

From: [N Aziz](#)
To: [Hill, Shannon](#)
Cc: [Michael Trujillo](#)
Subject: Comments to EIR Scoping re: Google Project
Date: Friday, November 22, 2019 9:46:37 AM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)
[Law Foundation Comments re EIR Notice of Preparation and Scoping 11.22.pdf](#)

[External Email]

Dear Ms. Hill:

Please see the attached comments form the Law Foundation related to the EIR Scoping for the Google Project.

Sincerely,

Nadia Aziz | Directing Attorney | Housing

Pronoun: she/her

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November 22, 2019

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 95113-1905

Via e-mail: shannon.hill@santoseca.gov

RE: Google Project (File No. GP19-00-, PDC 19-039, and PD 19-029)

Dear Ms. Hill:

The Law Foundation of Silicon Valley writes to provide the following comments related to the EIR Scoping for the Google Project. Since Google announced its plans to build a tech campus at Diridon Station, we and other community members in San Jose have raised concerns about the impact that the tech campus will have on the displacement of low-income families from San Jose. We write to request that the City consider displacement as part of EIR scoping for the Google Project. Additionally, we suggest that the timeline of the EIR process be extended given the size and scope of the Project, and that both the Diridon Station Area Plan and the Downtown Transportation Plan will not be completed before the Project is approved.

1. The Google Project Plan Does Not Adequately Address the Environmental Impact of Displacement

The City should analyze the environmental impacts of displacement as it relates to the Google Project. Displacement is an environmental issue. The lack of affordable housing in Silicon Valley means service workers who make low wages will face displacement and likely be forced to commute from the Central Valley, adding to pollution, greenhouse gas emissions, traffic congestion, and other environmental dangers.

In fact, families are already being displaced by speculative development in anticipation of the Google Project, and many more families will be displaced once construction of the Project begins. The City must address the environmental impacts of this displacement, a direct result of the Google Project, and require Google to mitigate those impacts as part of their Development

Application. In the absence of a plan to house more people closer to the Project, which will create at least 20,000 jobs, the City must require Google to analyze the environmental impacts of people moving further and further away from San Jose, and how Google will mitigate those environmental impacts.¹

The Google Project will exacerbate displacement already occurring in San Jose. Google's current proposal to build just 3,500 to 5,900 housing units is far below the number of housing units needed to address the impacts of its Project. One study found that an additional 5,284 affordable units, and another 12,450 market-rate units will be needed in the Diridon Station Area to prevent rapid rent increases.² Without a significantly higher commitment from Google to produce housing, renters could end up paying five times their current rent, an increased burden that would disproportionately affect communities of color in San Jose.³ The EIR must consider this analysis in evaluating the environmental impacts of displacement, and the greater effects of this Project on the displacement of families from San Jose.

2. The Proposed EIR Review and Development Application Time Frame Should Be Extended

The Google Project is one of the largest development projects ever contemplated in San Jose. The Project will dramatically transform the Diridon Station Area, and the entire City as a whole. The time frame for the environmental review process should be extended so that the City can adequately study, and the applicant can adequately mitigate, the negative environmental impacts of the Project.

We are deeply concerned that the Diridon Station Area Plan Amendments are happening concurrently and will be approved at the same time as the EIR and Draft Development Agreement. Additionally, the Downtown Transportation Plan will not be completed until before the Draft Development Agreement is finalized. Since both the Diridon Station Area Plan and the Downtown Transportation Plan inform what the Diridon Station Area should look like, we strongly believe both should happen *before* approval of the Google Project, not concurrently, and definitely not after.

The residents of San Jose should have the chance to shape what the Diridon Station Area, one of the most important transit hubs in California, looks like and how it meets their needs, and the Google Project should conform to that vision. Instead, the current timeline allows Google to dictate what the Diridon Station Area looks like to serve its corporate interests and forces the people of San Jose to conform to its plans.

¹ *Defend the Bay v. City of Irvine*, 119 Cal. App. 4th 1261 (2004)

² *Id.* at 4.

³ *Id.*

Therefore, we request that the City extend the time frame for review of the EIR and the Development Agreement until after the Diridon Station Area Plan Amendments and Studies and the Downtown Transportation Plan are completed.

We welcome the opportunity to discuss these comments with you further by contacting Nadia Aziz at Nadia.aziz@lawfoundation.org or (408) 280-2453.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'NA' with a stylized flourish.

Nadia Aziz, Directing Attorney
Law Foundation of Silicon Valley