

**From:** [REDACTED]  
**To:** [Hill, Shannon](#)  
**Subject:** Downtown West (Google Town!) GP19-009, PDC19-039, and PD19-029 Questions for EIR  
**Date:** Friday, November 22, 2019 2:18:29 PM  
**Attachments:** [Google EIR 2019November 22 Questions.pdf](#)

---

[External Email]

Please find attached,

—Jean Dresden

This message is from outside the City email system. Do not open links or attachments from untrusted sources.

November 22, 2019

Shannon Hill  
[shannon.hill@sanjoseca.gov](mailto:shannon.hill@sanjoseca.gov)  
Environmental Project Manager  
Planning, Building and Code Enforcement  
City of San Jose

Dear Ms. Hill

Here are the questions for the EIR for the Downtown West (Google) Mixed Use Village  
**GP19-009, PDC19-039, and PD19-029**

**Parks and Open Space**

The original Diridon Station Area Plan (DSAP) called for 8 acres of parks generally at the intersection of Los Gatos Creek with West San Carlos, on the west side. In addition, the DSAP called for green fingers.

Google has made presentations to community groups stating there is 16 acres of public open space. Yet, they state they have not determine the number of residences, so that don't know how much parkland there will be.

--Does this mean that 16 acres is the maximum open space and or parkland, and the ownership of the space will shift as the residential obligation changes? Or will additional parkland be dedicated as additional housing units are picked for development? Please clarify.

--Please provide a statement of what is required of this applicant for parkland. That is, does the sales agreement or Memorandum of Understanding specify the number of acres required to replace planned parkland? If not, what language is in these agreements. What parkland ratio will be charged for residential? Will it follow the number specified in Municipal Code of 3.0 acres per thousand? Or the General Plan's 3.5 acres per thousand?

--Please provide an accounting of the parkland and open space in this proposal.

--Please indicate which acreage will be deed restricted and dedicated as parkland owned by the city of San Jose. What is the acreage?

--Which will be deed restricted with an easement and still owned by Google?

--Will any of this "open space" be land designated "private recreation" and subject to closure at the discretion of Google (or its subsequent owners).

--What land is proposed for open space, owned by Google (or its heirs/assignees) and not deed restricted? In other words, how much is a land bank?

Considering the space between buildings, which of this land is considered open space by the applicant? What is the difference between creditable "open space" and "landscaping" typical of any commercial property? How will this difference be determined?

What portion of the open space is being considered "community benefits" ?

Are there any restrictions on the use of the non-city owned open space property? For example, time of day, day of week, active vs. passive recreation,

There has been some discussion of using the older buildings on Autumn as "community centers", "community serving", or available to non-profits. The map shows them surrounded by "open space" designation.

--Are these buildings expected to be dedicated to the city?

--Is the use by the community considered a "community benefit" in the sense of the discussion of community benefits at the Station Area Advisory Group?

--Are these buildings deed restricted in any way? Or are they serving as a land bank for future development?

## Toxics

The old Arena EIR and supplemental technical reports indicated that the parcel between SAP Arena and railroad tracks are very polluted from an 1880s coal making facility. Subsequently, tanks were installed on the site holding various petrochemicals. When the Arena was built, the site was capped rather than cleaned. The water table was determined to be near the surface.

--What are the toxics on the site?

--To what extent have they penetrated the upper water table? What if any plume exists?

--How would you remove the soil?

--If underground parking is proposed, what will protect the water table from further contamination?

--How will the water that seeps into the underground parking be pumped and cleaned?

--How many cubic yards of contamination soil and capping soil will be trucked away? To where? Along which route? How many trucks?

--How many gallons of water will have to be cleaned?

--What is the flow rate of underground water and how does that affect the risk of contaminated other water? How fast would a plume move? Does the water table at this site feed into the Los Gatos Creek/Guadalupe River?

Parcels south of the Alameda have been mostly industrial for over 140 years. Prior uses include a Foundry, lumber yards, car repairs, and pottery making. The properties generally have not redeveloped since 1970 and the introduction of stringent environmental laws. These areas are also known to have very high water table with high flow rates.

--Will each parcel be evaluation?

- Will the parcels no currently targeted for redevelopment be evaluated for contamination?0
- How will the toxics be removed?
- What risk of penetration to this upper water table?
- How will water that seeps into underground parking be treated?
- What is a typical amount of water in an underground lot? What is done with the water?

### **Water/Hydrology**

What is the height of the upper and lower water tables in each parcel?

How far down is drinking water in each parcel?

What is the flow rate of the upper water table and how does that affect constructability of underground parking?

When California High Speed Rail analyzed a tunnel solution through Diridon station, they published several reports and conducted soil analysis. They stated in the area generally bounded by West Santa Clara and Park, Autumn and Cahill that the flow rates and soils of were incompatible with constructing an underground station. They believe it *could* be constructed, but that it would be very risky due to the watery soils. They described risks of collapse during construction.

