

From: [Tu, John](#)
To: [PlanningSupportStaff](#)
Cc: [Downtown West Project](#)
Subject: Fw: 04.28.2021 - Planning Commission Item 8.a. - Downtown West Letters, Articles & Quotes
Date: Wednesday, April 28, 2021 9:12:40 AM
Attachments: [DANG Planning Commission Letter.pdf](#)
[HAC Planning Commission Letter.pdf](#)
[PACSJ Planning Commission Letter.pdf](#)
[SJDA Planning Commission Letter.pdf](#)
[Enviro Orgs Planning Commission Letter.pdf](#)
[SVBC Planning Commission Letter.pdf](#)
[SVLG Planning Commission Letter.pdf](#)
[SV@Home Planning Commission Letter.pdf](#)
[SVR Planning Commission Letter.pdf](#)
[Google eyes first downtown San Jose village site and project timing.pdf](#)
[Google's downtown San Jose transit village project offers \\$200 million in community benefits.pdf](#)
[Google promises \\$200M worth of community benefits under Downtown West plan for San Jose.pdf](#)
[Google, San Jose Release Long-awaited Development Agreement for Downtown West Project - San Jose Inside.pdf](#)
[Google's San Jose megaproject offers \\$200 million in community benefits, 1,000 affordable homes.pdf](#)
[Public I Community Benefits Press Quotes.pdf](#)
[04.14.2021 SAAG Meeting Member Quotes.pdf](#)
[Public I Community Benefits Social Media Posts.pdf](#)

From: Ricardo Benavidez <benavidez@google.com>
Sent: Tuesday, April 27, 2021 7:20 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>; Planning Commission 7 <PlanningCom7@sanjoseca.gov>
Cc: Tu, John <john.tu@sanjoseca.gov>; Han, James <James.Han@sanjoseca.gov>; Javier González <javiergonzalez@google.com>; benavidez@google.com <benavidez@google.com>
Subject: 04.28.2021 - Planning Commission Item 8.a. - Downtown West Letters, Articles & Quotes

[External Email]

Dear Planning Commissioners,

The

[Downtown West](#) project team is looking forward to tomorrow's Planning Commission meeting regarding

[Agenda Item 8.a.](#) We know you're very busy so we pulled together a summary package of all the Planning Commission letters that were shared with Google by third-party organizations (i.e. SV Rising, Diridon Area Neighborhood Group, etc.) as well as a sampling

of public and community benefits articles and quotes. We hope these attachments are helpful to you.

Thank you in advance for your Downtown West consideration.

Best regards,
Ricardo Benavidez
Google

List of attachments:

-

- Letters

-

- Diridon Area Neighborhood Group

-

- Housing Action Coalition

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- Preservation Action Council of San Jose

-

- San Jose Downtown Association

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- Sierra Club, California Native Plant Society, Audubon Society, Green Foothills

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- Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition

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- Silicon Valley Leadership Group

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SV@Home

-

SVRising

-

Articles

-

Google eyes first downtown San Jose village site and project timing

-

Google's downtown San Jose transit village project offers \$200 million in community benefits

- Google promises \$200M worth of community benefits under Downtown West plan for San Jose
- Google, San Jose Release Long-awaited Development Agreement for Downtown West Project
-

Google's San Jose megaproject offers \$200 million in community benefits, 1,000 affordable homes

-

Public | Community Benefits Press Quotes

-

04.14.2021 SAAG Meeting Member Quotes

-

Public 1 Community Benefits Social Media Posts

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

City of San Jose

Toni Taber, City Clerk

200 East Santa Clara Street

San Jose, CA 95113

RE: Google Downtown West Development

The Downtown West Project is the cornerstone to all development that will occur in the broader Diridon Station Area. Google has set the bar for community engagement, making the stakeholders and neighborhood voices heard. Through their collaboration with community members, Google has laid the groundwork to create a long-term positive working relationship with all area stakeholders.

The Diridon Area Neighborhood Group is pleased to see:


- New parks and open spaces with engaging experiences and programs
- Google's contribution to existing parks
- Year-round free programs that will benefit the broader community
- Opportunity for a vibrant new district that will complement existing neighborhoods
- Forward thinking infrastructure improvements for the 80-acre project with no public financing or subsidies
- The thoughtful and responsive Downtown West Design Standards and Guidelines, which should be the standard for projects large and small throughout this area.

The DANG would like to thank the City for their time and commitment to Downtown West. Developments of this size are complex, requiring respectful conversations in the spirit of the greater good. This is the beginning of a long-term endeavor and DANG is proud to be a partner in the future of San Jose.

Sincerely,

Kathy Sutherland
Laura Winter
Edward Saum
Helen Chapman
Mary Pizzo
Kevin Christman

Bert Weaver
Sarah Springer
Harvey Darnell
Bill Rankin
Norma Ruiz






DANG

Diridon Area Neighborhood Group

cc: Mayor Sam Liccardo
Vice Mayor Chappie Jones
Councilmember Sergio Jimenez
Councilmember Raul Peralez
Councilmember David Cohen
Councilmember Magdalena Carrasco
Councilmember Dev Davis
Councilmember Maya Esparza
Councilmember Sylvia Arenas
Councilmember Pam Foley
Councilmember Matt Mahan
Dave Sykes
Rosalynn Hughey
Nanci Klein





April 8, 2021

To Whom It May Concern:

The Housing Action Coalition is pleased to endorse Google's exemplary mixed-use project at Downtown West in San Jose. After a detailed presentation, the committee determined the project exceeds our high standards in addressing our region's affordability and displacement crisis.

The committee commends the project's excellent land use, as it will develop an underutilized 80 acre site with 4,000 new homes, more than seven million square feet of office space, 500k square feet of retail and community space, and 15 acres of parks, enhanced riparian habitat, and public plazas. The project will include or support the production of 1,000 below-market-rate homes (25% of total number of homes). This percentage is higher than the inclusionary housing ordinance requires and the committee commends Google for striving to incorporate a high percentage of BMR homes in such a large project.

The project site is adjacent to the SAP Center and Diridon Station, a major hub for Caltrain, VTA, and in the future, BART. This site is exceptionally well-located near both transit and amenities that will help limit car trips and thus reduce greenhouse gas emissions. To further complement the site's transit-oriented location, the project will provide 3,290 bike parking spaces, over 3.5 miles of new and improved bikeways, and more than 1.5 miles of new walkways and trail extensions. The project also includes 2,360 unbundled residential car parking spaces, an average of 0.6 spaces per home, plus an additional 4,800 spaces for the public. Given the abundance of transit next to Downtown West, we would ideally like to see less car parking and more bike spaces but we also understand feasibility concerns.

Beyond the environmental benefits that come with transit-oriented development, Downtown West highlights tremendous innovation in sustainability. Buildings will be equipped with 100% electric power, use recycled water, and contribute zero net emissions. Offices will be LEED Gold and residences will be LEED Silver. Included in Downtown West are 15 acres of parklands and open space which includes 4.25 acres of preserved and enhanced riparian habitat on Guadalupe and Los Gatos Creek. The committee admires the project team's dedication to sustainability, and believes that Downtown West will be a model of sustainable development in the future.

Downtown West's project team started community outreach in 2009, and has remained committed to transparency and public participation for more than a decade. This includes well over 100 community meetings and online conversations, resulting in more than 10,000 points of feedback. The project team has been responsive to community input and has put together an impeccable community benefits package. To go along with the environmental and climate benefits, the community benefits package is valued at \$200 million. It includes a first of its kind \$154.8 million Community Stabilization and Opportunity Pathways Fund targeted at housing, job accessibility and education programs for at-risk and underserved San Jose residents. The committee encourages the project team to promote viability for the retail spaces and

incentivize Google employees to frequent them. We also encourage the project team to continue engaging with the community to ensure Downtown West will benefit new and existing neighbors as well as Google employees.

