

From: [Zenk, Jessica](#)
To: [Downtown West Project](#)
Subject: FW: Downtown West - Support
Date: Monday, April 26, 2021 10:07:55 PM
Attachments: [210426 Diridon Letter for PC.pdf](#)

From: Shiloh Ballard <shiloh@bikesiliconvalley.org>
Sent: Monday, April 26, 2021 10:02 PM
To: Planning Commission 1 <PlanningCom1@sanjoseca.gov>; Planning Commission 2 <PlanningCom2@sanjoseca.gov>; Planning Commission 3 <PlanningCom3@sanjoseca.gov>; Planning Commission 4 <PlanningCom4@sanjoseca.gov>; Planning Commission 5 <PlanningCom5@sanjoseca.gov>; Planning Commission 6 <PlanningCom6@sanjoseca.gov>; PlanningSupportStaff <PlanningSupportStaff@sanjoseca.gov>; Tu, John <john.tu@sanjoseca.gov>
Cc: Zenk, Jessica <Jessica.Zenk@sanjoseca.gov>
Subject: Downtown West - Support

[External Email]

Dear Members of the Planning Commission,

Attached and pasted below my signature line is a letter of support for the Downtown West project.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

--

Shiloh Ballard
Executive Director



[Want to see more bikes on your streets? Donate today!](#)

96 N. Third, #375, San Jose

On behalf of Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition, (SVBC), a nonprofit organization improving the community, economy and environment through the everyday use of the bicycle, I am writing to support the staff recommendation regarding the Downtown West Mixed Use Project.

As a member of the Station Area Advisory Group and a stakeholder in San Jose, SVBC has been closely following the redevelopment of the Diridon Area. SVBC is thrilled that the community, City, and Google have put together a plan that will help ensure that as the area redevelops, important city-wide needs will be addressed and community assets will be bolstered.

As an organization, SVBC is focused on helping those who already ride or would like to ride for everyday use. We also understand that safe bike infrastructure alone is not nearly enough to encourage people to choose the bicycle. Housing, jobs, parks, densely built along with safe bike infrastructure will create the conditions under which people will be compelled to ride, walk, and take public transit. That's what this plan is about.

SVBC re-proved this lesson recently through the first ever [public opinion research](#) into Santa Clara County attitudes towards transportation. In partnership with the Mineta Transportation Institute the research showed clear differences between walking, biking and transit ridership within urban areas as opposed to suburban. In essence, if we are to create a transportation ecosystem that is resilient, affordable, sustainable, healthy and fun, meaning, walking, biking and public transit, we must build for that system in the ways outlined in this plan.

To do that we know that making biking infrastructure fantastic is not enough to change longstanding auto-centric habits. **That is why, at the same time, the City must constrain single occupancy driving.** People will default to driving unless bikes, transit, and walking are made awesome AND limits on single occupancy vehicles are put in place. This is baked into the City's General Plan in the form of mode shift goals that reduce SOVs to 40% and increase walking and biking to 15%. The prospect of this Plan offers one of the most significant opportunities to achieve those goals.

It is also important to note that the Diridon Area and Downtown must be even more aggressive than the rest of the City in achieving these mode shift goals. Downtown must exceed these targets in order to carry those areas of the City where walking, biking, and public transit are less possible. Downtown is where high mode shift is realistic and this is where we must double down on all methods of reducing San Jose's car-centric, outdated, prehistoric thinking.

SVBC would also like to highlight the work of professional staff in the Department of Transportation. These committed public servants have worked thoughtfully with stakeholders to put appropriate transportation improvements in place. And while SVBC doesn't agree that the Plan needs as much parking and capacity for cars as is outlined, we also understand why the Plan is as it is. **That said, we want to emphasize that less parking and street space for cars, not more, is warranted given the reasoning outlined above.** Neighboring businesses ought to view their role as that of a City partner working to achieve the General Plan's vision, a vision where one is not required to own a car in order to achieve economic mobility.

Thank you to the City for working so hard to move this plan forward. We encourage the Planning Commission's support.

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April 26, 2021



Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition
www.bikesiliconvalley.org
96 N. Third St, Suite 375
San Jose, CA 95112
408-287-7259

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**PRESIDENT AND
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**
Shiloh Ballard

SVBC is a 501(c)(3)
non-profit organization

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Thank you to the City for working so hard to move this plan forward. We encourage the Planning Commission's support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Shiloh Ballard". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Shiloh" and last name "Ballard" clearly distinguishable.

Shiloh Ballard
Executive Director
Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition