Comment Letter I from Diane Harrison (dated January 25, 2021).....	22
J. Responses to Comment Letter J from Oak Investment Group, LLC (dated January 25, 2021).....	24
K. Responses to Comment Letter K from Santa Clara Community Advocates (dated January 21, 2021).....	25

Comment letters were received from four public agencies. CEQA Guidelines Section 15086(c) require that:

A Responsible Agency or other public agency shall only make substantive comments regarding those activities involved in the project that are within an area of expertise of the agency or which are required to be carried out or approved by the Responsible Agency. Those comments shall be supported by specific documentation.

Regarding mitigation measures identified by commenting public agencies, the CEQA Guidelines Section 15086(d) state that:

Prior to the close of the public review period, a Responsible Agency or trustee agency which has identified what the agency considers to be significant environmental effects shall advise the Lead Agency of those effects. As to those effects relevant to its decisions, if any, on the project, the responsible or trustee agency shall either submit to the Lead Agency complete and detailed performance objectives for mitigation measures addressing those effects or refer the Lead Agency to appropriate, readily available guidelines or reference documents concerning mitigation measures. If the responsible or trustee agency is not aware of mitigation measures that address identified effects, the responsible or trustee agency shall so state.

## FEDERAL AND STATE AGENCIES

### A. Responses to Comment Letter A from State of California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) (dated January 20, 2021).

**Comment A.1:** Thank you for the opportunity to review the DEIR for the El Camino Real Specific Plan. Below are our comments for the DEIR. We would appreciate if you could provide more information with respect to our comments. Please feel free to reach out to me if you have any questions!

Please know that a Design Standard Decision Document (DSDD) would be required for the 10' left turn lane. And please specify the speed and the Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) Truck volume for the 11' lanes within the study area.

**Response A.1:** This comment is acknowledged. The City of Santa Clara will comply with all applicable Caltrans roadway design standards and specifications at the time the Specific Plan is implemented. The cross-section views presented in Figure 2.4-3 are conceptual, and not intended to be used for construction purposes.

## REGIONAL AND LOCAL AGENCIES

### B. Responses to Comment Letter B from Valley Water (dated January 22, 2021)

**Comment B.1:** The Santa Clara Valley Water District (Valley Water) has received the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the El Camino Real Specific Plan for the segment of El Camino Real between Helen Avenue to the west and the Capitol Corridor train tracks to the east, received by Valley Water on December 10, 2020.

The project area includes Valley Water fee title property and easements over East Branch El Camino Storm Drain, Calabazas Creek, Saratoga Creek, and San Tomas Aquino Creek. Any work proposed on Valley Water easements and/or fee title property will require issuance of a Valley Water encroachment permit. Valley Water encroachment permits are discretionary actions and Valley Water is to be considered a responsible agency under CEQA. Based on our review of the DEIR, we have the following comments:

On all project maps, please clearly label all creeks that cross through the Specific Plan area, including East Branch El Camino Storm Drain, Calabazas Creek, Saratoga Creek, and San Tomas Aquino Creek. The maps included in the DEIR do not show East Branch El Camino Storm Drain or San Tomas Aquino Creek.

**Response B.1:** This comment is acknowledged. There are two creeks that cross through the Specific Plan area, Calabazas Creek and Saratoga Creek. San Tomas Aquino Creek is located approximately 4,000 feet north of the project area boundary but is referred to as Saratoga Creek where the channel passes through the Specific Plan area. The East Branch El Camino Storm Drain is located below ground within the Specific Plan area, and does not represent a significant topographic feature having relevance to the land uses depicted on the project maps. As with the creeks, any work proposed within the Valley Water easements over the East Branch El Camino Storm Drain will require issuance of a Valley Water encroachment permit, however, it is not necessary to show its location on the project exhibits. Figure 2.3-1 (General Plan

Land Use Designations) will be revised to include labels on Calabazas Creek and Saratoga Creek (see SECTION 5. DRAFT EIR TEXT REVISIONS)

**Comment B.2:** Several sections in the DEIR note recreational opportunities will include existing and future trail connections and amenities along Calabazas, Saratoga, and San Tomas Aquino Creeks. These creeks are located within Valley Water easements or fee title property. If new trails and/or trail amenities are being proposed along Valley Water right of way, Valley Water permits will be required as well as joint use agreements with the City for reaches located on Valley Water property. Valley Water should be involved early in the design phase as there may be limited areas for trails along the creeks and early discussions will assist in determining opportunities and constraints and avoid conflicts with Valley Water operational needs.

**Response B.2:** This comment is acknowledged. The City will follow all required Valley Water permitting procedures and will consult with Valley Water regarding proposed trail connections and amenities along Calabazas, Saratoga, and San Tomas Aquino Creeks.

**Comment B.3:** Guidelines for lighting adjacent to creeks and trails need to include requirements for lighting to be directed away from the creek corridors for the protection of wildlife, in accordance with the Guidelines and Standards for Land Use Near Streams.

**Response B.3:** This comment does not speak to the adequacy of the DEIR, so no further response is necessary.

**Comment B.4:** Pages 146 and 150 of the DEIR incorrectly state that the plan area is within the Anderson Dam inundation area; however, according to the Lexington Dam Inundation Map the plan area is located within an area subject to inundation from the James J. Lenihan Dam on Lexington Reservoir. The document should be revised to correctly state the associated inundation area.

**Response B.4:** On page 146, the DEIR correctly states that much of the City is located within the zone that could be affected by flooding in the event of a failure of Lexington Dam and/or Anderson Dam. It further states, for the sake of clarification, that the El Camino Real Specific Plan area is located within the Lexington Dam Inundation Area.

The incorrect references to Anderson Dam on Page 150 have been revised to Lexington Dam. (see SECTION 5. DRAFT EIR TEXT REVISIONS)

**Comment B.5:** Page 145 of the DEIR the discussion of flooding notes the areas between Halford Avenue and Lawrence Expressway are in Zone AH; however, the FIRM Panel for this area shows this flooding in Zone AO. The City should confirm the flood zone limits.

**Response B.5:** This comment is acknowledged. The flooding discussion on Page 145 has been revised to describe the correct flood zone designation of AO. (see SECTION 5. DRAFT EIR TEXT REVISIONS)

**Comment B.6:** Valley Water appreciates the requirement to conform with the Guidelines and Standards for Land Use Near Streams.

**Response B.6:** This comment is acknowledged and no further response is necessary.

**C. Responses to Comment Letter C from County of Santa Clara Parks and Recreation Department (dated January 25, 2021).**

**Comment C.1:** The County of Santa Clara Parks and Recreation Department (County Parks Department) is submitting the following comments on the Notice of Availability of a Draft Environmental Impact Report for the El Camino Real Specific Plan (Plan).

In regard to the Plan, the County Parks Department's review is primarily focused on potential impacts related to the Santa Clara County Countywide Trails Master Plan Update (Countywide Trails Plan), an element of the County General Plan (adopted by the Board of Supervisors on November 14, 1995), relative to countywide trail routes, public access and regional parks. There is one Countywide Trails Plan trail route in the vicinity of the Plan:

*San Tomas Aquino/Saratoga Creek Trail (C5)*- an on-road bicycle route within the road right-of-way, located along Calabazas Boulevard.

A completed segment of the San Tomas Aquino/Saratoga Creek Trail in the Plan vicinity is an off-road bicycle route that allows hiking as well. This trail segment was rerouted from the original location featured in the Countywide Trails Plan and follows Calabazas Boulevard parallel to Calabazas Creek from Pomeroy Avenue to Cabrillo Avenue, and crosses the Plan site.

There are additionally two Santa Clara City-planned trail routes that cross the Plan site. One is the Saratoga Creek Extension Trail that is proposed as an on-road bicycle route located within the road right-of-way along Buchanan Drive, El Camino Real and Morse Lane. The second City-planned trail that crosses the Plan site is the partially-completed San Tomas Expressway Trail, which is a Class I on-road bicycle route located in the road right-of-way along San Tomas Expressway.

The County Parks Department supports the collaborative efforts between various City of Santa Clara departments and other local agencies in regard to this Plan and future site improvements. The County Parks Department also supports the Plan's efforts to develop new pedestrian and bicycle routes within the development, improve the safety of existing and proposed trail crossings across El Camino Real in the Plan vicinity, as well as develop and improve segments of the three regional trails mentioned above. It is imperative that the proposed development does not impact the completed segment of the Countywide Trails Plan's San Tomas Aquino/Saratoga Creek Trail, which crosses the Plan site.

**Response C.1:** This comment does not speak to the adequacy of the DEIR, so no further response is necessary.

**D. Responses to Comment Letter D from Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (dated January 25, 2021).**

**Comment D.1:** Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the DEIR for the El Camino Real Specific Plan. This is an exciting project and we look forward to working with the City to make this plan a reality. VTA has the following comments.

## Transit Service and Impacts

El Camino Real is an incredibly important corridor for it has the highest ridership within the VTA system that warrants two frequent network routes. VTA recommends more emphasis be placed within the plan that highlights this. VTA applauds the Specific Plan's vision to accommodate and provide improvements to transit service within Santa Clara (Page 40). VTA recommends the first paragraph under Transportation be updated to say, "Improve vehicular, transit, pedestrian, and bicycle facilities along the El Camino Real corridor by..." to reinforce the City's priority for accommodating all roadway users.

**Response D.1:** The Transportation discussion paragraph on Page 40 (1st sentence) has been revised to include "transit" as requested. (see SECTION 5. DRAFT EIR TEXT REVISIONS)

**Comment D.2:** Pages 216 and 217 indicate that in-lane stopping will speed up transit, then later states that congestion will delay transit. A more comprehensive analysis of transit impacts should be completed to determine if the net effect of in-lane stopping and congestion will be positive, negative, or neutral. VTA would be happy to work with the City to analyze the findings of this analysis. If any impacts are predicted to be negative, the project should provide mitigations to maintain current operations or improve the transit signal priority system to provide improved travel times and reliability of travel time on the corridor. This analysis would be consistent with Santa Clara General Plan policy 5.4.1-P18 that says, "Work with Valley Transportation Authority to improve transit access, information and frequency along El Camino Real, including the implementation of a Bus Rapid Transit or similar transit service near Regional Mixed- Use areas."

VTA's Transit Speed Policy encourages early coordination if a new signal (or new driveway with a signal) is being considered as part of a plan or development. The addition of a new signal would trigger signal retiming on the corridor in coordination with both VTA and Caltrans. We should note that VTA is beginning an audit on the existing Transit Signal Priority system on State Route 82/El Camino Real that will provide VTA with an overall recommendation on the future replacement technology. We will continue to update the City on this effort.

**Response D.2:** The discussion of transit vehicle delay in the DEIR includes the statement that the provision of the bus boarding islands aligns with City and VTA policies to increase the efficiency of bus service along key transit corridors, such as El Camino Real, and further concludes that "Neither the City of Santa Clara nor VTA have established policies or quantitative significance criteria related to transit vehicle delay. Therefore, there would be no transit travel time impacts." Based on these conclusions, it is not necessary for the DEIR to include a more comprehensive analysis, as there are no thresholds against which to determine the significance of any potential impacts. No revisions to the DEIR are required. The City will coordinate with VTA regarding the consideration of new signals, as necessary.

**Comment D.3:** Figure 3.17-2 on Page 203 and Figure 5 in Appendix D is using outdated route information. The DEIR should be updated to reflect current VTA routes that were implemented in December 2019.

Additionally, Page 222 indicates that VTA operates a Bus Rapid Transit service on El Camino Real. This should be updated to say that VTA operates a rapid bus route (Rapid 522) along El Camino Real. Bus Rapid Transit is a system that provide bus-only lanes and other quality infrastructure and programs. An example of this is along Alum Rock Avenue in San Jose between 34<sup>th</sup> Street and Capital Avenue.

**Response D.3:** Figure 3.17-2 on Page 203 and Figure 5 in Appendix D have been updated to reflect current VTA routes, as requested.

The term “Bus Rapid Transit” on Page 222 has been revised to “rapid bus route”, as requested. (see SECTION 5. DRAFT EIR TEXT REVISIONS)

#### **Comment D.4:**

##### **Bicycle and Pedestrian Accommodations**

VTA applauds the City's efforts to realize the proposed Class IV separated bikeway presented in the Santa Clara Bicycle Plan Update (2018). Page 202 states, "Specific Plan would allow in the interim condition the removal of on-street parking and installation of a Class II buffered or Class IV protected bicycle lane on both sides of El Camino Real (within the City limits) **within the existing curb to curb dimension of the street. Parking would remain along properties without on-site parking.**" VTA cautions that these two parameters (in bold) could compromise the construction of a continuous Class II buffered bike lane or Class IV separated bikeway. At transit stops, expanded ROW to provide a bus boarding island, which facilitates safe and efficient travel for bicycles and buses. To provide any bikeway, removal of parking or a travel lane is needed, and the latter may not be supported by the community. VTA recommends the language be updated to say, "Parking may remain along properties without on-site parking," to accommodate any future land use changes or City priorities that would allow for removal of parking.

VTA requests that any proposed traffic signal improvements consider the implementation of adaptive traffic signal timing to balance the mobility and enhanced safe movement of all travel modes, including pedestrians and bicycle users.

Due to the pandemic or to help reduce any future outbreaks of infectious diseases, VTA requests the project consider implementing touchless pedestrian push buttons on all traffic signals planned to be modified by the effort. Touchless buttons could have other benefits to help less physically able pedestrians to more easily trigger the pedestrian signals and associated timing.

**Response D.4:** These comments are acknowledged. Although VTA can work with the City to modify Specific Plan language and implement traffic signal design improvements such as adaptive traffic signal timing, touchless pedestrian push buttons, etc., these are not issues specifically related to CEQA or the analysis contained in the EIR. No revisions to the EIR are necessary.

## **Comment D.5:**

### Policy Language

Either the Regional or Local Regulatory Framework section of the Transportation chapter (Page 192) should be updated to include the Complete Streets Policy adopted by all Member Agencies in Santa Clara County, including the City of Santa Clara. The policy stipulates that all projects shall develop a Complete Streets Checklist. The intent of the VTA Checklist is to ensure bicyclists, pedestrians, transit, intelligent transportation systems, and green infrastructure is considered in all transportation plans and projects and to make the decision-making regarding trade-offs clear and publicly available. This should also be incorporated into Appendix D of the DEIR.

Also, Policy 5.8.3-P8 (Page 193) should be updated to read, "Require new development to work with VTA to install transit stop amenities, such as pedestrian pathways to stops, benches, traveler information, and shelters." VTA has our own set of standards for amenities and a system in place to work with developers to have them installed. Developers should reach out to bus.stop@vta.org early in the development process to allow for sufficient design and lead time for acquiring necessary amenities.

**Response D.5:** These comments are acknowledged. The Regulatory Framework discussion in Section 3.17 TRANSPORTATION has been revised to include a Santa Clara Complete Streets Policy subsection under the Local subheading. (see SECTION 5. DRAFT EIR TEXT REVISIONS)

The General Plan Policies listed on Page 193, including Policy 5.8.3-P8, are quoted directly from the City's General Plan document and cannot be modified or updated by this DEIR.

## **Comment D.6:**

### Clarity Edits

VTA also suggests a few edits to the text that would add clarity for readers.

- Page 67 - TR 5 Transit Efficiency and Use Please further explain what "full implementation of the Clipper fare payment system" entails.
- Page 200 - Existing Bike Conditions Add "planned" so text reads, "The City of Santa Clara Bicycle Plan (2018) identifies several planned bicycle infrastructure improvements near the Plan area, listed below and shown on Figure 3.17-1"
- Page 200 - Existing Pedestrian Conditions Project calls out location of Santa Clara Caltrain and notes pedestrian access to the station but makes no mention of bus stops along El Camino Real. Add a general note that indicates there are numerous (or provide the number) bus stops along El Camino Real that are served by sidewalks and signalized crossings.
- Page 201- Figure 3.17-1 Add a note to the legend so it is clear the dashed lines mean planned and the solid lines mean existing.

**Response D.6:** These comments are acknowledged. Control Measure TR5 of the 2017 Clean Air Plan shown on Page 67 was quoted directly from the document, and no further explanation or definition of what is meant by “full implementation of the Clipper fare payment system” is provided in the document or on the Bay Area Air Quality Management District (BAAQMD) website from which the document was obtained. Revisions have been made to the text on Page 200 regarding bicycle infrastructure improvements and bus stops, as requested. (see SECTION 5. DRAFT EIR TEXT REVISIONS) Figure 3.17-1 does not require revision, as the legend currently includes text that denotes Existing Bikeways (using lines that point to solid colored lines) and High-Priority Recommendations (with lines pointing to dashed colored lines).

**E. Responses to Comment Letter E from Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (additional comments, dated January 26, 2021).**

**Comment E.1:** Good morning, Lesley, I’m sorry to say I misunderstood my colleague on one aspect of the complete streets policy mentioned in our letter. The statement, “The policy stipulates that all projects shall develop a Complete Streets checklist” is not correct. There are two items here, which may have been conflated:

1. The VTA policy applies to VTA-led projects, and requires us to include planned complete streets elements into projects geographic limits or explain if there is an exception. Your policy also stipulates that if an exception is sought, a memo must be approved and made publicly available, but does not specify a checklist.
2. The 2016 Measure B Complete Streets Reporting Requirements, which require recipients of 2016 Measure B funds to have an adopted complete streets resolution (which you have) and to fill out the complete streets checklist. Essentially, if one of your projects did seek Measure B funds, you would require a complete streets checklist to be approved by VTA staff. If you have other funding sources, a checklist would not be required.

I’m attaching both the reporting requirements and your adopted complete streets resolution for clarity. Sorry about this! Please let me know if you need any more clarity or action from me on this.

**Response E.1:** This comment does not speak to the adequacy of the DEIR, so no further response is necessary.

## **ORGANIZATIONS, BUSINESSES, AND INDIVIDUALS**

**F. Responses to Comment Letter F from Nevenka Smrdeli (dated December 14, 2020)**

**Comment F.1:** I would like to provide some comments/suggestions in regards to the pending Plan.

1. Given the choice, I would not like to see any changes to El Camino Real.
2. The vegetation (i.e., olive trees, etc.) contained within the median strips along El Camino Real need to be maintained (i.e., trimmed) on a more regular basis.

**Response F.1:** The comment does not address environmental impacts or apply to any particular section of the DEIR and, therefore, does not warrant a further response.

### **G. Responses to Comment Letter G from Suds Jain (dated January 21, 2021)**

**Comment G.1:** Below are my comments on the Draft EIR plan for El Camino Real. These comments are mine alone and don't reflect any official position of the Santa Clara City Council. – Suds Jain

Only 5 alternatives were considered, none of which increased the amount of commercial square footage.

1. The proposed Specific Plan - reduces commercial space by 395,000 sq ft
2. No Project Alternative - the most environmentally superior alternative
3. No Project/No Redevelopment Alternative
4. No Project/Commercial, Residential and Office Redevelopment Alternative
5. Reduced Development Alternative - reduces both residential and commercial

Sunnyvale's letter to Santa Clara says:

*The Sunnyvale ECRCSP will provide a development cap for the project area. The Sunnyvale City Council selected Alternative R PLUS as the land use plan to be studied and developed further. This alternative will allow for 730,000 square feet of commercial floor area and 6,900 residential units above what is currently existing in the project area, **which is 220,000 square feet of commercial floor area and 2,700 residential units above what is allowed in the Sunnyvale 2035 Land Use and Transportation Element. Please ensure these numbers have been incorporated into the cumulative impacts analysis of the Environmental Impact Report.***

Why does Sunnyvale's plan call for more housing and more commercial than Santa Clara's plan? Sunnyvale is increasing commercial yet Santa Clara is reducing it. Sunnyvale's table below show the benefits to their general fund of various options. Santa Clara's plan has no such financial analysis.

What is the fiscal impact to the City's budget from sales taxes of reducing 395,000 square feet of commercial space?

# Summary of Net Fiscal Impact

Table 1  
SUMMARY OF FISCAL IMPACT OF SUNNYVALE EL CAMINO REAL ALTERNATIVES

Annual Impact in Year	ALT C - COMMERCIAL FOCUS		ALT M - MIXED-USE FOCUS		ALT R - RESIDENTIAL FOCUS		ALT R+ - RESIDENTIAL PLUS	
	2025	2035	2025	2035	2025	2035	2025	2035
Estimated General Fund Revenue Impact	\$4,041,237	\$9,716,835	3,651,520	9,038,409	4,038,809	9,029,447	4,600,590	10,623,804
Estimated General Fund Expenditure Impact	-2,172,507	-6,044,507	-2,752,773	-7,535,380	-3,136,826	-8,385,404	-4,140,242	-11,134,180
<b>Net City of Sunnyvale General Fund Impact</b>	<b>\$1,868,730</b>	<b>\$3,672,328</b>	<b>\$898,746</b>	<b>\$1,503,029</b>	<b>\$901,984</b>	<b>\$644,043</b>	<b>\$460,348</b>	<b>(\$510,376)</b>

Land Econ Group



**Response G.1:** The comment poses questions that are related to the fiscal impacts of the proposed Specific Plan, which do not require analysis under CEQA and were therefore not addressed in the DEIR. The Alternatives analyzed in the DEIR were selected consistent with the purposes of CEQA, which as stated in the DEIR are to identify alternatives that reduce the significant impacts that are anticipated to occur if the project is implemented, but also try to meet as many of the project’s fundamental objectives as possible. The project’s Land Use objective emphasizes the importance of housing. As stated in the DEIR, the Land Use objective is to “...*establish a land use plan and policy framework that will guide future development and redevelopment activities within the area toward multi-modal supportive uses and improvements, including; an increase in housing density to help meet the City’s state-mandated RHNA numbers; new development that appropriately transitions to existing adjacent residential neighborhoods, and more intensive development and public improvements focused at key nodes, which will include a concentration of retail, services, housing, and new public gathering areas.*” By replacing existing underutilized commercial areas with new residential development as proposed, the project would be consistent with this objective.

**Comment G.2:** On page 55, the document says “The implementation of TDM measures in the Plan area would be consistent with the requirements outlined in the City of Santa Clara’s Climate Action Plan (December 3, 2013), which currently requires a vehicle miles traveled (VMT) reduction between five and ten percent through TDM measures, depending on land use.”

I firmly believe that 5-10% will cause very substantial traffic congestion (increase) in this project. Regardless of the Climate Action Plan, this specific area plan needs to have a minimum of 25% trip reduction from TDM measures or 40% if including work-from-home policies. Those are the numbers suggested by TDM Specialists to the Santa Clara Planning Commission in a study session.

**Response G.2:** This comment is acknowledged. The DEIR is required to address the environmental effects of the proposed plan consistent with the requirements of CEQA and is not intended to address the adequacy of the measures included in the City's Climate Action Plan. However, it should be noted that the traffic study conducted for the project indicated that VMT, which is used to evaluate both traffic and GHG emissions, will decrease with the project. Per SB 743, traffic congestion is no longer used as a metric to assess impacts under CEQA. No revisions to the DEIR are necessary.

**Comment G.3:** Per the Sunnyvale letter, impact on LOS of Sunnyvale intersections must be included.

**Response G.3:** It is not clear to whom the Sunnyvale letter was addressed, or in what context it was provided. The TIA incorporated 19 development projects from the City of Sunnyvale into the background conditions used in its analysis, and identified Sunnyvale's signalized intersection impact criteria that were used. Study intersections were selected in consultation with City of Santa Clara staff and following guidance from VTA's Transportation Impact Analysis Guidelines (2014) and included one signalized intersection in the City of Sunnyvale (El Camino Real/Wolfe Road). As previously stated, traffic congestion is no longer used as a metric to assess impacts under CEQA. The implementation deadline for the use of VMT as the new metric was July 1, 2020.

**Comment G.4:** Impact NOI-1: Who decides between pile driving and cast-in drilled holes. What is the cost difference? There are a number of single family residences very close to ECR.

**Response G.4:** The decision to use pile driving or other construction techniques would depend on what is being constructed and the most effective way to accomplish the task at hand, among other factors, including cost. Because specific development proposals are not known at this time, there is no way to determine which methods will be used or what the costs will be. Mitigation Measure MM NOI-2 in the DEIR specifically addresses impacts to sensitive surrounding uses caused by pile driving.

**Comment G.5:** There is no discussion of traffic impacts during construction. When will the lanes be closed for cement trucks parked on ECR? How will the public be notified? This is a big problem on Page Mill Road in Palo Alto. I believe that noticing was very poor for the recent repaving of Homestead Rd this past Fall. There should be a single website for all closure notices from projects along ECR so that people can plan their trips.

**Response G.5:** In environmental analyses conducted prior to July 2020, intersection LOS was used to measure construction traffic on roadways affected by the project and typically resulted in temporary construction impacts. With the adoption of VMT

to evaluate transportation impacts, state law precludes the use of LOS for any CEQA transportation measure, including construction impacts. Prior to construction permits, traffic control plans for any proposed lane closures, sidewalk closures, traffic signal interruptions, and/or detours will be reviewed and approved by DPW Traffic Division. Additionally the EIR identified construction noise impacts and included the following:

**Impact NOI-1:** Land uses in the project vicinity would be exposed to a substantial temporary increase in ambient noise levels due to project construction activities.  
**(Significant Impact)**

**MM NOI-1.1:** Develop and adhere to a construction noise control plan to be submitted to the City for review and approval prior to issuance of a demolition and/or grading permit, including, but not limited to, the following available controls.

- Ensure that construction activities (including the loading and unloading of materials and truck movements) within 300 feet of residentially zoned El Camino Real Specific Plan xi Draft EIR City of Santa Clara November 2020 Impact Mitigation Measures property are limited to the hours of 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on weekdays and between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. on Saturdays. No construction is permitted on Sundays or holidays.
- Ensure that excavating, grading and filling activities (including warming of equipment motors) within 300 feet of residentially zoned property are limited to the hours of 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. on weekdays and between the hours of 9:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. on Saturdays. No construction is permitted on Sundays or holidays.
- Contractors equip all internal combustion engine driven equipment with mufflers, which are in good condition and appropriate for the equipment.
- Contractors utilize “quiet” models of air compressors and other stationary noise sources where technology exists.
- Locate loading, staging areas, stationary noise generating equipment, etc. as far as feasible from sensitive receptors when sensitive receptors adjoin or are near a construction project area. Construct temporary noise barriers to screen stationary noise generating equipment when located near adjoining sensitive land uses.
- Control noise from construction workers’ radios to a point where they are not audible at existing residences bordering the project area.
- Comply with Air Resource Board idling prohibitions of unnecessary idling of internal combustion engines.
- Construct solid plywood fences around construction sites adjacent to operational business, residences or noise-sensitive land uses.
- Route construction-related traffic along major roadways and as far as feasible from sensitive receptors.
- Businesses, residences or noise-sensitive land uses adjacent to construction sites shall be notified of the construction schedule in writing. Designate a “construction liaison” that will be responsible for

responding to any local complaints about construction noise. The liaison will determine the cause of the noise complaints (e.g., starting too early, bad muffler, etc.) and institute reasonable measures to correct the problem. Conspicuously post a telephone number for the liaison at the construction site.

- Include a disclosure in the lease of future tenants within the El Camino Real Specific Plan properties that provides information regarding the on-going construction activities within the area.

**Comment G.6:** *“Based on the City’s 15 percent affordable housing on-site requirement that applies to developments with 10 or more units, it is estimated that between 450 and 1,200 new affordable housing units would be developed in the Plan area over the next 10 to 20 years”.* 15% is only for 100% AMI. There is no plan to meet RHNA for Extremely Low and Very Low Income in this ECR SAP. Those lower affordability levels should be included in this plan.

**Response G.6:** The comment does not address environmental impacts or apply to any particular section of the DEIR and, therefore, does not warrant a further response.

**Comment G.7:** Table 1.5-1 has too low an FAR for Commercial for “Regional Commercial Mixed Use” at FAR = 0.02. This must be a typo. Also there is no minimum commercial FAR for “Corridor Mixed Use”

**Response G.7:** The titles of Tables 1.5-1 through 1.5-7, shown on Pages 20-24 of the DEIR, have been corrected to Tables 2.4-1 through 2.4-7, consistent with their listing in the Table of Contents.

The FAR for the Regional Commercial Mixed Use has been corrected to 0.20 in the table. As described in the paragraph on Page 22 and following table (Table 2.4-4) the Corridor Mixed Use designation would allow for stand-alone commercial or residential uses, and mixed-use development in a horizontal or vertical format, but a minimum floor area ratio is not applicable. (see SECTION 5. DRAFT EIR TEXT REVISIONS)

**Comment G.8:** I would like to see ½ mile radius circles drawn around every grocery store (Safeway, Target, Sprouts, India Bazaar, Grocery Outlet) to see whether there is a shortage of grocery stores along ECR and where they are. This analysis with the intention of creating 15 minute walkable communities. Also many residents of Santa Clara are concerned about grocery stores disappearing from ECR.

**Response G.8:** This comment does not speak to the adequacy of the DEIR, so no further response is necessary.

**Comment G.9:** Section 2.4.1.5 *“the Specific Plan recommends that the City take a proactive role in providing coordinated and cohesive improvements to the corridor by constructing or improving basic infrastructure (e.g., water supply, stormwater, wastewater systems, etc.), and the public realm (e.g. streetscape, bike lanes, lighting, etc. along El Camino Real).”*

It seems important to have dedicated staff to manage this process of coordinating all the infrastructure projects so that the pavement does not have to be dug up multiple times and that undergrounding of utilities can be made easier.

**Response G.9:** This comment does not speak to the adequacy of the DEIR, so no further response is necessary.

**Comment G.10:** Section 3.1: *Development projects within a specific plan area are required to submit plans and drawings submitted for architectural review for design, aesthetic considerations, and consistency with zoning standards, generally prior to submittal for building permits. The Community Development Director would review future development projects within the Specific Plan area for consistency with the El Camino Real Specific Plan Design Guidelines.*

Decisions on aesthetics should not be the responsibility of only one person. I would like to see more review from independent architects to create a signature look for ECR.

**Response G.10:** This comment does not speak to the adequacy of the EIR, so no further response is necessary.

**Comment G.11:** Section “MM AIR 2.3” *Peak hour traffic volumes at intersections affected by the proposed project would be less than 15,000 vehicles per hour.*

The City doesn't ever seem to go back and verify model predictions. I would like to see money allocated for periodic 3 year traffic counts to verify the models and predictions and to have tightening of trip reduction targets if the predictions are not tracking reality. Are the traffic models for Levi's Stadium being validated?

**Response G.11:** All development in Santa Clara County is required to be consistent with the VTA Travel Demand Model. The travel demand models are required to validate the baseline traffic assumptions included in the model by collecting current traffic data and then comparing it to the travel demand models and adjusting the models accordingly. The VTA model is used repeatedly for land use and transportation projects and includes general plan land use information for all of the cities within Santa Clara County. As part of the VTA monitoring, cities are required to report to the VTA all approved land uses and construction that have occurred each year. This information is used to update the model. The process of evaluating and updating model assumptions is continuous and is measured for consistency with the existing number of jobs and housing in the Bay Area.

**Comment G.12:** Under Section 3.6.2.1, All the measures are optional: *The proposed Specific Plan encourages development projects to incorporate various energy efficiency measures, including the following:*

There should be a LEED Gold equivalent minimum for all construction of more than 20,000 sq feet. There is a new Climate Action Plan coming, at what point do new buildings have to comply with the requirements there?

**Response G.12:** This comment is acknowledged. All future development projects under the proposed Specific Plan would be required to comply with the applicable provisions of the Climate Action Plan in place at that time the development application is filed. No revisions to the DEIR are necessary.

**Comment G.13:** The following is completely inadequate and incompatible with the proposed reach code for Santa Clara:

*Revise parking standards for new multi-family residential and nonresidential development to allow that a minimum of one parking space, and a recommended level of five percent of all new parking spaces, be designated for electric vehicle charging.*

EV Charging for developments in the ECR SAP, should follow the recommendation in the model PCE reach code for Electric Vehicles: <https://peninsulareachcodes.org/>

**Response G.13:** The 2013 CAP emission reduction strategies listed on Page 116 of the DEIR, including the referenced strategy, were the only ones applicable at the time the DEIR was written, as the forthcoming CAP had not been adopted. Future development under the proposed Specific Plan would follow the emissions reduction strategies of the updated CAP and/or reach codes in effect at the time such new development is proposed. No revisions to the DEIR are necessary.

**Comment G.14:** In section 1.13.1.3: *According to noise measurements made for the General Plan FEIR, noise levels along El Camino Real in the Plan area are approximately 68 dBA CNEL (at a distance of 100 feet)*

The limit of acceptability for residential is 70 dB per table 3.13-1. 68 dB is pretty close to the limit of 70 dB. Where is all that noise coming from? It seems to me that walking and eating outside would not be very pleasant. What can we do to reduce the noise on ECR? Special repaving materials with rubber in the asphalt? Lower the speed of travel? I would like to have an analysis done. Perhaps we will need to design buildings to dampen the noise.

ALSO: Section 9.10.040 of the City Code limits noise levels at residences to 55 dBA during daytime hours (7:00 AM to 10:00 PM) and 50 dBA at night (10:00 PM to 7:00 AM), and noise levels at commercial uses to 65 dBA during daytime hours and 60 dBA during nighttime hours.

So how can we even authorize any residential construction along ECR?

**Response G.14:** Because El Camino Real is a six-lane arterial street that carries a significant amount of vehicle and truck traffic, the majority of the ambient noise along El Camino Real within the Specific Plan area is generated by traffic. Per Table 3.13-1, 68 dB falls within the compatibility range for both commercial and residential that would require project design and building insulation measures to reduce noise levels. This would be taken into consideration during the City's review of future development projects when they are proposed. Noise and vibration assessments for future individual projects would be required, and would address existing noise levels and any required mitigation measures for the project's compliance with General Plan noise standards. In addition, City Code Section 9.10.060 provides that if the

measured ambient noise level at any given location differs from those levels set forth in Section 9.10.040, Schedule A, then the allowable noise exposure standard shall be adjusted in five dBA increments to encompass or reflect the ambient noise level.

**Comment G.15:** I see two seemingly conflicting statements:

*As discussed in Section 3.17 Transportation, the proposed project would contribute to a **decrease in vehicle miles traveled (VMT) in the Plan area**. The Specific Plan would allow for greater residential development in an infill location in proximity to employment and services, thus reducing VMT compared to existing conditions.*

VERSUS

*According to the Transportation Impact Analysis prepared for the proposed project by Fehr & Peers, the **Specific Plan would result in a net increase in 12,980 daily trips on the local roadway system** (from 72,504 trips without the project to 85,484 trips with the project).*

**Response G.15:** Since the project will intensify the plan area, more vehicle trips will be generated; however, those vehicle trips will result in less vehicle miles traveled (shorter distances) because the residential land uses are projected to provide housing closer to existing employment centers in Santa Clara, Sunnyvale, and San Jose, etc. when compared to today's available housing. No revisions to the DEIR are necessary.

**Comment G.16:** According to Fehr and Peers, 14,162 people will be added by the plan. This means  $2.53 \times 14,162 = 35.83$  acres of parkland will be needed. What is the plan to provide that parkland? I would like to see a plan for where those 35.8 acres will be located within the SAP. I know that impact fees are charged but where will the land come from? There must be a provision for using/allowing rooftops for recreation – community gardens, barbecue, etc.

*The existing service population in the Plan Area is estimated to be 3,729 people. Implementation of the Precise Plan would increase the population to 17,891, which amounts to a net increase of 14,162. Population estimates were obtained from the City of Santa Clara Travel Demand Forecasting Model. (Fehr & Peers, 2020)*

**Response G.16:** As discussed in Section 3.15 PUBLIC SERVICES of the DEIR, the Quimby Act authorizes local governments to establish ordinances requiring developers of new residential subdivisions to dedicate parks, pay a fee in lieu of parkland dedication, or perform a combination of the two at the discretion of the City. In 2014, the City of Santa Clara adopted Ordinance No. 1928 adding Chapter 17.35 (Park and Recreational Land) to Title 17 (Development) of the City Code, to ensure that new residential development provides adequate park and recreational land and/or pays an fee in-lieu of dedication in order to mitigate the impacts of the new growth. The ordinance requires parkland dedication and/or an in-lieu obligation on new residential developments pursuant to the Quimby Act. Although it is not known at this time whether the City will require in-lieu fees or dedication of parkland, the

amount of land available within the Specific Plan area for the development of parkland is limited. No revisions to the DEIR are necessary.

**Comment G.17:** Very little of ECR is serviced by recycled water. There should be a plan to extend the recycled water network to some or most of ECR:

*Recycled water is currently not provided throughout the Plan area. All recycled water line extensions for on-site use and demand in the Plan area would require City, South Bay Water Recycling, and State Water Resources Control Board – Division of Drinking Water approval.*

ALSO

***Supplies such as recycled water, rainwater/stormwater capture and reuse, greywater reuse, reclaimed wastewater on-site, or other water supplies (potable and/or non-potable) would need to be developed to meet the increased demand.***

**Response G.17:** This comment does not speak to the adequacy of the DEIR, so no further response is necessary.

**Comment G.18:** What will be the impacts on these substation expansion plans were the city or State to adopt an all electric building code. The expansion should plan for 100% building electrification and very substantial numbers of EV charging parking spots:

*There will be expansion and reinforcement of SVP facilities including rebuilding exist homestead substation to 3 – 30 MVA at 55 degree c transformer bank, expansion of Brokaw substation to additional third 20 MVA at 55 degree c transformer bank and possibly reinforcement of existing Zeno Substation .*

**Response G.18:** This comment does not speak to the adequacy of the DEIR, so and no further response is necessary.

**Comment G.19:** Table 3.19-3 looks at Multiple Dry Year Water Supply and Demand. It is based on a 2015 Urban Water Management Plan and shows a 3-10% margin between water supply and demand. I believe that the 2015 UWMP does not account for all the planned development in the City. What is the effect of drastic water usage restrictions put in play? What is the effect on demand of those restrictions? Water supply for projects is always a major concern of residents.

*If in the future the contract was in dispute or cancelled, the UWMP projects that demand could exceed supply in 2035 and 2040 during multiple dry year conditions (by approximately 113 acre-feet and 847 acre-feet, respectively). However, the projection does not account for increased groundwater pumping that could be implemented to offset the loss of Hetch Hetchy system supplies; nor does it account for water conservation measures and increased recycled water usage that could be implemented in the event of a drought. Under single-dry year conditions, water supply would exceed demand irrespective of the availability of water from SFPUC.*

**Response G.19:** According to the Water Supply Assessment (WSA) prepared for the El Camino Real Specific Plan, upon which the DEIR discussion is based, the

2015 UWMP did not specifically include or address the Specific Plan since it was proposed and evaluated after the adoption of the UWMP. However, the UWMP included projected increases in water demand due to densification and intensification of both residential and non-residential land uses. The WSA included proposed water demand for projects assessed since the adoption of the 2015 UWMP as well as previous WSAs for projects that were incorporated into the 2015 UWMP that have not yet been completed. It listed 23 major development projects in the City.