--What is the hydrology of this area?

--What depth of underground parking is safely constructible? At what depth does it become risky?

--If the results are different that the claims of California High Speed Rail, please provide a comparison of their data and conclusions and the conclusions of the Google consultants.

During the presentation of the results of analysis of California High Speed Rail underground alignment, Mr. Rod Diridon presented a portion of the results. He stated that the tunnel would disrupt the flow of underground water and change the amount of water entering the adjacent Los Gatos Creek and Guadalupe River from these underground streams. He reported that this would increase salt water intrusion into the Guadalupe River and into the soils of North San Jose due to reduced flows.

--Under what circumstances are creeks and rivers dewatered by underground construction?

--Please provide examples. Please describe how underground water changed direction, created springs, or disappeared.

--Please provide an analysis of the risk of dewater.

--What are the cumulative impacts at build-out of the risks of dewatering?

--How is the risk increased by the depth of the underground structures? By the size of the barrier between upstream and downstream? Does connections between underground structures, eg. connected parking lots, create greater risk of dewatering?

--How will the risk of dewatering be monitored ?

--How will post-construction flows be measured and monitored and how will it be remediated if it turns out the construction contributes to dewatering of the Los Gatos Creek or Guadalupe River?

What is done with water that is pumping out of underground parking structures?

Is the volume monitored? Is it cleaned?

How is it replaced within the underground water table, if at all?

Please provide a total estimate of water pumped from underground structures at build out.

In the past, subterranean structures have been built that severed subterranean water flow. For example, the I-280/Hwy 87 interchange is partially depressed below the level of the soil and into the water table. Also Interstation 880 near The Alameda is depressed. In both cases, the freeways disrupted the flow. The underground creek at I-880 was severed, eliminating historic flows in Santa Clara and water spills into the freeway at a site Caltrain calls a "spring." Similarly, the water table at 87/280 was disrupted and there are seeps into the roadway. Caltrain must pump both locations continuously. Sometimes the flow rate is so great that drivers are affected. Happily, the impacts were to Caltrans itself and they pay the consequences (although drivers are sometimes dangerously impacted by the wet roadways).

--If the subterranean structures sever the underground flow, or divert the flow so that pre-existing buildings or structures are impacted, how will that be measured or compensated?

--What responsibility/culpability does the applicant retain to mitigate or repair impacts caused by severing the flow of this underground river?

--What data will be collected to protect the applicant and the community from frivolous lawsuits but will mitigate predictable impacts?

### **Historic**

The proposal provide for retaining multiple buildings along Autumn Street to provide a "sense of place." Various current documents describe these older buildings as "historic." The City of San Jose's Redevelopment Agency analyzed these buildings as part of the Baseball Stadium EIR and determined that most were not "historic" under San Jose's Municipal Code and the standards of California and the Federal Government.

--What has changed?

--Which, if any, of these older buildings are "historic" and under what criteria, city, state, or national? How is this different from the prior analysis?

--Which, if any, of these buildings will be placed on the various registers and deed restricted?

--Will the underlying GP designations requested for these parcels allow for redevelopment into high density housing or commercial activity? If so, is that being analyzed in the various impacts?

## Traffic

The proposal calls for reopening a street next to SAP Arena through a toxic wasteland. The applicant may determine that this cost prohibitive.

--Will the traffic impact analysis be conducted with and without the reopening of this street?

--How will the change of the Autumn/Montgomery couplet affect the Traffic Management Plan for the Arena?

--After conversion of Autumn to one lane each way, what is the expected travel time from Bird/West San Carlos to Autumn/SAP Arena?

--What fraction of the traffic north of SAP Arena along the new Cahill is expected to turn right into the Shasta Hanchett neighborhood on the other side of the Railroad tracks?

How many thousand per day?

--Please provide an analysis of traffic at three milestones. Please include an estimate of private "Google" buses.

1) Built out with current transportation support.

2) Built out with BART, Caltrain at 2030 levels (mid-growth), and no HSR.

3) Built out with BART, Caltrain, HSR and automated to the Westside.

The northernmost zone—tucked up behind Coleman center along the railroad tracks is isolated with a single egress and without roadway connections across rail track or other parcels.

--Please provide an analysis of the amount of time needed to evacuated under fire conditions

--Please provide an analysis of alternative routes of evacuation and what it would take to make it so.

--Please provide a discussion of the Autumn Parkway and whether it will ever be built or will the plan be abandoned? What triggers will cause the parkway to be built? Please analyze traffic impacts with and without the built-out Autumn Parkway. Please clarify the impact on the SAP Arena traffic management plan.

Thank-you,

Jean Dresden