

From: [Edward Saum](#)
To: [Hill, Shannon](#)
Cc: [District 6](#); [District3](#); [The Office of Mayor Sam Liccardo](#); [City Clerk](#); [Hughey, Rosalynn](#)
Subject: Downtown West Mixed-Use Plan - EIR Scoping Comments
Date: Friday, November 22, 2019 4:54:38 PM
Attachments: [2019.11 SHPNA to PBCE - Google EIR Scoping.pdf](#)

[External Email]

Dear Ms. Hill:

Attached please find the comment letter from the Shasta / Hanchett Park Neighborhood Association (S/HPNA) regarding the EIR scoping for the Downtown West Mixed-Use Plan (Google Project).

Please confirm receipt of this email by return email.



Edward Saum

Vice President + Director for Planning and Land Use

Shasta / Hanchett Park Neighborhood Association

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Shasta/Hanchett Park Neighborhood Association
P.O. Box 28634 • San José, CA 95159 • info@shpna.org • www.shpna.org

November 22, 2019

VIA EMAIL (shannon.hill@sanjoseca.gov)

Shannon Hill
Environmental Project Manager
City of San Jose
Department of Planning, Building, and Code Enforcement
200 East Santa Clara Street, 3rd Floor Tower
San Jose, CA 95113

Re: Downtown West Mixed-Use Plan (Google Project)
Environmental Impact Report Scoping
File No. GP19-009, PDC19-039, PD19-029

Dear Ms. Hill:

I am writing to you as the Vice President and Director for Planning and Land Use of the Shasta / Hanchett Park Neighborhood Association (S/HPNA), on behalf of the NA, with our comments on the scope of the proposed Environmental Impact Report (EIR) for the above-referenced project. S/HPNA represents 4,500 households immediately West of Diridon Station, in the Garden Alameda, Shasta / Hanchett Park, and St. Leo's neighborhoods. We are therefore directly adjacent to the Western boundary of the proposed Google Project. For more than thirty-five years, we have sought to work with the City of San Jose, developers, and our neighbors to create a vibrant neighborhood.

Given the scale of the Google Project, and the rare opportunity it presents to reshape an underutilized portion of West San Jose under the auspices of a single, coherent development proposal, the scoping of the EIR needs to be equally as broad and comprehensive. Therefore, we would like to offer the following items as points of consideration for the EIR:

- **Separating Means of Transportation:** How will the Google Project plan for unimpeded, equal access for vehicles, pedestrians, public transit, bicycles, and motorized scooters? Will this take the form of physically separated means of circulation / transportation? Compromising the safety, efficacy, and scope of non-vehicular access is unacceptable on even the smallest scale of projects. Given the potential for tens of thousands of new employees, residents, and visitors to be traversing the Google Project footprint daily, coherent and seamless circulation should be a primary focus.
- **Multimodal Connections to Adjacent Neighborhoods:** How will the Google Project mitigate the uninviting, often unsafe means by which residents of the surrounding neighborhoods access the Diridon Station Area (DSA)? Poorly lit underpasses, some with no bike lanes and substantial deposits of bird droppings scattered across the sidewalks, actively *discourage* nonvehicular access to the DSA. Without seamless connections to the adjacent neighborhoods, how will the Google Project's internal circulation patterns avoid the creation of inevitable bottlenecks at the perimeter, creating the very type of insular campus that Google and the City of San Jose insist is neither wanted nor proposed?
- **Vision Zero:** How do the proposed street layout and circulation patterns address the City's embrace of Vision Zero guidelines and goals?
- **Complete Streets:** How do the proposed street layout and circulation patterns address the City's Complete Streets mandate?

- Expedite Downtown Transportation Plan: How can the City expedite the proposed Downtown Transportation Plan (DTP) to incorporate its findings and requirements into the Google Project? The DTP should provide City Council and PBCE staff with the necessary data and models to address the potential impacts of the Google Project before it is approved.
- Parks and Public Open Spaces: Riparian corridors and non-vehicular circulation paths should not be considered usable park space. What are the square footages and proposed activation means for the proposed parks and public open spaces within the Google Project? Will the Google Project honor the City's stated policy of a (10) minute walk to park space?
- Expand Downtown Transportation Plan: Given the need for seamless connections to adjacent neighborhoods, will the scope of the Downtown Transportation Plan be extended to include the St. Leo's Neighborhood, and further along The Alameda and its side streets, as these will be two of the primary means by which residents of West San Jose access the DSA?
- Construction Impact Mitigation Plan: Long before the development is fully occupied, there will be a decade or more of construction, impacting public services, transportation, and quality of life issues for the surrounding residents. The planning for this time period needs to be just as robust as that for the end product.
- Historic Landmarks: Within, and immediately adjacent to, the Google Project footprint, there are several landmark structures, landmark-eligible structures, structures on the City's Historic Resources Inventory (HRI), and structures on the California and National Registers of Historic Places. Per the City's own Historic Preservation Ordinance, the impacts under CEQA to all these structures need to be addressed, including, but not limited to, construction vibration, shade and shadow, and design compatibility.
- Energy Center: Google proposed an Energy Center. Given the City's "reach code" push towards the elimination of natural gas in proposed residential developments, for the sake of reducing emissions, what is being done to ensure that the cogeneration plant will not, by itself, far exceed the potential reductions in emissions the reach code seeks to ensure? How will the venting of this facility work, given the prevailing wind patterns and potential for a focused, unmitigated negative impact upon the surrounding neighborhoods.

We take pride in our neighborhood; S/HPNA Board members and volunteers have been diligent advocates for decades. Density and additional development within, and adjacent to, our boundaries are inevitable; poorly conceived developments, which show a deliberate indifference towards the multiple, significant impacts on the adjacent residents should not be. We welcome development that supports the neighborhoods with community services and amenities, while maintaining and encouraging the walkability and vibrance of the area.

Respectfully submitted,



Edward Saum
Vice President & Director for Planning & Land Use
Shasta / Hanchett Park Neighborhood Association

Cc: Councilmember Dev Davis
Councilmember Raul Peralez
Mayor Sam Liccardo
Rosalynn Hughey, Director, Department of Planning, Building and Code Enforcement
Toni Taber, City Clerk



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