The WSA acknowledged that the Specific Plan would add significant projected water demand when combined with the City's 2015 UWMP projected growth water demands, and concluded that projects within this Specific Plan area may therefore be subject to water supply or capacity fees, additional water efficiency standards, and/or establishment of annual water budgets. Additionally, it concluded that use of alternative water supplies must be utilized to the maximum extent possible, and that supplies such as recycled water, rainwater/stormwater capture and reuse, greywater reuse, reclaiming wastewater onsite or other water supplies (potable and/or non-potable) will need to be developed to mitigate the excess demand identified. These conclusions are stated in Section 3.19.2.1 of the DEIR. No revisions to the DEIR are necessary.

#### **H. Responses to Comment Letter H from Joseph Penniman (dated January 24, 2021)**

**Comment H.1:** After reviewing the General Plan, the proposed El Camino Specific Plan and the DEIR, a few things become apparent. The DEIR indicates in Appendix E1 and E2 that both the water supply and the sewer systems would be deficient and need updating if the Specific Plan were approved. Not only would this delay improvement along El Camino, but it would cause extensive construction throughout the corridor to meet the Specific Plan needs. Detours off of El Camino and onto residential streets is a nightmare scenario, and should only be considered in extreme circumstances. I live a stones throw from Warburton Ave, which is already being used as a bypass to El Camino traffic, and the speeding even now is significant and unsafe. A more prudent plan would be to meet in the middle, give existing developers an option on density requirements for approving near-term projects under the General Plan while infrastructure is gradually updated in a way to manage traffic through adjacent neighborhoods. Whether this means an update in the Specific Plan requirements or a longer timeline, the main goal should be to ensure safety and quality of life for the people who choose to live and pay taxes in Santa Clara.

**Response H.1:** This comment does not speak to the adequacy of the DEIR, so no further response is necessary.

#### **I. Responses to Comment Letter I from Diane Harrison (dated January 25, 2021)**

**Comment I.1:** I have commented a number of times before, at meetings or in emails, but these are my primary points regarding the roadway improvements, Appendix D.

Because the planned corridor improvements include an extra 20' added to the existing public corridor (based on Figure 3), it could be years, if not decades, in the implementation. Meanwhile, both the climate and the people who ride bicycles have needed bike lanes on this roadway for years already. Over the years, many have been injured and killed on the El Camino Real.

In section 1.1.2.2., it reads "As an interim solution before full implementation of the cycle track, a two-foot wide painted buffer could be provided". I assume that you mean a standard class II bike lane and that on-street parking will be removed. This is something that I and many others have been asking for for many years now, particularly when the street was recently repaved. (This same sentence appears in section 8.1.1.) So, if you could change that "could" to "will" and then do it, that would be a huge improvement for bicyclists until the roadway is widened enough to accommodate the class IV facility.

Please note that in section 1.1.2.3, there is a reference to the "City of Santa"; "Clara", of course, needs to be added.

In section 2.1.1.1, it could be noted that the El Camino Real is our #1 priority project.

Reading Policy 5.4.1-P19, from what I've seen of the planned cross section, we are indeed increasing the overall right of way. To avoid doing that, the city would have had to make an unpopular political choice which it chose not to do.

Section 4.4.2. Lafayette, Scott, and Bowers are definitely not existing bike routes, at least not where they cross El Camino. I avoid Lafayette and Scott for the most part and only occasionally take Bowers because I live nearby, and it becomes a bike route/lane north of Cabrillo. The El Camino is not considered a bike route at this time either. If you look closely at the city bike map, you will see that these roadways are called "undesignated rated streets", not "bicycle routes". A bicycle route is a roadway with a few improvements (e.g. signage and/or sharrows) designed to give a cyclist a bit of legitimacy and encouragement. The four mentioned in this section could better be labeled as "hostile" to bicycles. Experienced cyclists do ride on them, particularly on the El Camino with all its businesses, but they're in no way bike-friendly.

Section 4.4.3. I would add the word "future" between "several" & "bicycle" in the first line. Only Monroe currently has bike lanes. None of the others yet exist.

**Response I.1:** These comments are acknowledged. With regards to the discussion of the cycle track in Sections 2.4.1.4 and 3.17.2.4, The DEIR's description of the "*...interim solution before full implementation of the cycle track, a two-foot wide painted buffer could be provided...*" is a direct quote from the Specific Plan language, and cannot be modified in this (CEQA) document to change the word *could* to *will*. As stated in Section 3.17.2.4, a parking study was completed that evaluated the removal of parking along El Camino Real which will be used to determine the impact and feasibility prior to implementing the planned cycle track. As that determination has yet to be made, the elimination of parking and provision of the buffer as an interim solution cannot be assumed to be implemented as part of the project at this time.

Regarding Section 4.4.3, the title of this section in the traffic analysis is *Planned Bicycle Improvements*, so it is implied in this title that the bicycle infrastructure improvements described therein would be in the future, and not adding the word “future” would not significantly enhance or change the meaning of the sentence. No revision to the traffic analysis is required.

## **J. Responses to Comment Letter J from Oak Investment Group, LLC (dated January 25, 2021)**

**Comment J.1:** Oak Investment Group is under contract to purchase the property located at 3141-3155 El Camino Real, commonly referred to as Bowers Plaza. Bowers Plaza is located immediately adjacent to an established neighborhood of single-story, single family homes (including three adjacent homes that are less than 10 feet from the property line). Bowers Plaza is within the El Camino Real Focus Area and has a General Plan designation of Community Mixed Use (20-36 du/ac). Consistent with this designation, on February 22, 2019 OIG submitted a project preapplication and on October 20, 2020 OIG submitted a formal project application for a Design Review and Tentative Tract Map, to authorize approximately 60 dwelling units on the property (the Project”).

OIG has been an active participant in the four (4) year Specific Plan process and has invested significant time and resources working with City staff and the community to implement its vision for a neighborhood-compatible multifamily development at Bowers Plaza. The proposed Project scale and massing would serve as an appropriate transition between the adjacent single-family neighborhood and the City's higher-density vision for El Camino Real, consistent with El Camino Real Focus Area policies, including Policy 5.3. 1-P29 ("Encourage design of new development to be compatible with, and sensitive to, nearby existing and planned development, consistent with other applicable General Plan policies.") and Policy 5.4. 1-P5 ("Provide appropriate transition between new development in the Focus Area and adjacent uses consistent with General Plan Transition Policies."). Further, the Project offers substantial community benefits, including on-site affordable housing compliance with requirements. At the proposed density of 24 du/ac, the Project also would be compatible with the density of the recently approved adjacent project at 3035 El Camino Real at 25.5 du/ac.

Currently the draft Specific Plan proposes to designate Bowers Plaza as Corridor Mixed Use, with a density of 45 to 65 du/ac, effectively a doubling of the currently prescribed General Plan Density of 20 to 36 du/ac. In application, the proposed 45-65 du/ac density will result in violation of numerous current General Plan policies requiring appropriate land use transitions and neighborhood compatibility, resulting in additional land use, noise, traffic, and other quality of life impacts to the adjacent neighborhood. The DEIR fails to fully disclose and analyze these impacts.

To avoid these impacts, OIG respectfully requests the Specific Plan designate Bowers Plaza as Corridor Residential, with a density of 16 to 45 du/ac. Consistent with General Plan policies, this designation would allow an appropriate transition between the Project and the adjacent single-family neighborhood and would be consistent with the density of the recently approved project at 3035 El Camino Real. In addition, this density range would ensure compliance with current General Plan policies requiring appropriate land use transition and compatibility.

We appreciate your consideration of this request and look forward to continuing to work with the City to implement its vision for the El Camino Real Focus Area.

**Response J.1:** These comments are acknowledged. The DEIR includes detailed analyses of potential land use, noise and traffic impacts of the Specific Plan, as proposed (refer to Sections 3.11, 3.13 and 3.17, respectively, in the DEIR). In addition, the DEIR contains detailed analyses of other environmental topics that affect quality of life in the adjacent residential neighborhood such as Aesthetics (Section 3.1), Air Quality (Section 3.3), Cultural Resources (Section 3.5), Hazards and Hazardous Materials (Section 3.9), Population and Housing (Section 3.14), Public Services (Section 3.15), Recreation (Section 3.16), and Utilities and Service Systems (Section 3.19). With respect to the site identified by the Comment, 3141-3155 El Camino Real (“Bowers Plaza”), the DEIR’s analysis utilized a density of 45-65 du/ac for the site, consistent with the draft Specific Plan and the Project Description. The consideration of whether to designate Bowers Plaza at a different density would be a policy decision for the City Council. If the Council ultimately agrees to the Commenter’s request and uses a lower density in the final version of the Specific Plan, the Project Site would have a less intense use than analyzed and the impacts analyzed above would result in either identical or less severe impacts than were analyzed in the EIR, and so no subsequent environmental analysis would be necessary. Analysis of the requested re-designation the Bowers Plaza property to Corridor Residential is not within the scope of the EIR, therefore no revisions to the DEIR are necessary.

#### **K. Responses to Comment Letter K from Santa Clara Community Advocates (dated January 21, 2021)**

**Comment K.1:** As you know, Santa Clara Community Advocates is a homegrown group of Santa Clara residents and representatives from local non-profit organizations. We work to provide input and support for creating a sustainable and equitable ECR Specific Plan. We have organized walking tours along El Camino Real for residents and city staff members, which have enabled us to solicit feedback and general comments about El Camino Real. We had submitted a comment letter in June 2019 during the initial EIR scoping phase.

The Impact Analysis is very thorough. However, the main concern we have is with the traffic impact analysis. This EIR has indicated minimal impact on traffic congestion. With 6200 residential units being added under the Plan and the increase in commercial properties, the plan assumes the incoming residents will also have vehicles. These vehicles, in addition to visitors to the plan area, will result in increased vehicle traffic.

We submit the following questions and comments:

Regarding Table 3.3-4: Operational Period Emissions, the EIR indicates that the proposed project would contribute to a decrease in vehicle miles traveled (VMT) in the Plan area (Section 3.17 Transportation indicates this project would result in a reduction of 12,657 daily VMT, corresponding gasoline usage by approximately 508 gallons per day). More residents result in more vehicles, which means more VMT. Did CalEEMod accurately predict the VMT for the recently built housing

developments along El Camino Real without the guarantee and specific plans that detail out multiple transportation modes (most notably, implementation of bicycle lanes, reliable and more frequent VTA bus routes along ECR)? What are the steps that need to be taken to make adjustments if the assumptions are not being met?

**Response K.1:** While additional persons could result in additional trips, CEQA requires an assessment of VMT, which is a measurement of trip distance, not number of trips. If trip lengths are reduced, there would be a corresponding reduction in gasoline usage and air pollutants. The DEIR reports the results of the traffic analysis, which indicate that although the project would result in a net increase in trips, the VMT would be reduced. This is because the new trips generated by the project would be shorter due to the location of the new residential development closer to employment centers and services, reducing trip lengths. This EIR addresses potential impacts for the build out of the proposed Specific Plan and does not address the methodology used for assessing VMT impacts from previously-approved projects along El Camino Real. Individual development projects under the proposed Specific Plan would be subject to project-specific environmental review, which would likely include project-specific traffic impact analysis.

**Comment K.2:** Regarding Table 3.17-5 (Freeway Segment Capacity and Trips Added), how was it determined that there would be net negative project trips added? With 6200 new residential units being added, is it safe to assume each will bring at least 1 vehicle, thus adding at a minimum 6200 vehicles to the Plan Area, thus causing more VMT and more congestion, particularly during the morning peak hours when residents are driving to schools and workplaces?

**Response K.2:** VMT and congestion are not interrelated. An increase in vehicles does not directly correlate to an increase in VMT if there is a sufficient mix of land uses. As explained in the discussion preceding Table 3.17-5, the project would replace commercial uses with residential uses, which causes shifts in travel patterns throughout the area as existing trips divert to other commercial areas and new trips from the new residential uses connect to employment centers. This results in negative trips for the diverted commercial trips and added trips for the new residential uses. At some freeway segments, this difference causes net negative project trips.

**Comment K.3:** In response to MM AIR-2.3 (proposed residential development within El Camino Real Specific Plan area shall implement TDM programs to reduce residential vehicle miles traveled as required by the City's Climate Action Plan): when will these TDM programs be available for public review? Will the public be able to make comments before being approved and implemented? Who determines whether the TDM programs will be effective? How will the TDM programs be measured to verify effectiveness?

**Response K.3:** Future development projects under the proposed Specific Plan would be subject to project-specific environmental review, which would likely include traffic impact analysis and any necessary mitigation measures such as TDM measures. These project-specific environmental documents would be available for public review and comment prior to approval and implementation, per CEQA protocols.

**Comment K.4:** If any part of the TDM and VMT reduction plan includes giving free or discounted transit passes to residents or workers on the corridor, will there be follow-up to ensure these transit passes are issued in a timely manner?

**Response K.4:** Although the DEIR cannot determine the how TDM measures, or any other mitigation measures from future development projects will be implemented, the City of Santa Clara has monitoring requirements that will be applicable to future projects within the Specific Plan area.

**Comment K.5:** What will need to be adjusted if the execution of the El Camino Real Plan is not meeting the standards listed in the updated Climate Action Plan? How will these new standards be incorporated into the plan?

**Response K.5:** Implementation of Climate Action Plan measures will occur following adoption of individual environmental clearance documents for future projects within the Specific Plan Area by the City. This DEIR provides CEQA clearance for the Specific Plan and does not address future modifications to the Specific Plan.

**Comment K.6:** What is the current percentage of trips by bus, bicycle or e-scooter, or foot? If the plan doesn't achieve the target percentage, what is the impact? What is the current safety record along El Camino Real for pedestrians, bicyclists, and vehicle drivers? Can City Council and City Staff measure comparative safety and make reference to the current safety record?

**Response K.6:** The traffic analysis does not include measurements of existing or future bus, bicycle, scooter or pedestrian trips within the Specific Plan area, nor does it identify target percentages. The DEIR does, however, address impacts to bicycle, pedestrian and transit access and circulation. Transit impacts are evaluated in terms of travel time and ridership, not by percentages of bus, bicycle or pedestrian trips. Safety issues may be taken into account during the City's review of future project-specific development proposals, but do not require analysis in a program-level document such as the subject DEIR. No revisions to the DEIR are necessary.

**Comment K.7:** Will there be any follow-up to ensure that secure bicycle and scooter parking (i.e., lockers) remain in place and are usable by the public?

**Response K.7:** Bicycle and scooter parking facilities can be addressed at the development project-specific stage, but do not require analysis in a program-level document such as the subject DEIR. No revisions to the DEIR are necessary.

**Comment K.8:** The Plan states that street parking will remain along properties without on-site parking. Having consistent buffered bicycle lanes along all of El Camino Real in Santa Clara is crucial to providing safety to bicyclists. For those businesses, the concern is not necessarily having insufficient on-street parking; the concern is not having enough parking in general. All businesses on El Camino Real should share their off-street parking. Has the City Staff studied what is the impact to those businesses if on-street parking was removed and businesses were required to share off-street parking? Please consider doing a simple experiment of blocking the on-street parking and enforcing

the adjacent businesses to share parking to identify the true impact to these businesses if on-street parking were removed and was coupled with businesses sharing off-street parking.

**Response K.8:** The comment does not address environmental impacts or apply to any particular section of the DEIR and, therefore, does not warrant a further response.

**Comment K.9:** Regarding the mitigation measures listed for IMPACT NOI-1, who holds these accountable? Who verifies that all options were considered? Can the city mandate utilization of electric equipment and only allow gas-operated machinery when all other options have been exhausted?

**Response K.9:** As stated in Section 3.13.2.3 of the DEIR, mitigation measures to reduce noise and vibration to acceptable levels would be further refined during project-level analyses of noise and vibration impacts. Responsibility for implementation of the measures listed in MM NOI-1 would lie with the individual project's applicant and their contractors, with oversight responsibility by the Director of Community Development, as indicated in the Mitigation Monitoring or Reporting Program for the El Camino Real Specific Plan. A construction noise management plan is typically required by the Director of Community Development prior to the issuance of grading and/or demolition for the project, and this requirement is described in that project's CEQA documentation. No revisions to the DEIR are necessary.

**Comment K.10:** Regarding Table 3.17-6 (Roadway Improvement Projects for Background Conditions (which include adding additional left-turn lanes on certain signaled intersections) and Table 3-17-14, what is the impact to implementation of bicycle lanes as dictated in the Bicycle Plan?

Before implementing these roadway improvements, the priority should be on implementing more bicycle lanes and ensuring there are more reliable and frequent bus, light rail, and train routes which will encourage residents to use those instead of single occupancy vehicles, thus eliminating the need for additional turn lanes.

**Response K.10:** The DEIR states that, pursuant to the VTA TIA Guidelines, any mitigation measure identified in the TIA that would change the roadway geometry or signal operations must be evaluated to determine their effects on the quality of service for bicyclists and pedestrians. It further states that for the purposes of the EIR analysis, effects of potential improvement measures on pedestrian and bicycle travel were qualitatively evaluated. In the impact discussion following Table 3.17-6 (in Section 3.17.2.4) the DEIR qualitatively states that overall, the project will provide improved pedestrian and bicycling facilities to enhance the existing pedestrian and bicycling networks, and that the project does not meet the significance thresholds including: disruption or elimination of pedestrian and bicycling facilities; creation of a hazardous condition that does not exist for pedestrians or bicyclists; increase in conflicts between drivers, pedestrians and/or bicyclists; conflict with any existing or planned pedestrian or bicycle facility; or conflict with policies related to bicycle and pedestrian activity adopted by the City for facilities within the City. No revisions to the DEIR are necessary.

**Comment K.11:** How will the City hold the developers accountable that the mitigation measures listed in the EIR are implemented and followed?

**Response K.11:** See response K.9.

**Comment K.12:** What kind of material will be used in the residential and commercial buildings to maximize insulation and thus reduce energy usage?

**Response K.12:** Specific building materials to be used in future development projects within the Specific Plan area cannot be determined at this time and thus were not addressed in the DEIR. As stated in the DEIR, the planned uses would replace existing industrial and commercial office buildings constructed during the last four decades, and that the Specific Plan would allow development of modern buildings that would be subject to current building codes which require greater energy efficiency (Title 24) than when the existing development in the Plan area was constructed. No revisions to the DEIR are necessary.

**Comment K.13:** Regarding Impact EN-1 (project would not result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy, or wasteful use of energy resources, during project construction or operation), recommendations are listed in the bullet points. What incentive is the City providing the developers to implement these recommendations? Is it possible to have City Council and City Staff to make these mandatory?

**Response K.13:** These comments are acknowledged. Because the DEIR concluded that the energy impacts would be less than significant, the City does not have the legal authority to impose the recommendations as mitigation measures. As a result, this comment does not speak to the adequacy of the DEIR. No revisions to the DEIR are necessary.

**Comment K.14:** Table 3.6-1 Estimated Annual Energy Use of Existing Development. Why is the CalEEMod used to calculate electricity use estimates for the existing development? Is it possible to obtain specific measurements from Silicon Valley Power? What are the default energy usage assumptions for the given development land uses?

**Response K.14:** The CalEEMod default electricity usage rates were used to estimate existing electricity within the Specific Plan area because determining actual usage by obtaining specific measurements from SVP for all of the properties within the Specific Plan area would be infeasible. The default energy usage assumptions included in CalEEMod were representative of the existing land uses. For residential uses, the CalEEMod rate of 2.16 kBTU/yr (Apartments Mid-Rise) was used, and for commercial uses, 5.37 kBTU/yr (Strip Mall) was used, as shown in Attachment 1 of the Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Assessment in Appendix B of the DEIR.

**Comment K.15:** As the El Camino Real Plan gets implemented, will there be ongoing assessments on a periodic basis to determine whether the actual energy used is consistent with the projected energy usage?

**Response K.15:** The estimated annual energy use figures in Table 3.6-2 and in the following discussion are given for the purpose of providing a comparison with existing conditions within the Specific Plan area. They are not intended to be used as targets or thresholds for future assessments, but are discussed only within the context of the CEQA document for analysis of potential impacts.

**Comment K.16:** Although the EIR report indicates minimal impact with regard to traffic congestion, we strongly encourage the City Council to require or provide incentive to developers to provide funding for implementing bicycle lanes along El Camino Real and funding for helping to implement better public transportation.

This Plan provides a great opportunity to make El Camino Real a thriving corridor. However, a higher priority needs to be placed on encouraging and incentivizing new and existing residents and visitors to reduce or eliminate their dependence on a single-occupancy vehicle. We encourage the City Staff and City Council to ensure developers support multi-modal transportation provided through enhanced buffered bicycle lanes, more frequent bus routes, more dignified and inviting transit stops, unbundling parking from rent and property prices.

Additionally, the City Council and Staff should place a higher standard on developers implementing efficient and non-wasteful systems for water and electricity usage.

We understand that the City is updating its Climate Action Plan. We urge the Council and Staff to review ensure the impacts studied as part of this EIR aligns with the updated Climate Action Plan.

In conclusion, we would like the City Council to ensure the Plan that promotes walkability and encourages and incentivizes active modes of transportation (buses, bicycles, e-scooters), while making El Camino Real safer for all users.

**Response K.16:** To clarify, congestion is no longer a metric by which CEQA assesses traffic impacts. While there is a non-CEQA operational discussion of level of service to show consistency with City policy, no level of service impact was identified under CEQA consistent with Senate Bill 743. This comment is acknowledged and no further response is necessary.

## SECTION 5.0 DRAFT EIR TEXT REVISIONS

---

This section contains revisions to the text of the El Camino Real Specific Plan Draft EIR dated November 2020. Revised or new language is underlined. All deletions are shown with a ~~line through~~ the text.

### Table Revisions

Page 20 *Table 1.5-1: El Camino Real Specific Plan Land Use Designations*; **REVISE** the title of the table as follows:

- ~~Table 1.5-1~~ Table 2.4-1

Page 20 *Table 1.5-1: El Camino Real Specific Plan Land Use Designations*; **REVISE** the Regional Commercial Mixed Use Density/Intensity FAR figure in the table as follows:

Min. Commercial  
FAR: ~~0.02~~ 0.20

Page 21 *Table 1.5-2: Regional Commercial Mixed-Use Intensity Standards*; **REVISE** the title of the table as follows:

- ~~Table 1.5-2~~ Table 2.4-2

Page 21 *Table 1.5-3: Regional Commercial Mixed-Use Setback and Lot Coverage Standards*; **REVISE** the title of the table as follows:

- ~~Table 1.5-3~~ Table 2.4-3

Page 23 *Table 1.5-4: Corridor Mixed Use Intensity Standards*; **REVISE** the title of the table as follows:

- ~~Table 1.5-4~~ Table 2.4-4

Page 23 *Table 1.5-5: Setback and Lot Coverage Standards*; **REVISE** the title of the table as follows:

- ~~Table 1.5-5~~ Table 2.4-5

Page 24 *Table 1.5-6: Corridor Residential Intensity Standards*; **REVISE** the title of the table as follows:

- ~~Table 1.5-6~~ Table 2.4-6

Page 24 *Table 1.5-7: Corridor Residential Setback and Lot Coverage Standards*; **REVISE** the title of the table as follows:

- ~~Table 1.5-7~~ Table 2.4-7

Page 61 *Table 0-1: Health Effects of Air Pollutants*; **REVISE** the title of the table as follows:

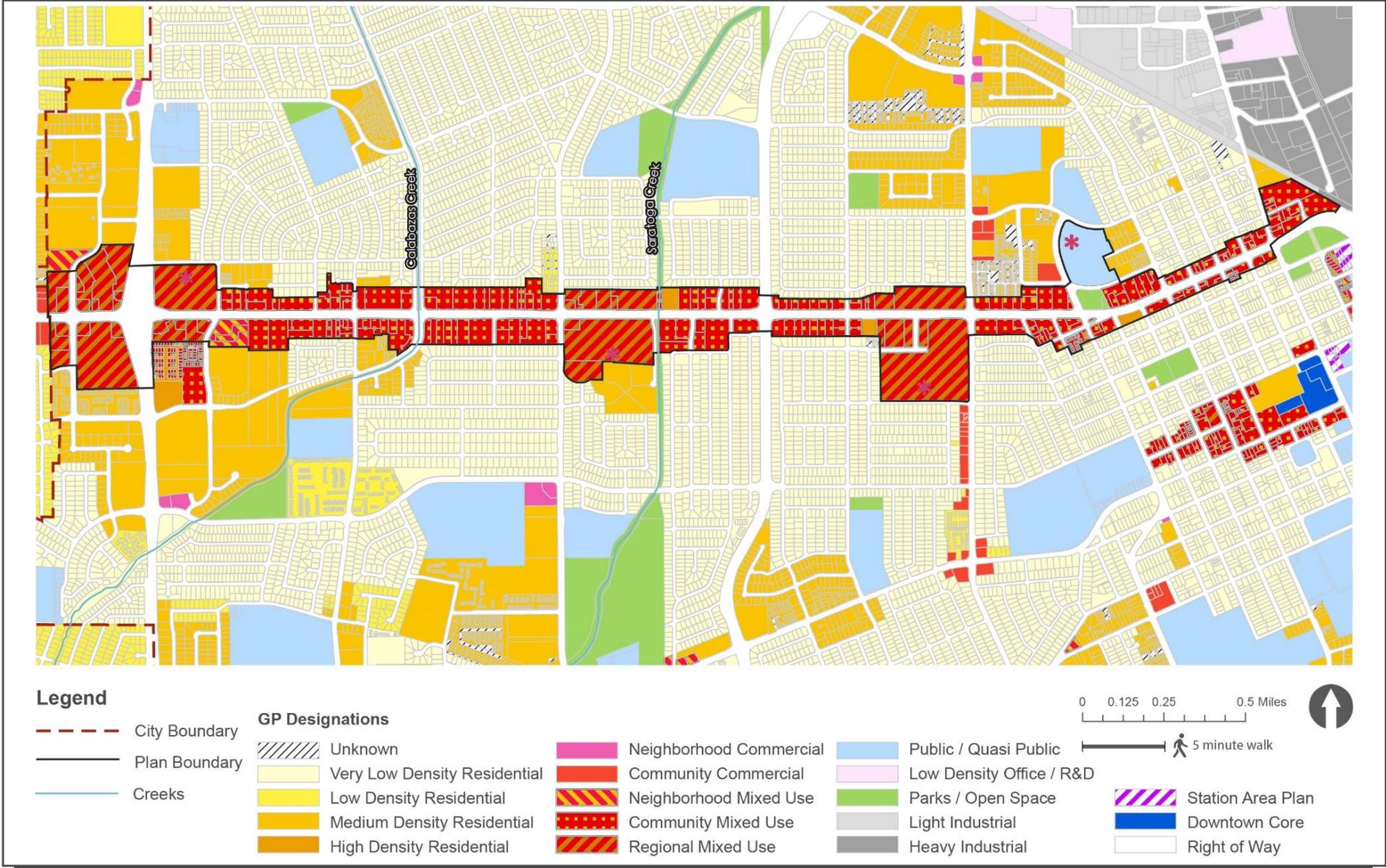
- ~~Table 0-1: Health Effects of Air Pollutants~~ Table 3.3-1: Health Effects of Air Pollutants

Page 66 *Table 0-2: BAAQMD Air Quality Significance Thresholds*; **REVISE** the title of the table as follows:

- ~~Table 0-2: BAAQMD Air Quality Significance Thresholds~~ Table 3.3-2: BAAQMD Air Quality Significance Thresholds

### Figure Revisions

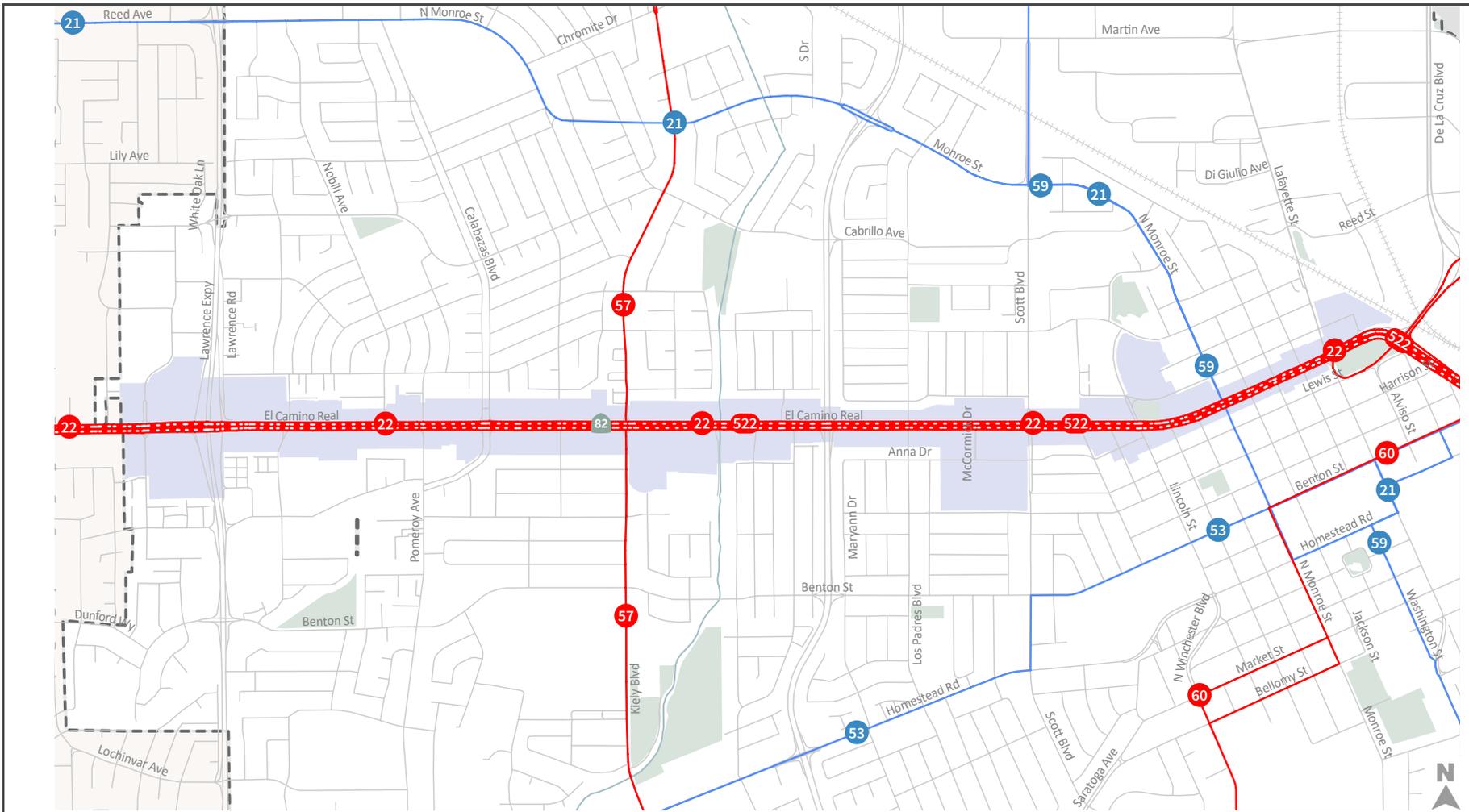
Page 12 *Figure 2.3-1: General Plan Land Use Designations*; **REVISE** to include labels on Calabazas Creek and Saratoga Creek, as follows:



GENERAL PLAN LAND USE DESIGNATIONS

FIGURE 2.3-1

*Figure 3.17-2: Existing Transit Services in Study Area; REVISE to show updated VTA bus routes, as follows:*



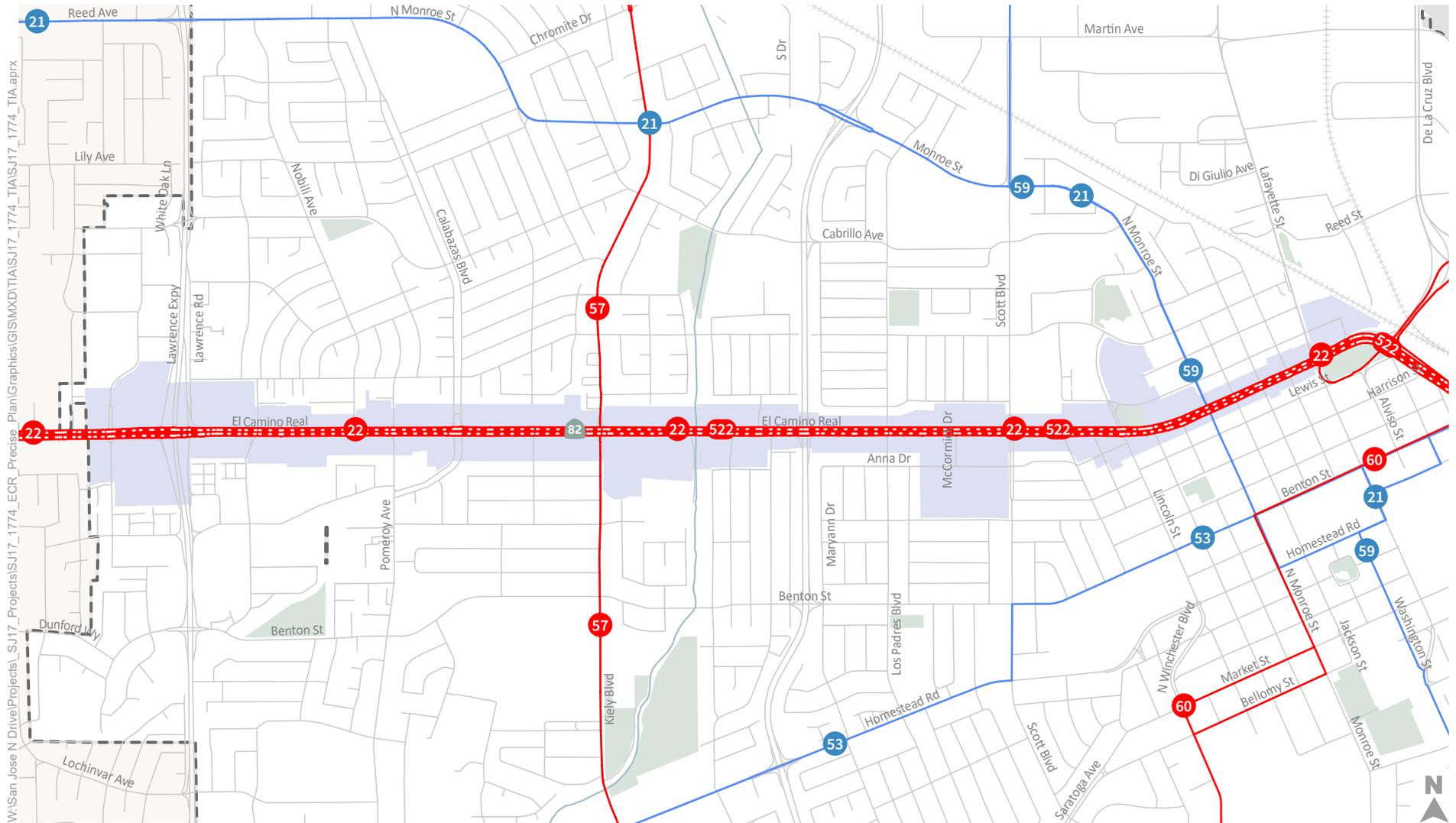
- - - Rapid Bus
- City of Santa Clara Boundary
- Frequent Bus
- PDA Boundary
- Local Bus

Source: Fehr & Peers.

EXISTING TRANSIT SERVICES IN THE PLAN AREA

FIGURE 3.17-2

Appendix D *Figure 5: Existing Transit Services in Study Area; REVISE to show updated VTA bus routes, as follows:*



W:\San Jose N Drive\Projects\SJ17\_1774\_ECR\_Precise\_Plan\Graphics\GIS\MXD\TIA\SJ17\_1774\_TIA.aprx

Source: Valley Transportation Authority (VTA)

- - - Rapid Bus
- Frequent Bus
- Local Bus
- City of Santa Clara Boundary
- PDA Boundary

Figure 3-2



## Existing Transit Services in Study Area

## Text Revisions

Page 40      *Section 2.6 PROJECT OBJECTIVES*; **REVISE** the Transportation discussion as follows:

- Transportation: Improve vehicular, transit, pedestrian, and bicycle facilities along the El Camino Real corridor by establishing a mobility framework that balances El Camino Real's many functions while improving mobility and safety for people of all ages, means, and abilities. The Plan area's circulation network consists of the roadways and sidewalks that serve vehicles, as well as off-street shared-use paths and pedestrian-only connections.

Page 67      Page 67 - TR 5 Transit Efficiency and Use Please further explain what "full implementation of the Clipper fare payment system" entails.

Page 76      *Section 3.3.2.2, Impact AIR-3*; **REVISE** the impact discussion as follows:

The BAAQMD standard measures described under Impact ~~AIR-1~~ AIR-2 and mitigation measure ~~MM AIR-1.1~~ MM AIR-2.1 would reduce the level of pollutants sensitive receptors in and around the Plan area would be exposed to. Implementation of BAAQMD standard measures would reduce exhaust emissions by five percent and fugitive dust emissions by over 50 percent. Implementation of mitigation measure ~~MM AIR-1.1~~ MM AIR-2.2 would further reduce diesel exhaust emissions by requiring project-level construction air quality assessments and identifying mitigation measures to reduce emissions to below the applicable BAAQMD thresholds (if exceeded).

The selection of appropriate equipment would also reduce emissions substantially. For example, the use of diesel-powered construction equipment that meets EPA particulate matter emissions standards for Tier 4 engines or includes CARB-certified diesel particulate matter filters could reduce diesel particulate matter emissions by at least 80 percent. This measure alone would reduce construction health risk impacts at sensitive receptors to a less than significant level. The other measures identified in mitigation measure ~~MM AIR-1.1~~ MM AIR-2.2 would further reduce impacts.