Overall, we appreciate the project team's dedication to alleviating the impact on the nearby community. The team has demonstrated continued community involvement by amending plans that achieve the best possible housing outcomes and community open space. The committee encourages Google to continue engaging with labor groups to ensure quality construction and local job opportunities. We are proud to endorse Downtown West because it will provide well-designed and well-located homes that help alleviate the Bay Area's ongoing affordability and displacement crisis.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Todd David". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Todd" and last name "David" clearly distinguishable.

Todd David, *Executive Director*



**PRESERVATION ACTION
COUNCIL OF SAN JOSE**
History Park
1650 Senter Road
San Jose, CA 95112
Phone: 408-998-8105
www.preservation.org

April 26, 2021

VIA EMAIL (city.clerk@sanjoseca.gov)

City of San José
Planning Commission
Mariel Caballero, Chair
Rolando Bonilla, Vice Chair
George Casey, Jorge A. Garcia, Justin Lardinois, Pierluigi Oliverio, and Deborah Torrens
200 E. Santa Clara Street
San Jose, CA 95113

**RE: DOWNTOWN WEST (GOOGLE) DRAFT EIR FIRST AMENDMENT
GP19-009, PDC19-039, PD19-029**

Dear Chairperson Caballero and Esteemed Commissioners,

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on Google's revised Downtown West Mixed Use Plan and the project's Draft EIR First Amendment. PAC*sj would like to commend both the Google project team and Planning Division staff for their comprehensive and constructive responses to PAC*sj's concerns about project's potential impacts to historic resources within and adjacent to the project site. As outlined in Section 1.2.2 (pp. 1-4 through 1-6) of the First Amendment, Google has made significant positive changes to their proposed scope of work since the release of the first Draft EIR, including new commitments to preserve and rehabilitate numerous historic resources originally proposed for demolition. These and other welcome changes are a direct result of Google's commitment to robust, good-faith engagement with PAC*sj and other community stakeholders and a testament to the benefits of open dialogue and collaboration.

While not all of PAC*sj's comments and recommendations have been incorporated into the revised Downtown West project, we are generally satisfied that our input was given fair consideration and helped contribute to an improved overall plan that better meets the project's stated objectives to "*incorporate high-quality urban design, architecture, and open spaces with varied form, scale, and design character to enliven San José's downtown*" and to "*preserve and adapt landmark historic resources and assets where feasible to foster a place authentic to San José, and foster contemporary relations to San José's history.*"

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**PRESERVATION ACTION
COUNCIL OF SAN JOSE**

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1650 Senter Road
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www.preservation.org

We therefore support the revised project as presented and encourage its approval by the Planning Commission and City Council. We also look forward to continued collaboration with the Google project team, Planning Department, and other stakeholders to implement this ambitious and exciting preservation effort.

Sincerely,

Ben Leech
Executive Director
Preservation Action Council of San Jose

cc: Shannon Hill (shannon.hill@sanjoseca.gov)
Vicrim Chima (Vicrim.Chima@sanjoseca.gov)
Robert Manford (robert.manford@sanjoseca.gov)
Rosalynn Hughey (rosalynn.hughey@sanjoseca.gov)
Ricardo Benavidez (benavidez@google.com)
Bhavesht Parikh (bhaveshtp@google.com)
Javier González (javiergonzalez@google.com)



April 26, 2021

City of San Jose Planning Commission
200 East Santa Clara Street
San José, CA 95113

RE: Support for Downtown West zoning, environmental and General Plan amendments

Dear Chair Caballero and Planning Commission members,

The Downtown West development plan is a community-created vision for transforming 80-acres into a transit village and central social district on the westside of downtown. The General Plan amendments, re-zoning and environmental documents before you on April 28 represent a vast improvement over the area's previous Diridon specific plan. The San Jose Downtown Association (SJDA) urges your approval of items 8a and 8b.

