

**From:** [Elizabeth Gonzalez](#)  
**To:** [Hill, Shannon](#)  
**Cc:** [Perry, Sandy](#); [Robert Aguirre](#); [serveethepeoplesj@yahoo.com](mailto:serveethepeoplesj@yahoo.com)  
**Subject:** Comments to EIR Scoping for Downtown West Mixed Use Plan, File Nos. GP19-009, PDC19-039, and PD19-029  
**Date:** Friday, November 22, 2019 3:26:07 PM  
**Attachments:** [EIRScoping Public Comment Downtown West Mixed Used Plan 1122.docx](#)

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[External Email]

Dear Shannon Hill,

attached are comments to the EIR Scoping for the Goolge Project from Silicon Valley De-Bug, the Affordable Housing Network, South Bay Community Land Trust and Serve the People.

thank you,

Liz González // Silicon Valley De-Bug  
[www.siliconvalleydebug.org/stories](http://www.siliconvalleydebug.org/stories)

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November 22, 2019

Shannon Hill, Environmental Project Manager  
City of San Jose  
200 E. Santa Clara St  
San Jose, CA 95113

RE: Downtown West Mixed Use Plan, File Nos. GP19-009, PDC19-039, and PD19-029

Dear Shannon Hill,

We write to you from grassroots organizations including Silicon Valley De-Bug, a longstanding community organization who has worked with communities that face multiple barriers to full inclusion, families impacted by the criminal justice system and a community that has demonstrated a commitment to work together to collectively improve our lives and continue building San Jose. The Affordable Housing Network of Santa Clara County, formed in 1987 with the goal of expanding the supply of housing affordable to low-income families and individuals, and organizing the people in need of affordable housing to advocate on their own behalf. Serve the People organizing against the displacement of San Jose communities. And, the recently formed South Bay Community Land Trust with a mission to acquire and steward land in trust for the permanent benefit of low income communities in San Jose.

We are writing to share what we believe should be included in the Environmental Impact Report for the Downtown West Mixed Use Plan, commonly referred to as the Google Project. As the entire project has been rushed through San Jose City approvals and community members with nothing to gain from these hasty approvals are largely left out of this conversation, it is imperative that this portion of the process include the following to have a complete understanding of the impact the Google Project will have on San Jose as a whole, and in particular low-income residents, people of color and immigrants who share this city as home.

We are requesting that these particular issues be included and analyzed in the Environmental Impact Report:

- **Cumulative Impact of Multiple Development Projects on the City.** Because the Google Project converges multiple projects including the BART expansion, changes to Diridon Station, High Speed Rail and significant changes to San Jose's General Plan and rezoning of land, a cumulative analysis on the impact of these multiple projects occurring simultaneously must be provided.
- **Google Project Impact to Housing Affordability.** The EIR should comprehensively address housing affordability issues and the impacts the Project will have on the housing supply and current residents both housed and unhoused, and especially low-income renters at greatest risk for displacement. The EIR should adequately analyze and identify any mitigation measures of the Project on the displacement of current low-income residents in San Jose and commit to development without displacement. Along these lines, a Job/Housing fit analysis should be conducted as well, since the Project is creating an induced demand for affordable housing given that the projected 5,000 housing units in the Project fall far short of the over 13,000 units necessary to house the 20,000 direct Google employees alone. Furthermore, the EIR should analyze the impacts of displacement on the environment.

- **Effects of Higher Income Jobs.** An accurate estimate of the proposed 20,000 jobs by type. Additionally, we believe the EIR should account for the nexus between higher income Google employees and the subsequent multiplier effect those jobs have on lower income service sector job generation. This multiplier effect will add many new jobs paying less than a sufficient wage to house such lower income workers locally, making it critical to study the social impacts of new high wage earners on existing low income communities.
- **Impact on Traffic and Transit Services.** The EIR should analyze the traffic impact of automobile trips, transit service. While the Project and the City promotes more pedestrian friendly areas and a people centric place, the analysis should include the potential automobile trips from rideshare apps like Uber and Lyft.
- **Impact on Water and Energy Use of the Project.** The EIR should analyze the water supply/sources, the adequacy of these sources, and the impact to our sewer systems and waterways due to the Project. A campus of this size will undoubtedly require more water and energy use.
- **Impact of Carbon Footprint.** Although the Google Project planning objective includes high levels of sustainability, high tech development is high carbon. Research out of the University of Pennsylvania tells us that residential density “led by tech companies and tech workers causes social displacement and has no climate benefit.”<sup>1</sup> A clearly outlined and adequate measure of emissions from the project needs to be provided.
- **Impacts of estimated space use.** The analysis must provide an accurate estimate of the number of employees and other users of the retail, event space, hotel, limited corporate accommodations spaces and more that the Project proposes. How will these spaces be continuously accessible to local and existing residents and what benefits and resources will be afforded especially to communities historically excluded from economic opportunities?
- **Health Impact Assessment.** Given the diverse socio-economic makeup of the City of San Jose, particularly the downtown area, the EIR should include a health impact assessment that looks comprehensively at health impacts of the Project.
- **Project Alternatives.** The EIR should also include an analysis of alternatives -- including a much scaled down campus, a campus where Google holds land in other parts of the city already, and a No Project Alternative considering the forecasted economic depression and the effects it will have on the most vulnerable residents of our city.

Furthermore, if these issues are not included, we would like to know why they will not be included in the analysis.

Sincerely,

Cecilia Chavez  
Charisse Domingo  
Elizabeth Gonzalez  
Glen Maxwell  
Rosie Chavez  
Silicon Valley De-Bug

Sandy Perry  
Affordable Housing Network

Robert Aguirre  
South Bay Community Land Trust

Serve the People San Jose

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<sup>1</sup> Berger, Michele W. “When green ‘fixes’ actually increase the carbon footprint” March 8, 2019: <https://penntoday.upenn.edu/news/when-green-fixes-actually-increase-carbon-footprint>