Additional measures to reduce TAC and PM<sub>2.5</sub> emissions would be identified during project-level construction air quality assessments, and could include hourly limits for generator or crane use, electrification or use of alternative fuels for portable equipment, appropriate staging of equipment (e.g., distanced from nearby sensitive receptors), and additional limitations on equipment idling. The application of appropriate measures, as required by ~~MM AIR-1.1~~ MM AIR-2.2, would reduce maximum cancer risk, annual PM<sub>2.5</sub> concentrations, and the Hazard Index (HI) to below respective threshold levels (shown in Table 3.3-2). Therefore, with implementation of the measures described, the proposed project would not expose sensitive receptors to substantial pollutant concentrations. **(Less than Significant Impact with Mitigation Incorporated)**

Page 145      *Section 3.10.1.2 Existing Conditions*; **REVISE** the Flooding discussion as follows:

## Flooding

According to the Federal Emergency Management Agency's (FEMA) current Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM), most of the Specific Plan area is not within a Special Flood Hazard Area (SFHA) .55 The majority of the Plan area is designated Zone X, defined as "Areas of 0.2 percent annual chance flood; areas of one percent chance flood with average depths of less than one foot or with drainage areas less than one square mile; and areas protected by levees from one percent annual chance flood." Certain portions of the Plan area are in SFHA Zone ~~AHAO~~, which is defined as an area of flood depths from one to three feet during 100-year flood conditions. Flooding in the areas designated Zone ~~AHAO~~ is due to a lack of capacity in the local drainage systems. These areas occur in three principal locations within the Plan area: 1) near the eastern boundary of the Plan area along the south side of El Camino Real and between El Camino Real and the railroad tracks; 2) along both sides of El Camino Real between approximately Buchanan Drive and Los Padres Boulevard; and 3) both sides of El Camino Real, between Halford Avenue and Lawrence Expressway.

Page 150 *Section 3.10.2.1 Project Impacts; REVISE* the Onsite Flooding discussion as follows:

As described previously, the Specific Plan area is not subject to seiche, tsunami, or mudflows. The Specific Plan area is, however, located within the inundation area of ~~Anderson Dam~~ Lexington Dam. While the Specific Plan area is subject to inundation if ~~Anderson Dam~~ Lexington Dam fails catastrophically, the dam is inspected twice a year by Valley Water in conjunction with the California Division of Safety of Dams and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission and the reservoir is managed to prevent significant damage during a maximum credible earthquake. Therefore, the probability of dam failure is extremely remote and is not considered a significant hazard.

Page 195 *Section 3.17.1.1 Regulatory Framework; ADD* the following paragraph:

### Santa Clara Complete Streets Policy

The City of Santa Clara adopted a Complete Streets Policy in 2018, in compliance with the California Complete Streets Act of 2008 (AB 1358) which requires local jurisdictions to include the complete streets policies as part of their general plans so that roadways are designed to safely accommodate all users including bicyclists, pedestrians, transit riders, children, senior citizens, disabled people, and motorists. The Policy contains four Complete Streets Principles that provide the framework for implementation of the Policy: 1) Complete Streets Serving All Users; 2) Context Sensitivity; 3) Complete Streets Routinely Addressed by All Departments; and 4) All Projects and Phases. In addition, the Policy contains the following Implementation standards: 1) Plan Consultation and Consistency; 2) Street Network/Connectivity; 3)

Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Commission Consultation; and 4) Evaluation. It also provides a procedure for projects that seek an exemption from the Policy.

Page 200

*Section 3.17.1.3 Existing Conditions; REVISE* the Existing Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities discussion as follows:

#### Pedestrian Facilities

Pedestrian connectivity within the Plan area is provided by a mostly complete network of sidewalks, crosswalks, and shared use paths. There are a few gaps in the sidewalk network on portions of San Tomas Expressway and Lawrence Expressway. Signalized crossings on El Camino Real, which have pedestrian signals to provide safe pedestrian/bicycle crossings, are provided at Lafayette Street, Monroe Street, Lincoln Street, Scott Boulevard, Los Padres Boulevard, San Tomas Expressway, Bowe Avenue, Bowers Avenue – Kiely Boulevard, Calabazas Boulevard, Pomeroy Avenue, Nobili Avenue, Flora Vista Avenue, and Lawrence Expressway. In addition, pedestrian hybrid beacons (PHBs) are located along El Camino Real at the intersections of Morse Lane, Buchanan Drive, and Alpine Avenue. PHBs consist of three signal indicators, with a circular yellow indication centered below two horizontally aligned circular red indications. The signal remains dark until a pedestrian pushing a button activates the system.

The closest rail station is the Santa Clara Transit station located on the east side of El Camino Real, southeast of the Plan Area. Pedestrians can either use El Camino Real to access the station or the pedestrian signals and crosswalks at Benton Street or Palm Drive. There are numerous bus stops along El Camino Real that are also served by sidewalks and signalized crossings.

#### Bicycle Facilities

Existing and planned bicycle facilities in the Plan area are shown on Figure 3.17-1. North-south bicycle connectivity to the El Camino Real area is good, with an off-street bicycle path along the San Tomas Aquino Creek that provides access between the Baylands Park Trail to the north and Homestead Road to the south. Bicycle lanes are present along Monroe Street, Los Padres, and Calabazas Boulevard. Calabazas Boulevard, in particular, features enhanced buffered bike lanes at the El Camino Real intersection. Several bicycle routes exist within the Plan area, including Lafayette Street, Scott Boulevard, and Bowers Avenue. Bicycles are permitted on Lawrence Expressway and San Tomas Expressway. East-west bicycle access is allowed along El Camino Real in the Plan area but there are no bicycle facility provisions. El Camino Real is designated as a “high caution” bike route within the County.

The *City of Santa Clara Bicycle Plan (2018)* identifies several planned bicycle infrastructure improvements near the Plan area, listed below and shown on Figure 3.17-1:

- Shared-Use Path (Class I): Along Saratoga Creek and Calabazas Boulevard

- Bicycle Lanes (Class II): Along Monroe Street, Lincoln Street north of El Camino Real, and Scott Boulevard
- Buffered Bicycle Lanes (Class IIB): Along Kiely Boulevard north of El Camino Real
- Bicycle Boulevard (Class IIIB): Along Lincoln Street south of El Camino Real
- Separated Bikeway (Class IV): Along El Camino Real, which is included as part of the El Camino Real Specific Plan

Page 222 *Section 3.17.2.4 Project Impacts; REVISE* the VMT Impacts discussion as follows:

El Camino Real qualifies as a high-quality transit corridor because VTA operates a ~~Bus Rapid Transit~~ rapid bus route service on the roadway (Rapid 522). The Rapid 522 bus route operates with 10 minute headways on weekdays and 15 minute headways on weekends. Additionally, the Specific Plan would have an average residential density greater than 35 residential units per acre, would not construct more parking than required by City Municipal Code, and would not result in a loss of affordable residential units. For these reasons, the Specific Plan qualifies as a transit supportive project and is presumed to have a less than significant impact on VMT.

Page 266 *Section 7.1 SIGNIFICANT IMPACTS OF THE PROJECT; REVISE* the last sentence of the first paragraph as follows:

As mentioned above, the CEQA Guidelines advise that the alternatives analysis in an EIR should be limited to alternatives that would avoid or substantially lessen any of the significant effects of the project and would achieve most of the basic project objectives. ~~The project has significant unavoidable impacts related to transportation.~~

## **Appendix A: Draft EIR Comment Letters**

---

**From:** [Luo, Yunsheng@DOT](mailto:Luo, Yunsheng@DOT)  
**To:** [Lesley Xavier](mailto:Lesley.Xavier)  
**Cc:** [Leong, Mark@DOT](mailto:Leong, Mark@DOT); [OPR State Clearinghouse](mailto:OPR State Clearinghouse)  
**Subject:** Caltrans comments for El Camino Real Specific Plan, DEIR  
**Date:** Wednesday, January 20, 2021 2:26:56 PM

---

Good afternoon Lesley,

Thank you for the opportunity to review the DEIR for the El Camino Real Specific Plan. Below are our comments for the DEIR. We would appreciate if you could provide more information with respect to our comments. Please feel free to reach out to me if you have any questions!

**Comments:**

Please know that a Design Standard Decision Document (DSDD) would be required for the 10' left turn lane. And please specify the speed and the Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) Truck volume for the 11' lanes within the study area.

Thank you!

Best,

Yunsheng Luo  
Associate Transportation Planner  
Local Development - Intergovernmental Review (LD-IGR)  
Caltrans, District 4  
Cell: 626-673-7057

*For early coordination and project circulation, please reach out to [LDIGR-D4@dot.ca.gov](mailto:LDIGR-D4@dot.ca.gov)  
For information about Caltrans' land use and transportation environmental review guidances, please visit the [SB-743 Implementation website](#).*



**From:** [Lisa Brancatelli](#)  
**To:** [Lesley Xavier](#)  
**Cc:** [Colleen Haggerty](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Notice of Availability of EIR Report - El Camino Real Specific Plan  
**Date:** Friday, January 22, 2021 8:52:22 AM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)  
[image002.png](#)  
[image003.png](#)  
[ECR Specific Plan\\_NOA\\_Final.pdf](#)  
**Importance:** High

---

Hello Lesley,

The Santa Clara Valley Water District (Valley Water) has received the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the El Camino Real Specific Plan for the segment of El Camino Real between Helen Avenue to the west and the Capitol Corridor train tracks to the east, received by Valley Water on December 10, 2020.

The project area includes Valley Water fee title property and easements over East Branch El Camino Storm Drain, Calabazas Creek, Saratoga Creek, and San Tomas Aquino Creek. Any work proposed on Valley Water easements and/or fee title property will require issuance of a Valley Water encroachment permit. Valley Water encroachment permits are discretionary actions and Valley Water is to be considered a responsible agency under CEQA. Based on our review of the DEIR, we have the following comments:

1. On all project maps, please clearly label all creeks that cross through the Specific Plan area, including East Branch El Camino Storm Drain, Calabazas Creek, Saratoga Creek, and San Tomas Aquino Creek. The maps included in the DEIR do not show East Branch El Camino Storm Drain or San Tomas Aquino Creek.
2. Several sections in the DEIR note recreational opportunities will include existing and future trail connections and amenities along Calabazas, Saratoga, and San Tomas Aquino Creeks. These creeks are located within Valley Water easements or fee title property. If new trails and/or trail amenities are being proposed along Valley Water right of way, Valley Water permits will be required as well as joint use agreements with the City for reaches located on Valley Water property. Valley Water should be involved early in the design phase as there may be limited areas for trails along the creeks and early discussions will assist in determining opportunities and constraints and avoid conflicts with Valley Water operational needs.
3. Guidelines for lighting adjacent to creeks and trails need to include requirements for lighting to be directed away from the creek corridors for the protection of wildlife, in accordance with the Guidelines and Standards for Land Use Near Streams.
4. Pages 146 and 150 of the DEIR incorrectly state that the plan area is within the Anderson Dam inundation area; however, according to the Lexington Dam Inundation Map the plan area is located within an area subject to inundation from the James J. Lenihan Dam on Lexington Reservoir. The document should be revised to correctly state the associated inundation area.
5. Page 145 of the DEIR the discussion of flooding notes the areas between Halford Avenue and Lawrence Expressway are in Zone AH; however, the FIRM Panel for this area shows this flooding in Zone AO. The City should confirm the flood zone limits.
6. Valley Water appreciates the requirement to conform with the Guidelines and

## Standards for Land Use Near Streams.

If you have any questions, or need further information, you can reach me at (408) 630-2479, or by e-mail at [LBrancatelli@valleywater.org](mailto:LBrancatelli@valleywater.org). Please reference Valley Water File No. 33858 on future correspondence regarding this project.

Thank you,  
Lisa

### LISA BRANCATELLI

ASSISTANT ENGINEER II (CIVIL)  
Community Projects Review Unit  
[lbrancatelli@valleywater.org](mailto:lbrancatelli@valleywater.org)  
Tel. (408) 630-2479 / Cell. (408) 691-1247  
CPRU Hotline: (408) 630-2650

Santa Clara Valley Water District is now known as:



Clean Water • Healthy Environment • Flood Protection

5750 Almaden Expressway, San Jose CA 95118  
[www.valleywater.org](http://www.valleywater.org)

---

**From:** Elizabeth Elliott <[EElliott@santaclaraca.gov](mailto:EElliott@santaclaraca.gov)>  
**Sent:** Monday, December 14, 2020 2:14 PM  
**To:** [jlaurain@adamsbroadwell.com](mailto:jlaurain@adamsbroadwell.com); [sudsjain@mail2web.com](mailto:sudsjain@mail2web.com); [suds.jain.sc@gmail.com](mailto:suds.jain.sc@gmail.com); [plan.review@vta.org](mailto:plan.review@vta.org); [data@publicnoticejournal.com](mailto:data@publicnoticejournal.com); Meagan Calahan <[MCalahan@valleywater.org](mailto:MCalahan@valleywater.org)>; Usha Chatwani <[uchatwani@valleywater.org](mailto:uchatwani@valleywater.org)>; [richard@lozeaudrury.com](mailto:richard@lozeaudrury.com); [theresa@lozeaudrury.com](mailto:theresa@lozeaudrury.com); [michael@lozeaudrury.com](mailto:michael@lozeaudrury.com); [hannah@lozeaudrury.com](mailto:hannah@lozeaudrury.com); [komal@lozeaudrury.com](mailto:komal@lozeaudrury.com); CPRU-Dropbox <[CPRU@valleywater.org](mailto:CPRU@valleywater.org)>; Maria Le <[MLe@SantaClaraCA.gov](mailto:MLe@SantaClaraCA.gov)>  
**Subject:** Notice of Availability of EIR Report - El Camino Real Specific Plan

Good Afternoon,

You are receiving this email because you are subscribed to receive CEQA/Scoping Meetings/Environmental Notice from the City of Santa Clara. Attached please find the NOA of an EIR for the El Camino Real Specific Plan. For specific questions on this project please contact Principal Planner Lesley Xavier at [lxavier@santaclaraca.gov](mailto:lxavier@santaclaraca.gov).

If you would like to be removed from this email notification list please reply to this email to unsubscribe.

Thank you.

Elizabeth Elliott

Planning Division | Community Development Department  
1500 Warburton Avenue | Santa Clara, CA 95050  
O : 408.615.2450

# County of Santa Clara

## Parks and Recreation Department

298 Garden Hill Drive  
Los Gatos, California 95032-7669  
(408) 355-2200 FAX (408) 355-2290  
Reservations (408) 355-2201

[www.parkhere.org](http://www.parkhere.org)



January 25, 2021

City of Santa Clara  
Attn: Lesley Xavier  
1500 Warburton Avenue  
Santa Clara, CA 95050

### **SUBJECT: Notice of Availability of a Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the El Camino Real Specific Plan**

Dear Lesley Xavier,

The County of Santa Clara Parks and Recreation Department (County Parks Department) is submitting the following comments on the Notice of Availability of a Draft Environmental Impact Report for the El Camino Real Specific Plan (Plan).

In regard to the Plan, the County Parks Department's review is primarily focused on potential impacts related to the *Santa Clara County Countywide Trails Master Plan Update (Countywide Trails Plan)*, an element of the County General Plan (adopted by the Board of Supervisors on November 14, 1995), relative to countywide trail routes, public access and regional parks. There is one *Countywide Trails Plan* trail route in the vicinity of the Plan:

*San Tomas Aquino/Saratoga Creek Trail (C5)*- an on-road bicycle route within the road right-of-way, located along Calabazas Boulevard

A completed segment of the San Tomas Aquino/Saratoga Creek Trail in the Plan vicinity is an off-road bicycle route that allows hiking as well. This trail segment was rerouted from the original location featured in the Countywide Trails Plan and follows Calabazas Boulevard parallel to Calabazas Creek from Pomeroy Avenue to Cabrillo Avenue, and crosses the Plan site.

There are additionally two Santa Clara City-planned trail routes that cross the Plan site. One is the Saratoga Creek Extension Trail that is proposed as an on-road bicycle route located within the road right-of-way along Buchanan Drive, El Camino Real and Morse Lane. The second City-planned trail that crosses the Plan site is the partially-completed San Tomas Expressway Trail, which is a Class I on-road bicycle route located in the road right-of-way along San Tomas Expressway.

The County Parks Department supports the collaborative efforts between various City of Santa Clara departments and other local agencies in regard to this Plan and future site improvements. The County Parks Department also supports the Plan's efforts to develop new pedestrian and bicycle routes within

Board of Supervisors: Mike Wasserman, Cindy Chavez, Otto Lee, Susan Ellenberg, S. Joseph Simitian

County Executive: Jeffrey V. Smith





January 25, 2021

City of Santa Clara  
Department of Planning  
1500 Warburton Avenue  
Santa Clara, CA 95050

Attention: Lesley Xavier, Principal Planner  
By Email: [lxavier@santaclaraca.gov](mailto:lxavier@santaclaraca.gov)

Re: Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the El Camino Real Specific Plan

Dear Ms. Xavier:

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on the DEIR for the El Camino Real Specific Plan. This is an exciting project and we look forward to working with the City to make this plan a reality. VTA has the following comments.

#### Transit Service and Impacts

El Camino Real is an incredibly important corridor for it has the highest ridership within the VTA system that warrants two frequent network routes. VTA recommends more emphasis be placed within the plan that highlights this. VTA applauds the Specific Plan's vision to accommodate and provide improvements to transit service within Santa Clara (Page 40). VTA recommends the first paragraph under Transportation be updated to say, "Improve vehicular, transit, pedestrian, and bicycle facilities along the El Camino Real corridor by..." to reinforce the City's priority for accommodating all roadway users.

Pages 216 and 217 indicate that in-lane stopping will speed up transit, then later states that congestion will delay transit. A more comprehensive analysis of transit impacts should be completed to determine if the net effect of in-lane stopping and congestion will be positive, negative, or neutral. VTA would be happy to work with the City to analyze the findings of this analysis. If any impacts are predicted to be negative, the project should provide mitigations to maintain current operations or improve the transit signal priority system to provide improved travel times and reliability of travel time on the corridor. This analysis would be consistent with Santa Clara General Plan policy 5.4.1-P18 that says, "Work with Valley Transportation Authority to improve transit access, information and frequency along El Camino Real, including the implementation of a Bus Rapid Transit or similar transit service near Regional Mixed-Use areas."

VTA's Transit Speed Policy encourages early coordination if a new signal (or new driveway with a signal) is being considered as part of a plan or development. The addition of a new signal would trigger signal retiming on the corridor in coordination with both VTA and Caltrans. We should note that VTA is beginning an audit on the existing Transit Signal Priority system on State Route 82/El Camino Real that will provide VTA with an overall recommendation on the future replacement technology. We will continue to update the City on this effort.

Figure 3.17-2 on Page 203 and Figure 5 in Appendix D is using outdated route information. The DEIR should be updated to reflect current VTA routes that were implemented in December 2019.

Additionally, Page 222 indicates that VTA operates a Bus Rapid Transit service on El Camino Real. This should be updated to say that VTA operates a rapid bus route (Rapid 522) along El Camino Real. Bus Rapid Transit is a system that provide bus-only lanes and other quality infrastructure and programs. An example of this is along Alum Rock Avenue in San José between 34<sup>th</sup> Street and Capital Avenue.

#### Bicycle and Pedestrian Accommodations

VTA applauds the City's efforts to realize the proposed Class IV separated bikeway presented in the Santa Clara Bicycle Plan Update (2018). Page 202 states, "Specific Plan would allow in the interim condition the removal of on-street parking and installation of a Class II buffered or Class IV protected bicycle lane on both sides of El Camino Real (within the City limits) **within the existing curb to curb dimension of the street. Parking would remain along properties without on-site parking.**" VTA cautions that these two parameters (in bold) could compromise the construction of a continuous Class II buffered bike lane or Class IV separated bikeway. At transit stops, expanded ROW to provide a bus boarding island, which facilitates safe and efficient travel for bicycles and buses. To provide any bikeway, removal of parking or a travel lane is needed, and the latter may not be supported by the community. VTA recommends the language be updated to say, "Parking may remain along properties without on-site parking," to accommodate any future land use changes or City priorities that would allow for removal of parking.

VTA requests that any proposed traffic signal improvements consider the implementation of adaptive traffic signal timing to balance the mobility and enhanced safe movement of all travel modes, including pedestrians and bicycle users.

Due to the pandemic or to help reduce any future outbreaks of infectious diseases, VTA requests the project consider implementing touchless pedestrian push buttons on all traffic signals planned to be modified by the effort. Touchless buttons could have other benefits to help less physically able pedestrians to more easily trigger the pedestrian signals and associated timing.

#### Policy Language

Either the Regional or Local Regulatory Framework section of the Transportation chapter (Page 192) should be updated to include the Complete Streets Policy adopted by all Member Agencies in Santa Clara County, including the City of Santa Clara. The policy stipulates that all projects shall develop a Complete Streets Checklist. The intent of the VTA Checklist is to ensure bicyclists, pedestrians, transit, intelligent transportation systems, and green infrastructure is considered in all transportation plans and projects and to make the decision-making regarding trade-offs clear and publicly available. This should also be incorporated into Appendix D of the DEIR.

Also, Policy 5.8.3-P8 (Page 193) should be updated to read, "Require new development to work with VTA to install transit stop amenities, such as pedestrian pathways to stops, benches,

traveler information, and shelters.” VTA has our own set of standards for amenities and a system in place to work with developers to have them installed. Developers should reach out to [bus.stop@vta.org](mailto:bus.stop@vta.org) early in the development process to allow for sufficient design and lead time for acquiring necessary amenities.

#### Clarity Edits

VTA also suggests a few edits to the text that would add clarity for readers:

- Page 67 – TR 5: Transit Efficiency and Use: Please further explain what “full implementation of the Clipper fare payment system” entails.
- Page 200 – Existing Bike Conditions: Add “planned” so text reads, “The City of Santa Clara Bicycle Plan (2018) identifies several planned bicycle infrastructure improvements near the Plan area, listed below and shown on Figure 3.17-1.”
- Page 200 – Existing Pedestrian Conditions: Project calls out location of Santa Clara Caltrain and notes pedestrian access to the station but makes no mention of bus stops along El Camino Real. Add a general note that indicates there are numerous (or provide the number) bus stops along El Camino Real that are served by sidewalks and signalized crossings.
- Page 201 – Figure 3.17-1: Add a note to the legend so it is clear the dashed lines mean planned and the solid lines mean existing.

VTA looks forward to continuing and improving our coordinated planning efforts with the City of Santa Clara especially along El Camino Real. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 408-321-5830 or [lola.torney@vta.org](mailto:lola.torney@vta.org).

Sincerely,



Lola Torney  
Transportation Planner III

**From:** [Torney, Lola](#)  
**To:** [Lesley Xavier](#)  
**Cc:** [plan.review](#)  
**Subject:** RE: VTA Comments on El Camino Real Specific Plan DEIR [SC1709]  
**Date:** Tuesday, January 26, 2021 8:35:48 AM  
**Attachments:** [image002.png](#)  
[image003.png](#)  
[image004.png](#)  
[Approved 2016MB CS Reporting Requirements - Processed June 2017.pdf](#)  
[SantaClaraCSReso082118.pdf](#)

---

Good morning, Lesley,

I'm sorry to say I misunderstood my colleague on one aspect of the complete streets policy mentioned in our letter. The statement, "The policy stipulates that all projects shall develop a Complete Streets checklist" is not correct. There are two items here, which may have been conflated:

1. The VTA policy applies to VTA-led projects, and requires us to include planned complete streets elements into projects geographic limits or explain if there is an exception. Your policy also stipulates that if an exception is sought, a memo must be approved and made publicly available, but does not specify a checklist.
2. The 2016 Measure B Complete Streets Reporting Requirements, which require recipients of 2016 Measure B funds to have an adopted complete streets resolution (which you have) and to fill out the complete streets checklist. Essentially, if one of your projects did seek Measure B funds, you would require a complete streets checklist to be approved by VTA staff. If you have other funding sources, a checklist would not be required.

I'm attaching both the reporting requirements and your adopted complete streets resolution for clarity. Sorry about this! Please let me know if you need any more clarity or action from me on this.

~Lola

---

**From:** Lesley Xavier <[LXavier@santaclaraca.gov](mailto:LXavier@santaclaraca.gov)>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 25, 2021 4:44 PM  
**To:** Torney, Lola <[Lola.Torney@vta.org](mailto:Lola.Torney@vta.org)>  
**Cc:** [plan.review](#) <[plan.review@vta.org](mailto:plan.review@vta.org)>  
**Subject:** RE: VTA Comments on El Camino Real Specific Plan DEIR [SC1709]

Thank you. Your comments have been received.

*Lesley*

**Lesley Xavier** | Principal Planner  
Community Development Department | Planning Division  
1500 Warburton Avenue | Santa Clara, CA 95050  
D: 408.615.2484 | email: [LXavier@SantaClaraCA.gov](mailto:LXavier@SantaClaraCA.gov)

[www.SantaClaraCA.gov](http://www.SantaClaraCA.gov)

---

**From:** Torney, Lola <[Lola.Torney@vta.org](mailto:Lola.Torney@vta.org)>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 25, 2021 4:36 PM  
**To:** Lesley Xavier <[LXavier@santaclaraca.gov](mailto:LXavier@santaclaraca.gov)>  
**Cc:** plan.review <[plan.review@vta.org](mailto:plan.review@vta.org)>  
**Subject:** VTA Comments on El Camino Real Specific Plan DEIR [SC1709]

Hi Lesley,  
Thank you for the opportunity to review the DEIR for the El Camino Real Specific Plan. Attached are our comments. Please let me know if you have any questions!

~Lola

**Lola Torney** | She/Her  
Transportation Planner III  
Bicycle and Pedestrian Program

Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority  
3331 North First Street, Building B  
San José, CA 95134-1927  
Phone [408-321-5830](tel:408-321-5830)



the development, improve the safety of existing and proposed trail crossings across El Camino Real in the Plan vicinity, as well as develop and improve segments of the three regional trails mentioned above. It is imperative that the proposed development does not impact the completed segment of the *Countywide Trails Plan's* San Tomas Aquino/Saratoga Creek Trail, which crosses the Plan site.

Thank you for the opportunity for County Parks Department to provide comments on the Notice of Availability of a Draft Environmental Impact Report for the El Camino Real Specific Plan. If you have any questions, please email me at [kelly.gibson@prk.sccgov.org](mailto:kelly.gibson@prk.sccgov.org)

Sincerely,

*Kelly Gibson*

Kelly Gibson  
Assistant Planner



Board of Supervisors: Mike Wasserman, Cindy Chavez, Otto Lee, Susan Ellenberg, S. Joseph Simitian

County Executive: Jeffrey V. Smith

**RESOLUTION NO. 18-8593**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CITY OF SANTA CLARA, CALIFORNIA  
TO ADOPT A COMPLETE STREETS POLICY CONTAINING THE  
NINE COMPLETE STREETS ELEMENTS AS OUTLINED BY THE  
METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION IN ORDER  
TO RECEIVE MEASURE B FUNDS**

**BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY OF SANTA CLARA AS FOLLOWS:**

**WHEREAS**, on November 8, 2016, the voters of Santa Clara County approved Measure B, a 30-year, ½ cent sales tax measure supporting transportation projects and services. In order to be eligible to receive 2016 Measure B funds, all recipients must adopt a Complete Streets resolution that contains elements of Complete Streets laid out by Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC) for the One Bay Area Grant (OBAG) Program Cycle 2. These elements describe Complete Streets principles, implementation, evaluation, and exception processes;

**WHEREAS**, the term "Complete Streets" describes a comprehensive, integrated transportation network with infrastructure and design that allows safe and convenient travel along and across streets for all users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, persons with disabilities, motorists, movers of commercial goods, users and operators of public transportation, seniors, children, youth, and families;

**WHEREAS**, the City of Santa Clara City Council has long acknowledged the benefits and value for the public health and welfare of reducing vehicle miles traveled and increasing transportation by walking, bicycling, and public transportation;

**WHEREAS**, the City Council also recognizes that the planning and coordinated development of Complete Streets infrastructure provides benefits for local governments in the areas of infrastructure cost savings; public health; and environmental sustainability;

**WHEREAS**, these concepts are inherent in the adopted Circulation policies of the City of Santa Clara General Plan;

**WHEREAS**, the State of California has emphasized the importance of Complete Streets by enacting

the California Complete Streets Act of 2008 (also known as AB 1358), which requires that when cities or counties revise general plans, they identify how they will provide for the mobility needs of all users of the roadways, as well as through Deputy Directive 64, in which the California Department of Transportation explained that it "views all transportation improvements as opportunities to improve safety, access, and mobility for all travelers in California and recognizes bicycle, pedestrian, and transit modes as integral elements of the transportation system";

**WHEREAS**, the California Global Warming Solutions Act of 2006 (known as AB 32) sets a mandate for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in California, and the Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act of 2008 (known as SB 375) requires emissions reductions through coordinated regional planning that integrates transportation, housing, and land-use policy, and achieving the goals of these laws will require significant increases in travel by public transit, bicycling, and walking;

**WHEREAS**, numerous California counties, cities, and agencies have adopted Complete Streets policies and legislation in order to further the health, safety, welfare, economic vitality, and environmental well-being of their communities; and,

**WHEREAS**, the City of Santa Clara, therefore, in light of the foregoing benefits and considerations, wishes to improve its commitment to Complete Streets and desires that its streets form a comprehensive and integrated transportation network promoting safe, equitable, and convenient travel for all users while preserving flexibility, recognizing community context, and using the latest and best design guidelines and standards.

**NOW THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED BY THE CITY OF SANTA CLARA AS FOLLOWS:**

1. That the City of Santa Clara adopts the Complete Streets Policy, attached hereto as **Exhibit A**, and made part of this Resolution, and that said exhibit is hereby approved and adopted; and

2. That the next substantial revision of the City of Santa Clara General Plan circulation policies shall incorporate Complete Streets policies and principles consistent with the California Complete Streets Act of 2008 (AB 1358) and with the Complete Streets Policy adopted by this resolution.

3. Effective date. This resolution shall become effective immediately.

I HEREBY CERTIFY THE FOREGOING TO BE A TRUE COPY OF A RESOLUTION PASSED AND ADOPTED BY THE CITY OF SANTA CLARA, CALIFORNIA, AT A REGULAR MEETING THEREOF HELD ON THE 21<sup>st</sup> DAY OF AUGUST, 2018, BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:

AYES:	COUNCILORS:	Davis, Kolstad, Mahan, O'Neill, and Watanabe and Mayor Gillmor
NOES:	COUNCILORS:	None
ABSENT:	COUNCILORS:	None
ABSTAINED:	COUNCILORS:	None

ATTEST:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
JENNIFER YAMAGUMA  
ACTING CITY CLERK  
CITY OF SANTA CLARA

Attachments incorporated by reference:  
1. Exhibit A

## EXHIBIT A

### COMPLETE STREETS POLICY OF THE CITY OF SANTA CLARA

#### A. Complete Streets Principles

1. **Complete Streets Serving All Users.** The City of Santa Clara ("City"), through its Circulation policies within the 2010-2035 General Plan and reaffirmed by this resolution is committed to creating, preserving, and maintaining Complete Streets that provide safe, comfortable, and convenient travel along and across streets (including streets, roads, highways, bridges, and other portions of the transportation system) through a comprehensive, integrated transportation network that serves all categories of users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, persons with disabilities, motorists, movers of commercial goods, users and operators of public transportation, seniors, children, youth, and families.
2. **Context Sensitivity.** In planning and implementing street projects, departments of the City of Santa Clara shall maintain sensitivity to local conditions in both residential and business districts as well as urban, suburban, and rural areas, and shall work with residents, businesses, and other stakeholders to ensure that a strong sense of place ensues. Improvements that may be considered include sidewalks, shared use paths, bicycle lanes, bicycle routes, paved shoulders, street trees and landscaping, planting strips, accessible curb ramps, crosswalks, refuge islands, pedestrian signals, signs, street furniture, bicycle parking facilities, public transportation stops and facilities, transit priority signalization, and other features assisting in the provision of safe travel for all users as identified in an adopted local plan such as a bicycle, pedestrian, transit, multimodal, or other relevant plan.
3. **Complete Streets Routinely Addressed by All Departments.** All relevant departments of the City of Santa Clara shall work towards making Complete Streets practices a routine part of everyday operations, approach every relevant project, program, and practice as an opportunity to improve streets and the transportation network for all categories of users, and work in coordination with other agencies, and jurisdictions to maximize opportunities for Complete Streets, connectivity, and cooperation.
4. **All Projects and Phases.** Complete Streets infrastructure sufficient to enable reasonably safe travel along and across the right of way for each category of users shall be assessed and may be incorporated into all planning, funding, design, approval, and implementation processes for applicable construction, reconstruction, retrofit, maintenance, operations, alteration, or repair of streets, roads, highways, bridges, and other portions of the transportation system, except that specific infrastructure for a given category of users may be excluded if an exemption is approved via the process set forth in section C.1 of this policy.

## B. Implementation

1. **Plan Consultation and Consistency.** Maintenance, planning, and design of projects affecting the transportation system shall be consistent with local bicycle, pedestrian, transit, multimodal, and other relevant plans, except that where such consistency cannot be achieved without negative consequences, consistency shall not be required if the head of the relevant department provides written approval explaining the basis of such deviation.
2. **Street Network/Connectivity.** Consistent with the City's General Plan and other adopted plans, the City of Santa Clara shall incorporate Complete Streets infrastructure into existing streets to improve the safety and convenience of users, with the particular goal of creating a connected network of facilities accommodating each category of users, and increasing connectivity across jurisdictional boundaries and for existing and anticipated future areas of travel origination or destination.
3. **Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Commission Consultation.** Relevant transportation projects shall be coordinated with the Santa Clara Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee to provide comments and recommendations regarding Complete Streets features to be incorporated into the project.
4. **Evaluation.** All relevant departments shall perform evaluations of how well the streets and transportation network of Santa Clara are serving each category of users by collecting baseline data and collecting follow-up data on a regular basis.

## C. Exemptions

1. **Leadership Approval for Exemptions.** Projects that seek Complete Streets exemptions must provide a written finding of why accommodations for all modes were not to be included in the project. The memorandum should be signed off by the Public Works Director, City Engineer or equivalent high level staff person. Projects that are granted exceptions must be made publically available for review.



Date: May 25, 2017  
Current Meeting: June 1, 2017  
Board Meeting: June 1, 2017

**BOARD MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority  
Board of Directors

APPROVED ACCEPTED ADOPTED AMENDED DEFERRED REVIEWED

Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority

Board of Directors

Elaine F. Baltao, Board Secretary

BY: *[Signature]*

DATE: 6/1/2017

**THROUGH:** General Manager, Nuria I. Fernandez

**FROM:** Interim Director - Planning & Program Development, Carolyn M. Gonot

**SUBJECT:** Measure B Complete Streets Reporting Requirements

**Policy-Related Action:** No

**Government Code Section 84308 Applies:** No

**ACTION ITEM**

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Approve the proposed 2016 Measure B Complete Streets reporting requirements.

**BACKGROUND:**

On November 8, 2016, the voters of Santa Clara County overwhelmingly approved a 30-year, ½ cent sales tax measure supporting transportation projects and services. 2016 Measure B, adopted by the VTA Board of Directors in June 2016, lists and describes the following nine program categories: Local Streets and Roads; BART Phase II; Bicycle and Pedestrian; Caltrain Grade Separations; Caltrain Corridor Capacity Improvements; Highway Interchanges; County Expressways; SR 85 Corridor; and Transit Operations.

In response to input received from Member Agencies and members of the public, 2016 Measure B supports multiple modes of transportation. Specifically, 2016 Measure B requires “the cities and the County [to] apply Complete Streets best practices in order to improve bicycle and pedestrian elements of the street system.” Staff recommends expanding the Complete Streets requirement to apply to all capital program categories in 2016 Measure B.

In recent years, Member Agencies and VTA have worked closely with the public to develop strong, visionary, multimodal planning documents. Applying Complete Streets best practices to projects funded by 2016 Measure B will assist Member Agencies in implementing bicycle and pedestrian projects identified in local plans.

Below are the proposed reporting requirements that project sponsors would be required to follow in order to comply with 2016 Measure B’s Complete Streets requirement and to receive funding from the program.

## Definition of Complete Streets

For the purposes of these requirements, Complete Streets are generally defined as streets:

- That are planned, designed, funded, constructed, operated and maintained for the safe travel of all users.
- Where designs are context sensitive, and incorporate a balanced network approach.
- Which prioritize the safety, comfort, and convenience of pedestrians, bicyclists, transit riders (including access and operations), as appropriate for the local context, while still providing safe accommodations for motorists and other roadway users.
- Where capital projects, once completed, should not degrade the safety, comfort, or convenience of pedestrians, bicyclists, or access to transit, nor should they degrade the travel time of transit operations (recognizing that there may be situations where one of these modes may need to be prioritized over another).
- Where designs are developed with input from the community and support future conditions.

To fulfill the requirements of 2016 Measure B, VTA has worked with Member Agencies and stakeholders to develop Complete Streets reporting requirements that will:

- Ensure 2016 Measure B projects support the measure's Complete Streets requirement.
- Provide accountability and transparency to Santa Clara County taxpayers.
- Allow VTA to report to the public on how Complete Streets practices are being applied to 2016 Measure B-funded projects.
- Minimize additional Member Agency staff time while still being effective, and that can potentially be expanded to VTA's other funding programs, including One Bay Area Grant (OBAG) Cycle III.

## **DISCUSSION:**

### **Member Agency and Stakeholder Outreach**

To develop the Complete Streets reporting requirements, VTA sought input from Member Agency staff, the Metropolitan Transportation Commission (MTC), Caltrans, and the following transportation advocacy organizations: California Walks, Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition, TransForm, SPUR, and Friends of Caltrain.

Below is a summary of the outreach VTA has conducted to date:

- Presented initial concepts and a draft proposal for the Complete Streets reporting requirements to VTA’s Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and associated working groups. (August 2016 - November 2016)
- Presented the same materials to a subcommittee of the VTA Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) which includes the aforementioned advocacy organizations. (August 2016 - November 2016)
- Met individually with staff from fifteen Member Agencies, Caltrans, MTC and the BPAC subcommittee to understand project delivery and pavement maintenance practices, and to gather feedback on the draft proposal for Complete Streets reporting requirements. (November 2016 - January 2017)
- Hosted a facilitated workshop for 45 attendees, representing Member Agencies and advocacy organizations, to present revised requirements and to better understand commonalities and differences among stakeholders. (January 2017)
- Presented the proposed 2016 Measure B Complete Streets reporting requirements to VTA’s Technical Advisory Committee, Policy Advisory Committee, Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee, and Congestion Management Program & Planning Committee. (April 2017)

Based on the input VTA received through the ten-month outreach process, and through research and analysis conducted by staff, VTA proposes the Complete Streets reporting requirements as outlined below.

### **Proposed Complete Streets Reporting Requirements for 2016 Measure B**

VTA’s approach to Complete Streets compliance keeps design decisions local, while increasing the transparency of these decisions and ensuring the requirements of 2016 Measure B are met. Member Agencies universally requested that reporting requirements for pavement management programs be structured differently, and require less staff time, than those for standalone capital projects.