While the project's 7.3 million square feet of office space, 4,000 housing units (25 percent affordable) and 15 acres of parks and open spaces have grabbed most of the attention, SJDA would like to highlight how the Downtown West plan will strengthen neighborhoods by directly investing in initiatives co-created by community members during a two year public outreach process.

One such initiative will focus on small business resiliency, entrepreneurship and ways to help small businesses make Downtown West a home. Google will work directly with businesses on the ground floor design of Downtown West to ensure their proximity is central to the project's new open spaces. Half of the developable parts of the site will go to non-office uses – housing mostly – but 500,000 square feet is planned for “active” spaces. Those spaces include food, drink, retail, cultural, arts and education uses.

Downtown West will strive to create a “15-minute city” where work, home, shopping, entertainment and recreational uses are all situated within a 15-minute walk. The project also will invest in a greener future in terms of net-zero emissions, ecology and mobility infrastructure – in essence, the equivalent of removing 4100 cars from traffic and powering 1500 homes using solar energy.

The necessary land use updates, certifications and approvals before you April 28 are a critical milestone as we embrace a new vision for San Jose that integrates neighborhoods, nature, equity and economic growth.

Onwards -- and with the heights and densities in Downtown West -- definitely upwards.

Sincerely,

Scott Knies
Executive Director

Cc:

Mariel Caballero, Chair

Rolando Bonilla, Vice Chair

George Casey

Jorge A. Garcia

Justin Lardinois

Pierluigi Oliverio

Deborah Torrens

Chu Chang

Tim Rood

Michael Brillot

James Han

John Tu

Jose Ruano

David Keyon

Shannon Hill

Nanci Klein

Kelly Kline

Katia McClain

Nathan Ulsh

Nate LeBlanc



Santa Clara Valley Chapter
CALIFORNIA NATIVE PLANT SOCIETY



Santa Clara Valley
Audubon Society



SIERRA CLUB
LOMA PRIETA CHAPTER



**green
foothills**

April 23, 2021

To: Chair Caballero and San Jose Planning Commissioners

Re: Item 8a on the April 28 Agenda: Google Downtown West Plan

The Sierra Club Loma Prieta Chapter, the Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society, the California Native Plant Society Santa Clara Valley Chapter and Green Foothills write in support of the Google Downtown West Plan and its associated Development Agreement between Google and the City of San Jose.

For decades, our organizations have advocated for the preservation of the open landscapes of Santa Clara County and our native flora and fauna. At the same time, we promoted good urban planning that focuses density in the urban core, prevents displacement, protects riparian ecosystems, integrates native trees and shrubs into urban design, and promotes sustainability. More recently, we have been advocating for climate action and resilience, and transit-focused mixed-use development. Google's Downtown West Plan accomplishes many of these elements. We are pleased to see the long-term vision of incorporating nature into the public urban environment and the building of a vibrant, walkable, planned community coming to life in the City of San Jose.

The Google team reached out to our groups early in the design process and has been responsive to many of our suggestions and requests regarding riparian setbacks, protecting and enhancing nature and habitat along the creeks, and embracing a California native plant palette that includes locally native trees such as oaks and sycamores. Downtown West has been designed to stay consistent with policies and guidelines around Los Gatos Creek and Guadalupe River, and to allow people to enjoy nature along the creeks. Our suggestions for bird safety measures, avoiding light pollution and minimizing the impacts of artificial light at night were incorporated into the plan.

The project is a downtown-focused and transit-focused mixed-use development — the right thing for San José, as the creation of jobs and housing downtown contributes to climate action and resilience, and allows for the protection of open space, as in Coyote Valley.