Accordingly, the requirements are divided into two sections: 1) Local Streets & Roads; and 2) Capital Projects. Attachment A presents a process diagram for these requirements.

#### **Local Streets and Roads**

- A. Member Agencies will be required to adopt a Complete Streets Resolution. The

resolution will need, at a minimum, to contain the nine Complete Streets elements as outlined by the Metropolitan Transportation Commission. (Attachment B). Seven of the sixteen VTA Member Agencies have already adopted the MTC resolution or a variation thereof.

- B. With an initial funding request, Member Agencies will submit (1) a Pavement Program Self-Declaration Form and (2) a list of street segments anticipated for repaving. The Pavement Declaration Form will require sponsors to detail the pavement condition and the types of anticipated work, as well as anticipated Complete Streets infrastructure. If the Member Agency anticipates that any project segments will not include Complete Streets accommodations identified in a local, county, or regional adopted plan, it must be noted and accompanied by an explanation. VTA will develop the Pavement Program Self-Declaration Form with input from VTA's TAC and its respective Working Groups, and VTA's BPAC.
- C. After pavement work has been completed, Member Agencies must submit a final list of completed projects on an annual basis, noting the Complete Street accommodations that have been added, upgraded, or maintained. If any segments did not include Complete Streets accommodations identified in an adopted plan, the exception should be noted and explained.

### **Capital Projects**

- A. As is the case with Local Streets & Roads, Project Sponsors will be required to adopt a Complete Streets Resolution. The resolution will need to contain the nine Complete Streets elements as outlined by the MTC. (Attachment B).
- B. Prior to beginning work, project sponsors must submit a Complete Streets Checklist. The checklist will ask sponsors to detail the project scope, describe anticipated complete streets infrastructure, and describe any negative impacts the project may have on bicyclists, pedestrians, or transit. If the Member Agency anticipates that the project will not include Complete Streets accommodations identified in a local, county, or regional adopted plan, it must be noted and accompanied by an explanation. VTA will develop the Complete Streets Checklist with input from VTA's TAC and its respective Working Groups, and VTA's BPAC.
- C. VTA and the project sponsor will check in at appropriate point(s) in the project life-cycle to confirm Complete Streets best practices are being applied, and note if an exception should be declared. Check-in points will be determined by VTA, with input from the project sponsor, at project initiation, and documented in the project funding agreement.
- D. At completion of the phase(s) of the project funded through 2016 Measure B, project sponsors must submit a project close out form, which details Complete Streets elements

provided by the project and, if necessary, explains why Complete Streets infrastructure identified in a local, county, or regional adopted plan has not been included in the project.

- E. After the project has been constructed, the project sponsor will provide VTA with before and after data and photos, determined on a project-by-project basis. Before and after data will be related to the project purpose and need, and will be determined by the project sponsor.

### **Exceptions**

As referenced above, VTA will require an exception if a project: a) does not provide Complete Streets infrastructure that is identified in a local, countywide, or regional adopted plan within the project's geographical limits; b) severs an existing bicycle, pedestrian, or transit connection; or c) does not meet minimum design standards or guidelines for Complete Streets infrastructure.

Should a Member Agency or project sponsor wish to declare a Complete Streets exception for a local streets and roads or capital project, the project sponsors must provide an explanation and authorization from the agency's Public Works Director, their equivalent, or a designee. Including the explanation in the Pavement Program Self-Declaration Form or Complete Streets Checklist will be sufficient to meet this requirement. While each project is unique, the following are examples of reasonable explanations for requesting an exception:

- Cost of providing the Complete Streets element is disproportionate to the overall cost of the project.
- A roadway user is legally prohibited from using the transportation facility.
- There is an absence of existing and future need.

VTA will review the explanation for the exception and, on a case-by-case basis, determine if the project is eligible to receive 2016 Measure B funding.

### **On-line Reporting**

Several stakeholders requested that pavement lists be made available prior to final design, and that public input be incorporated into final design. In response, VTA plans to facilitate the public input process by posting the Pavement Program Self-Declaration Form online, and having Member Agencies describe their public comment process. Additionally, the Complete Streets Checklist for capital projects will be posted online.

### **NEXT STEPS:**

If the proposed 2016 Measure B Complete Streets reporting requirements are approved by the VTA Board of Directors, staff will begin implementation. As a first step, VTA will work with the TAC, its respective Working Groups, and the BPAC to develop the Pavement Program Self-

Declaration Form and Complete Streets Checklist. VTA will also integrate the Complete Streets reporting requirements into 2016 Measure B's overall reporting and funding processes, and develop an online reporting tool.

### **ALTERNATIVES:**

The Board of Directors could choose to approve, modify, or reject staff's recommended 2016 Measure B Complete Streets Reporting Requirements.

### **FISCAL IMPACT:**

If 2016 Measure B Complete Streets reporting requirements are approved, estimated staff time of 0.5 to 1 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) would be required to administer the reporting process. The staff cost would be funded from 2016 Measure B.

### **ADVISORY COMMITTEE DISCUSSION/RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Technical Advisory Committee received this item at their May 10, 2017 meeting. Discussion ensued regarding the Complete Streets example resolution in Attachment B, specifically the language requiring consultation with local advisory committees early in a project's development. The Committee endorsed staff recommendation with one member opposing.

The Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee received this item at their May 10, 2017 meeting and discussed the following: 1) process for VTA to comment on Local Streets and Roads Self Declaration Forms before funding is distributed to Member Agencies 2) percentage of overall project cost that would be considered "disproportionate," and 3) before-after data for capital projects. The committee voted unanimously to forward staff recommendation to the Board, with the additional recommendation that Member Agencies be encouraged to provide before and after bicycle and pedestrian counts for capital projects funded through 2016 Measure B.

The Policy Advisory Committee received this item at their May 11, 2017 meeting and recommended Board approval without comment.

### **STANDING COMMITTEE DISCUSSION/RECOMMENDATIONS**

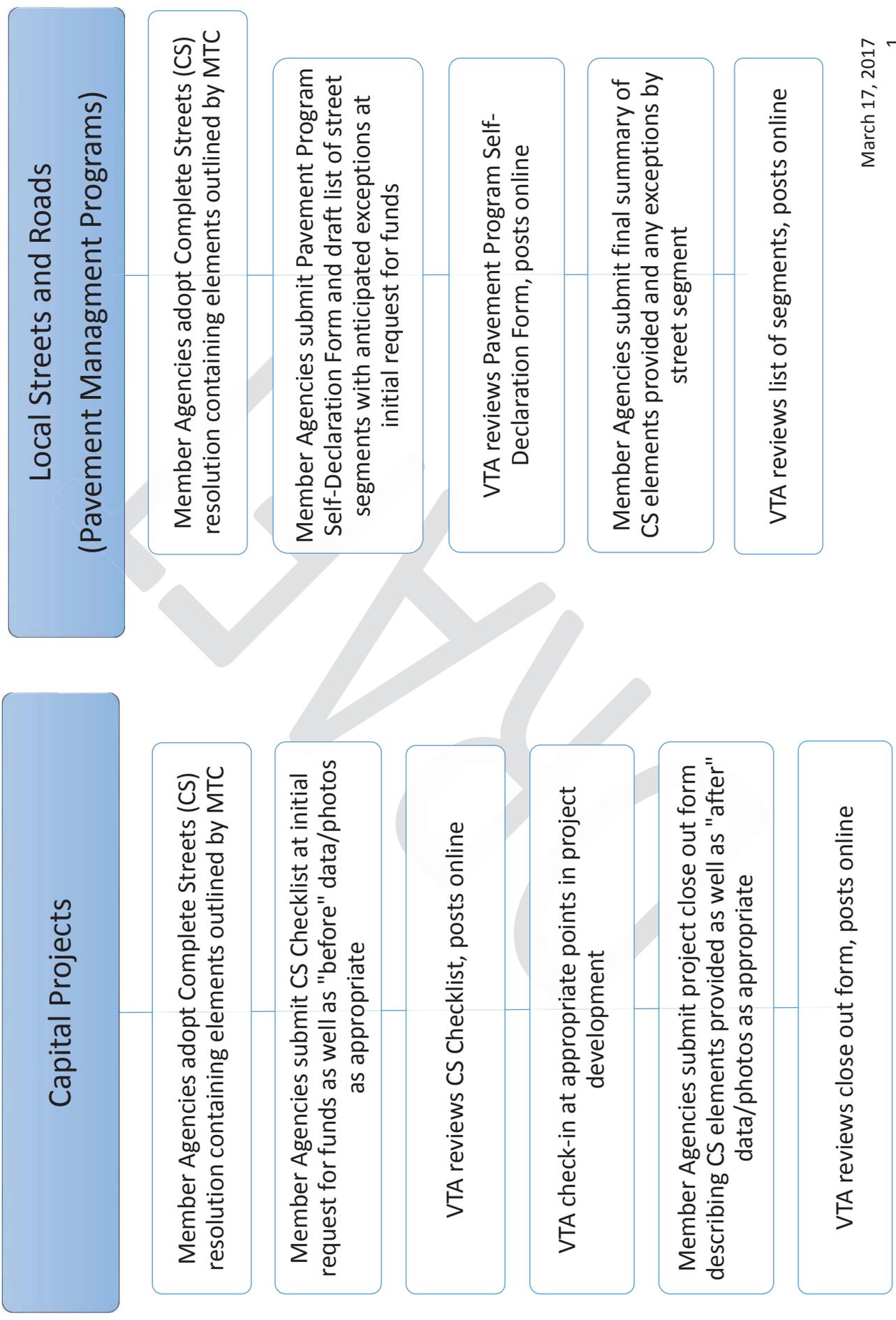
The Congestion Management Program and Planning Committee received this item at their May 18, 2017, meeting and unanimously recommended Board approval.

Prepared by: Lauren Ledbetter  
Memo No. 6096

#### **ATTACHMENTS:**

- Attachment A - Diagram - v2 (DOCX)
- Attachment B - MTC CS Elements (DOCX)

# Attachment A: VTA Complete Streets Process Diagram



March 20, 2017

## ATTACHMENT B: COMPLETE STREETS ELEMENTS

In order to be eligible for Measure B funding, all Member Agencies must adopt a resolution which contains the nine (9) Complete Streets elements described below. This list is drawn from Metropolitan Transportation Commission's (MTC) model Complete Streets resolution, which was in turn based on the work of SMART Growth America's National Complete Streets Coalition. More information can be found on MTC's website: <http://mtc.ca.gov/tools-and-resources/digital-library/obag-2-complete-streets-resolution-guidance>

The general language below gives Member Agencies flexibility to develop their own policy; Member Agencies are encouraged to develop the best policy that fits within the context of their local area, in consultation with affected departments and stakeholders, and to go beyond the required nine elements if desired.

### Complete Streets Principles

1. **Serve all Users** - All transportation improvements will be planned, designed, constructed, operated and maintained to support safe and convenient access for all users, and increase mobility for walking, bicycling and transit use.
2. **Context Sensitivity** – The planning and implementation of transportation projects will reflect conditions within and surrounding the project area, whether the area is a residential or business district or urban, suburban or rural. Project planning, design and construction of complete streets projects should include working with residents and merchants to ensure that a strong sense of place is maintained.
3. **Complete Streets in all Departments** – All Member Agency departments whose work affects the roadway must incorporate a complete streets approach into the review and implementation of their projects and activities. Potential Complete Streets opportunities include transportation projects, road rehabilitation, new development, and utility work, among others.
4. **All Projects/Phases** - The policy will apply to all roadway projects including those involving reconstruction, new construction, retrofits, repaving, rehabilitation, or changes in the allocation of pavement space on an existing roadway, as well as those that involve new privately built roads and easements intended for public use.

### Implementation

5. **Plan Consultation** –Any proposed improvements should be evaluated for consistency with all local bicycle, pedestrian and /or transit plans and any other plans that affect the right of way.
6. **Street Network/Connectivity** - The transportation system should provide a connected network of facilities accommodating all modes of travel. This includes looking for

March 20, 2017

opportunities for repurposing rights-of-ways to enhance connectivity for cyclists, pedestrians and transit users. The network should include non-motorized connectivity to schools, parks, commercial areas, civic destinations and regional non-motorized networks from publicly owned roads/land and private developments (or redevelopment areas).

7. **BPAC Consultation** - Input shall be solicited from the local bicycle and pedestrian advisory committee (BPAC) or similar advisory group in an early project development phase to verify bicycling and pedestrian needs for projects.
8. **Evaluation** – Member Agencies will establish a means to collect data for the purpose of evaluating implementation of complete streets policies. Examples include tracking the mileage of bike lanes and sidewalks, the number of street crossings, or the amount of specific signage etc.

#### **Exceptions**

9. **Process**– Plans or projects that seek exemptions from the Complete Streets approach must provide written finding of how exceptional circumstances dictated that accommodations for all modes were not to be included in the project. The memorandum should be signed by the Public Works Director or equivalently senior staff person or his/her designee. Plans or projects that are granted exceptions must be made publicly available for review.

**From:** [Nevenka Smrdeli](#)  
**To:** [Lesley Xavier](#)  
**Subject:** Notice Of Availability Of An EIR  
**Date:** Monday, December 14, 2020 1:00:29 PM

---

Hello,

I recently received a "Notice of Availability Of An EIR" from the City of Santa Clara.

Project Title: El Camino Real Specific Plan

I would like to provide some comments/suggestions in regards to the pending Plan.

1. Given the choice, I would not like to see any changes to El Camino Real.
2. The vegetation (i.e., olive trees, etc.) contained within the median strips along El Camino Real need to be maintained (i.e., trimmed) on a more regular basis.

Thank you for taking my comments/suggestions.

Wishing you a pleasant day,

Peter

Below are my comments on the Draft EIR plan for El Camino Real. These comments are my own and don't reflect any official position of the Santa Clara City Council. – Suds Jain

---

1. Only 5 alternatives were considered, none of which increased the amount of commercial square footage.
  1. The proposed Specific Plan – reduces commercial space by 395,000 sq ft
  2. No Project Alternative -- the most environmentally superior alternative
  3. No Project/No Redevelopment Alternative
  4. No Project/Commercial, Residential and Office Redevelopment Alternative
  5. Reduced Development Alternative -- reduces both residential and commercial

Sunnyvale's letter to Santa Clara says:

*The Sunnyvale ECRCSP will provide a development cap for the project area. The Sunnyvale City Council selected Alternative R PLUS as the land use plan to be studied and developed further. This alternative will allow for 730,000 square feet of commercial floor area and 6,900 residential units above what is currently existing in the project area, **which is 220,000 square feet of commercial floor area and 2,700 residential units above what is allowed in the Sunnyvale 2035 Land Use and Transportation Element. Please ensure these numbers have been incorporated into the cumulative impacts analysis of the Environmental Impact Report.***

Why does Sunnyvale's plan call for more housing and more commercial than Santa Clara's plan? Sunnyvale is increasing commercial yet Santa Clara is reducing it. Sunnyvale's table below show the benefits to their general fund of various options. Santa Clara's plan has no such financial analysis.

What is the fiscal impact to the City's budget from sales taxes of reducing 395,000 square feet of commercial space?

# Summary of Net Fiscal Impact

Table 1  
SUMMARY OF FISCAL IMPACT OF SUNNYVALE EL CAMINO REAL ALTERNATIVES

Annual Impact in Year	ALT C - COMMERCIAL FOCUS		ALT M - MIXED-USE FOCUS		ALT R - RESIDENTIAL FOCUS		ALT R+ - RESIDENTIAL PLUS	
	2025	2035	2025	2035	2025	2035	2025	2035
Estimated General Fund Revenue Impact	\$4,041,237	\$9,716,835	3,651,520	9,038,409	4,038,809	9,029,447	4,600,590	10,623,804
Estimated General Fund Expenditure Impact	-2,172,507	-6,044,507	-2,752,773	-7,535,380	-3,136,826	-8,385,404	-4,140,242	-11,134,180
<b>Net City of Sunnyvale General Fund Impact</b>	<b>\$1,868,730</b>	<b>\$3,672,328</b>	<b>\$898,746</b>	<b>\$1,503,029</b>	<b>\$901,984</b>	<b>\$644,043</b>	<b>\$460,348</b>	<b>(\$510,376)</b>

Land Econ Group



- On page 55, the document says "The implementation of TDM measures in the Plan area would be consistent with the requirements outlined in the City of Santa Clara's Climate Action Plan (December 3, 2013), which currently requires a vehicle miles traveled (VMT) reduction between five and ten percent through TDM measures, depending on land use."

I firmly believe that 5-10% will cause very substantial traffic congestion (increase) in this project. Regardless of the Climate Action Plan, this specific area plan needs to have a minimum of 25% trip reduction from TDM measures or 40% if including work-from-home policies. Those are the numbers suggested by TDM Specialists to the Santa Clara Planning Commission in a study session.

- Per the Sunnyvale, letter impact on LOS of Sunnyvale intersections must be included.
- Impact NOI-1:** Who decides between pile driving and cast-in drilled holes. What is the cost difference? There are a number of single family residences very close to ECR.
- There is no discussion of traffic impacts during construction. When will the lanes be closed for cement trucks parked on ECR? How will the public be notified? This is a big problem on Page Mill Road in Palo Alto. I believe that noticing was very poor for the

recent repaving of Homestead Rd this past Fall. There should be a single website for all closure notices from projects along ECR so that people can plan their trips.

6. *“Based on the City’s 15 percent affordable housing on-site requirement that applies to developments with 10 or more units, it is estimated that between 450 and 1,200 new affordable housing units would be developed in the Plan area over the next 10 to 20 years”. 15% is only for 100% AMI. There is no plan to meet RHNA for Extremely Low and Very Low Income in this ECR SAP. Those lower affordability levels should be included in this plan.*
7. *Table 1.5-1 has too low an FAR for Commercial for “Regional Commercial Mixed Use” at FAR = 0.02. This must be a typo. Also there is no minimum commercial FAR for “Corridor Mixed Use”*
8. *I would like to see ½ mile radius circles drawn around every grocery store (Safeway, Target, Sprouts, India Bazaar, Grocery Outlet) to see whether there is a shortage of grocery stores along ECR and where they are. This analysis with the intention of creating 15 minute walkable communities. Also many residents of Santa Clara are concerned about grocery stores disappearing from ECR.*
9. *Section 2.4.1.5 “the Specific Plan recommends that the City take a proactive role in providing coordinated and cohesive improvements to the corridor by constructing or improving basic infrastructure (e.g., water supply, stormwater, wastewater systems, etc.), and the public realm (e.g. streetscape, bike lanes, lighting, etc. along El Camino Real).”*

It seems important to have dedicated staff to manage this process of coordinating all the infrastructure projects so that the pavement does not have to be dug up multiple times and that undergrounding of utilities can be made easier.

10. *Section 3.1: Development projects within a specific plan area are required to submit plans and drawings submitted for architectural review for design, aesthetic considerations, and consistency with zoning standards, generally prior to submittal for building permits. The Community Development Director would review future development projects within the Specific Plan area for consistency with the El Camino Real Specific Plan Design Guidelines.*

Decisions on aesthetics should not be the responsibility of only one person. I would like to see more review from independent architects to create a signature look for ECR.

11. *Section “MM AIR 2.3” Peak hour traffic volumes at intersections affected by the proposed project would be less than 15,000 vehicles per hour.*

The City doesn’t ever seem to go back and verify model predictions. I would like to see money allocated for periodic 3 year traffic counts to verify the models and predictions and to have tightening of trip reduction targets if the predictions are not tracking reality. Are the traffic models for Levi’s Stadium being validated?

12. *Under Section 3.6.2.1, All the measures are optional: The proposed Specific Plan encourages development projects to incorporate various energy efficiency measures, including the following: ...*

There should be a LEED Gold equivalent minimum for all construction of more than 20,000 sq feet. There is a new Climate Action Plan coming, at what point do new buildings have to comply with the requirements there?

13. The following is completely inadequate and incompatible with the proposed reach code for Santa Clara:

*Revise parking standards for new multi-family residential and nonresidential development to allow that a minimum of one parking space, and a recommended level of five percent of all new parking spaces, be designated for electric vehicle charging.*

EV Charging for developments in the ECR SAP, should follow the recommendation in the model PCE reach code for Electric Vehicles : <https://peninsulareachcodes.org/>

14. In section 1.13.1.3: *According to noise measurements made for the General Plan FEIR, noise levels along El Camino Real in the Plan area are approximately 68 dBA CNEL (at a distance of 100 feet)*

The limit of acceptability for residential is 70 dB per table 3.13-1. 68 dB is pretty close to the limit of 70 dB. Where is all that noise coming from? It seems to me that walking and eating outside would not be very pleasant. What can we do to reduce the noise on ECR? Special repaving materials with rubber in the asphalt? Lower the speed of travel? I would like to have an analysis done. Perhaps we will need to design buildings to dampen the noise.

*ALSO: Section 9.10.040 of the City Code limits noise levels at residences to 55 dBA during daytime hours (7:00 AM to 10:00 PM) and 50 dBA at night (10:00 PM to 7:00 AM), and noise levels at commercial uses to 65 dBA during daytime hours and 60 dBA during nighttime hours.*

### **So how can we even authorize any residential construction along ECR?**

15. I see two seemingly conflicting statements:

*As discussed in Section 3.17 Transportation, the proposed project would contribute to a **decrease in vehicle miles traveled (VMT) in the Plan area**. The Specific Plan would allow for greater residential development in an infill location in proximity to employment and services, thus reducing VMT compared to existing conditions.*

VERSUS

*According to the Transportation Impact Analysis prepared for the proposed project by Fehr & Peers, the **Specific Plan would result in a net increase in 12,980 daily trips on the local roadway system** (from 72,504 trips without the project to 85,484 trips with the project).*

16. According to Fehr and Peers, 14,162 people will be added by the plan. This means  $2.53 \times 14,162 = 35.83$  acres of parkland will be needed. What is the plan to provide that parkland? I would like to see a plan for where those 35.8 acres will be located within the SAP. I know that impact fees are charged but where will the land come from? There must be a provision for using/allowing rooftops for recreation – community gardens, barbecue, etc.

*The existing service population in the Plan Area is estimated to be 3,729 people. Implementation of the Precise Plan would increase the population to 17,891, which amounts to a net increase of 14,162. Population estimates were obtained from the City of Santa Clara Travel Demand Forecasting Model. (Fehr & Peers, 2020)*

17. Very little of ECR is serviced by recycled water. There should be a plan to extend the recycled water network to some or most of ECR::

*Recycled water is currently not provided throughout the Plan area. All recycled water line extensions for on-site use and demand in the Plan area would require City, South Bay Water Recycling, and State Water Resources Control Board – Division of Drinking Water approval.*

*ALSO*

***Supplies such as recycled water, rainwater/stormwater capture and reuse, greywater reuse, reclaimed wastewater on-site, or other water supplies (potable and/or non-potable) would need to be developed to meet the increased demand.***

18. What will be the impacts on these substation expansion plans were the city or State to adopt an all electric building code. The expansion should plan for 100% building electrification and very substantial numbers of EV charging parking spots:

*There will be expansion and reinforcement of SVP facilities including rebuilding exist homestead substation to 3 – 30 MVA at 55 degree c transformer bank, expansion of Brokaw substation to additional third 20 MVA at 55 degree c transformer bank and possibly reinforcement of existing Zeno Substation .*

19. Table 3.19-3 looks at Multiple Dry Year Water Supply and Demand. It is based on a 2015 Urban Water Management Plan and shows a 3-10% margin between water supply and demand. I believe that the 2015 UWMP does not account for all the planned development in the City. What is the effect of drastic water usage restrictions put in play? What is the effect on demand of those restrictions? Water supply for projects is always a major concern of residents.

*If in the future the contract was in dispute or cancelled, the UWMP projects that demand could exceed supply in 2035 and 2040 during multiple dry year conditions (by approximately 113 acre-feet and 847 acre-feet, respectively). However, the projection does not account for increased groundwater pumping that could be implemented to offset the loss of Hetch Hetchy system supplies; nor does it account for water conservation measures and increased recycled water usage that could be implemented in the event of a drought. Under single-dry year conditions, water supply would exceed demand irrespective of the availability of water from SFPUC.*

**From:** [Joey Penniman](#)  
**To:** [Lesley Xavier](#)  
**Subject:** Public comment on DEIR for El Camino Specific Plan  
**Date:** Sunday, January 24, 2021 6:02:13 PM

---

Hello, I'm submitting my public comment regarding the "Draft Environmental Impact Report" (DEIR) for the El Camino Specific Plan.

My contact info is as follows:

Joseph Penniman  
1689 Hood Ct  
Santa Clara, CA 95051

Public comment:

After reviewing the General Plan, the proposed El Camino Specific Plan and the DEIR, a few things become apparent. The DEIR indicates in Appendix E1 and E2 that both the water supply and the sewer systems would be deficient and need updating if the Specific Plan were approved. Not only would this delay improvement along El Camino, but it would cause extensive construction throughout the corridor to meet the Specific Plan needs. Detours off of El Camino and onto residential streets is a nightmare scenario, and should only be considered in extreme circumstances. I live a stonethrow from Warburton Ave, which is already being used as a bypass to El Camino traffic, and the speeding even now is significant and unsafe. A more prudent plan would be to meet in the middle, give existing developers an option on density requirements for approving near-term projects under the General Plan while infrastructure is gradually updated in a way to manage traffic through adjacent neighborhoods. Whether this means an update in the Specific Plan requirements or a longer timeline, the main goal should be to ensure safety and quality of life for the people who choose to live and pay taxes in Santa Clara.

thanks,  
Joey

**From:** [diane@dianesdreamdestinations.biz](mailto:diane@dianesdreamdestinations.biz)  
**To:** [Lesley Xavier](#)  
**Subject:** DEIR for El Camino Real Specific Plan  
**Date:** Monday, January 25, 2021 1:24:51 AM

---

Hi Lesley! I have commented a number of times before, at meetings or in emails, but these are my primary points regarding the roadway improvements, Appendix D.

Because the planned corridor improvements include an extra 20' added to the existing public corridor (based on Figure 3), it could be years, if not decades, in the implementation. Meanwhile, both the climate and the people who ride bicycles have needed bike lanes on this roadway for years already. Over the years, many have been injured and killed on the El Camino Real.

In section 1.1.2.2., it reads "As an interim solution before full implementation of the cycle track, a two-foot wide painted buffer could be provided". I assume that you mean a standard class II bike lane and that on-street parking will be removed. This is something that I and many others have been asking for for many years now, particularly when the street was recently repaved. (This same sentence appears in section 8.1.1.)

So, if you could change that "could" to "will" and then do it, that would be a huge improvement for bicyclists until the roadway is widened enough to accommodate the class IV facility.

Please note that in section 1.1.2.3, there is a reference to the "City of Santa"; "Clara", of course, needs to be added.

In section 2.1.1.1, it could be noted that the El Camino Real is our #1 priority project.

Reading Policy 5.4.1-P19, from what I've seen of the planned cross-section, we are indeed increasing the overall right of way. To avoid doing that, the city would have had to make an unpopular political choice which it chose not to do.

Section 4.4.2. Lafayette, Scott, and Bowers are definitely not existing bike routes, at least not where they cross El Camino. I avoid Lafayette and Scott for the most part and only occasionally take Bowers because I live nearby, and it becomes a bike route/lane north of Cabrillo. The El Camino is not considered a bike route at this time either. If you look closely at the city bike map, you will see that these roadways are called "undesignated rated streets", not "bicycle routes". A bicycle route is a roadway with a few improvements (e.g. signage and/or sharrows) designed to give a cyclist a bit of legitimacy and encouragement. The four mentioned in this

section could better be labeled as "hostile" to bicycles. Experienced cyclists do ride on them, particularly on the El Camino with all its businesses, but they're in no way bike-friendly.

Section 4.4.3. I would add the word "future" between "several" & "bicycle" in the first line. Only Monroe currently has bike lanes. None of the others yet exist.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Diane Harrison (member of the city BPAC)  
3283 Benton St.  
Santa Clara, CA 95051 (land of the Ohlone and  
Muwekma Ohlone people)

408-246-8149

[diane@dianesdreamdestinations.biz](mailto:diane@dianesdreamdestinations.biz)

January 25, 2021  
Ms. Lesley Xavier  
Page 1

**Oak Investment Group, LLC**  
**60 S Market St. Ste 450**  
**San Jose, CA, 95113**

January 25, 2021

VIA EMAIL / *By Hand*

Ms. Lesley Xavier  
City of Santa Clara  
1500 Warburton Avenue  
Santa Clara, CA 95059  
[lxavier@santaclaraca.gov](mailto:lxavier@santaclaraca.gov)

Re: El Camino Real Specific Plan Draft Environmental Impact Report

On behalf of Oak Investment Group, LLC (“OIG”), I am writing to provide comments on the El Camino Real Specific Plan (“Specific Plan”) Draft Environmental Impact Report (“DEIR”).

Oak Investment Group is under contract to purchase the property located at **3141-3155 El Camino Real**, commonly referred to as Bowers Plaza. Bowers Plaza is located immediately adjacent to an established neighborhood of single-story, single family homes (including three adjacent homes that are less than 10 feet from the property line). Bowers Plaza is within the El Camino Real Focus Area and has a General Plan designation of Community Mixed Use (20-36 du/ac). Consistent with this designation, on February 22, 2019 OIG submitted a project preapplication and on October 20, 2020 OIG submitted a formal project application for a Design Review and Tentative Tract Map, to authorize approximately 60 dwelling units on the property (the Project”).

OIG has been an active participant in the four (4) year Specific Plan process and has invested significant time and resources working with City staff and the community to implement its vision for a neighborhood-compatible multifamily development at Bowers Plaza. The proposed Project scale and massing would serve as an appropriate transition between the adjacent single-family neighborhood and the City’s higher-density vision for El Camino Real, consistent with El Camino Real Focus Area policies, including Policy 5.3.1-P29 (“Encourage design of new development to be compatible with, and sensitive to, nearby existing and planned development, consistent with other applicable General Plan policies.”) and Policy 5.4.1-P5 (“Provide appropriate transition between new development in the Focus Area and adjacent uses

January 25, 2021  
Ms. Lesley Xavier  
Page 2

consistent with General Plan Transition Policies.”). Further, the Project offers substantial community benefits, including on-site affordable housing in compliance with City requirements. At the proposed density of 24 du/ac, the Project also would be compatible with the density of the recently approved adjacent project at 3035 El Camino Real at 25.5 du/ac.

Currently the draft Specific Plan proposes to designate Bowers Plaza as Corridor Mixed Use, with a density of 45 to 65 du/ac, effectively a doubling of the currently prescribed General Plan Density of 20 to 36 du/ac. In application, the proposed 45-65 du/ac density will result in violation of numerous current General Plan policies requiring appropriate land use transitions and neighborhood compatibility, resulting in additional land use, noise, traffic, and other quality of life impacts to the adjacent neighborhood. The DEIR fails to fully disclose and analyze these impacts.

To avoid these impacts, OIG respectfully requests the Specific Plan designate Bowers Plaza as Corridor Residential, with a density of 16 to 45 du/ac. Consistent with General Plan polices, this designation would allow an appropriate transition between the Project and the adjacent single-family neighborhood and would be consistent with the density of the recently approved project at 3035 El Camino Real. In addition, this density range would ensure compliance with current General Plan policies requiring appropriate land use transition and compatibility.

We appreciate your consideration of this request and look forward to continuing to work with the City to implement its vision for the El Camino Real Focus Area.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T. McMahon', followed by a horizontal line extending to the right.

Ted McMahon

January 25, 2021

Lesley Xavier, Principal Planner  
Santa Clara Community Development Department  
1500 Warburton Avenue  
Santa Clara, CA 95051

Dear Ms. Xavier:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the EIR Draft Plan of the El Camino (ECR) Specific Plan.

As you know, Santa Clara Community Advocates is a homegrown group of Santa Clara residents and representatives from local non-profit organizations. We work to provide input and support for creating a sustainable and equitable ECR Specific Plan. We have organized walking tours along El Camino Real for residents and city staff members, which have enabled us to solicit feedback and general comments about El Camino Real. We had submitted a comment letter in June 2019 during the initial EIR scoping phase.

The Impact Analysis is very thorough. However, the main concern we have is with the traffic impact analysis. This EIR has indicated minimal impact on traffic congestion. With 6200 residential units being added under the Plan and the increase in commercial properties, the plan assumes the incoming residents will also have vehicles. These vehicles, in addition to visitors to the plan area, will result in increased vehicle traffic.

We submit the following questions and comments:

### **Transportation**

1. Regarding Table 3.3-4: Operational Period Emissions, the EIR indicates that the proposed project would contribute to a decrease in vehicle miles traveled (VMT) in the Plan area (Section 3.17 Transportation indicates this project would result in a reduction of 12,657 daily VMT, corresponding gasoline usage by approximately 508 gallons per day). More residents result in more vehicles, which means more VMT. Did CalEEMod accurately predict the VMT for the recently built housing developments along El Camino Real without the guarantee and specific plans that detail out multiple transportation modes (most notably, implementation of bicycle lanes, reliable and more frequent VTA bus routes along ECR)? What are the steps that need to be taken to make adjustments if the assumptions are not being met?
2. Regarding Table 3.17-5 (Freeway Segment Capacity and Trips Added), how was it determined that there would be net negative project trips added? With 6200 new residential units being added, is it safe to assume each will bring at least 1 vehicle, thus adding at a minimum 6200 vehicles to the Plan Area, thus causing more VMT and more congestion, particularly during the morning peak hours when residents are driving to schools and workplaces?
3. In response to MM AIR-2.3 (proposed residential development within El Camino Real Specific Plan area shall implement TDM programs to reduce residential vehicle miles traveled as required by the City's Climate Action Plan): when will these TDM programs be available for public review? Will the public be able to make comments before being approved and implemented? Who determines whether the TDM programs will be effective? How will the TDM programs be measured to verify effectiveness?

4. If any part of the TDM and VMT reduction plan includes giving free or discounted transit passes to residents or workers on the corridor, will there be follow-up to ensure these transit passes are issued in a timely manner?
5. What will need to be adjusted if the execution of the El Camino Real Plan is not meeting the standards listed in the updated Climate Action Plan? How will these new standards be incorporated into the plan?
6. What is the current percentage of trips by bus, bicycle or e-scooter, or foot? If the plan doesn't achieve the target percentage, what is the impact? What is the current safety record along El Camino Real for pedestrians, bicyclists, and vehicle drivers? Can City Council and City Staff measure comparative safety and make reference to the current safety record?
7. Will there be any follow-up to ensure that secure bicycle and scooter parking (i.e., lockers) remain in place and are usable by the public?
8. The Plan states that street parking will remain along properties without on-site parking. Having consistent buffered bicycle lanes along all of El Camino Real in Santa Clara is crucial to providing safety to bicyclists. For those businesses, the concern is not necessarily having insufficient on-street parking; the concern is not having enough parking in general. All businesses on El Camino Real should share their off-street parking. Has the City Staff studied what is the impact to those businesses if on-street parking was removed and businesses were required to share off-street parking? Please consider doing a simple experiment of blocking the on-street parking and enforcing the adjacent businesses to share parking to identify the true impact to these businesses if on-street parking were removed and was coupled with businesses sharing off-street parking.
9. Regarding the mitigation measures listed for IMPACT NOI-1, who holds these accountable? Who verifies that all options were considered? Can the city mandate utilization of electric equipment and only allow gas-operated machinery when all other options have been exhausted?
10. Regarding Table 3.17-6 (Roadway Improvement Projects for Background Conditions (which include adding additional left-turn lanes on certain signaled intersections) and Table 3-17-14, what is the impact to implementation of bicycle lanes as dictated in the Bicycle Plan?
  - a. Before implementing these roadway improvements, the priority should be on implementing more bicycle lanes and ensuring there are more reliable and frequent bus, light rail, and train routes which will encourage residents to use those instead of single occupancy vehicles, thus eliminating the need for additional turn lanes.
11. How will the City hold the developers accountable that the mitigation measures listed in the EIR are implemented and followed?

## **Energy**

1. What kind of material will be used in the residential and commercial buildings to maximize insulation and thus reduce energy usage?
2. Regarding Impact EN-1 (project would not result in potentially significant environmental impact due to wasteful, inefficient, or unnecessary consumption of energy, or wasteful use of energy resources, during project construction or operation), recommendations are listed in the bullet points. What incentive is the City providing the developers to implement these recommendations? Is it possible to have City Council and City Staff to make these mandatory?.
3. Table 3.6-1 Estimated Annual Energy Use of Existing Development. Why is the CalEEMod used to calculate electricity use estimates for the existing development? Is it possible to obtain specific measurements from Silicon Valley Power? What are the default energy usage assumptions for the given development land uses?
4. As the El Camino Real Plan gets implemented, will there be ongoing assessments on a periodic basis to determine whether the actual energy used is consistent with the projected energy usage?

Although the EIR report indicates minimal impact with regard to traffic congestion, we strongly encourage the City Council to require or provide incentive to developers to provide funding for implementing bicycle lanes along El Camino Real and funding for helping to implement better public transportation.

This Plan provides a great opportunity to make El Camino Real a thriving corridor. However, a higher priority needs to be placed on encouraging and incentivizing new and existing residents and visitors to reduce or eliminate their dependence on a single-occupancy vehicle. We encourage the City Staff and City Council to ensure developers support multi-modal transportation provided through enhanced buffered bicycle lanes, more frequent bus routes, more dignified and inviting transit stops, unbundling parking from rent and property prices.

Additionally, the City Council and Staff should place a higher standard on developers implementing efficient and non-wasteful systems for water and electricity usage.

We understand that the City is updating its Climate Action Plan. We urge the Council and Staff to review ensure the impacts studied as part of this EIR aligns with the updated Climate Action Plan.

In conclusion, we would like the City Council to ensure the Plan that promotes walkability and encourages and incentivizes active modes of transportation (buses, bicycles, e-scooters), while making El Camino Real safer for all users.

Thank you for your time and consideration. We look forward to continuing working with you to help make Santa Clara an inviting and great place to live.

Sincerely,

**Santa Clara Community Advocates**

*Gabriela Landaveri (Resident)*

*Jeff Houston (Resident)*

*Betsy Megas (Resident)*

*Atisha Varshney (Resident)*

*Mathew Reed (Resident)*

**Non-Profit Partners**

*Justin Wang, South Bay Regional Representative, Greenbelt Alliance*

*John Cordes, Santa Clara County Advocate, SVBC Coalition*

**About the Santa Clara Community Advocates:** We have formed this coalition to provide input and support for a long-term solution to creating a more sustainable and equitable Santa Clara community. We advocate for solutions that improve walkability, provide diverse modes of transportation, and provide affordable housing.