Respectfully,

David W. Poeschel
Open Space Committee Chair
Sierra Club Loma Prieta Chapter

Matthew Dodder
Executive Director
Santa Clara Valley Audubon Society

Linda Ruthruff
Conservation Chair
California Native Plant Society
Santa Clara Valley Chapter

Alice Kaufman
Legislative Advocacy Director
Green Foothills

Cc: James Eggers
Executive Director
Sierra Club Loma Prieta Chapter

April 26, 2021



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

Dear Chair and Members of the Planning Commission

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

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**PRESIDENT AND
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**
Shiloh Ballard

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

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.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Shiloh Ballard".

Shiloh Ballard
Executive Director
Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition



SILICON VALLEY
LEADERSHIP GROUP



2001 Gateway Place, Suite 101E
San Jose, California 95110

Est. in 1978 by
David Packard



(408) 501-7864

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Ryan Popple
Proterra

Sharon Ryan
Bay Area News Group

Tom Werner
SunPower

April 23, 2021

Planning Commission
City of San José
200 E. Santa Clara St.
San José, CA 95113

RE: Agenda Item 8 - Downtown West Mixed-Use Plan

Dear Chair Caballero, Vice Chair Bonilla, and Commissioners Casey, Garcia, Lardinois, Oliverio, and Torrens,

On behalf of the Silicon Valley Leadership Group, we express our support for the Downtown West Mixed-Use Plan, a transformative Google project that would bring 7.3 million square feet of office space, 500 thousand square feet of active use space, 4,000 new homes (1,000 of them affordable), and fifteen acres of parks, in addition to an unprecedented \$200 million community benefits package to San José. We encourage you to vote to recommend the items in support of staff recommendations included in agenda item 8 regarding the Downtown West project.

The Silicon Valley Leadership Group, founded in 1978 by David Packard of Hewlett-Packard, represents hundreds of Silicon Valley's most respected employers in issues, programs and campaigns that affect the economic quality of life in Silicon Valley. Collectively, Leadership Group members provide nearly one out of every three private sector jobs in Silicon Valley and contribute more than \$3 trillion to the global economy.

The Downtown West Mixed-Use plan before you is the successful outcome of years of thoughtful community engagement with over 100 impactful community meetings, including neighborhood walks and over 3,000 in person touch points. This has resulted in careful land use planning and collaboration that will bring economic and other public benefits to San José residents.

This project will support jobs and housing for a diverse set of residents and businesses. The proposal not only meets, but exceeds, the city's inclusionary housing requirement. With the creation of 7.3 million square feet of office space resulting in over 25,000 good paying jobs; we will see local residents and businesses benefit with the inclusion of local-hire provisions, as well as incentives for contracting with local, small, and diverse businesses.

Environmental leadership is key to our success as a state and a region. This project builds on our local investments in clean energy with 7.8 megawatts of onsite solar generation, 15 acres of parks, plazas and open spaces, 100 percent use of recycled water for non-potable uses, and Google is committed to using 100% carbon free energy across the organization by 2030.

This proposal is the embodiment of one of the core tenets of good planning: transit-oriented development. Building jobs and housing near transit is essential for our communities and our climate, for stronger, more vibrant downtowns, and for the survival of public transit itself. Downtown West leverages the proximity to Diridon Station to create the "15-minute city" San José residents deserve, with bikeways and trail segments to bring benefits for the environment and workers in a way that will reduce traffic and greenhouse gas emissions and enhance overall health and quality of life. Building Downtown West around Diridon Station, soon to be known as the Grand Central Station of the West, is exactly the right place for this development. Diridon station will be a nearly-unparalleled multi-modal transit hub, including servicing Caltrain, VTA, High Speed Rail, and BART and more. This will allow those who work and live at Downtown West transit access to the entire bay area and beyond.

In addition, the Downtown West proposal is designed to start benefiting the community early and well into the future. Community benefits include a first-of-its-kind Community Stabilization and Opportunity Pathways fund that is designed from the ground up to be expertly managed and community led. It will result in housing, education, local job training and much more. The care put in at the outset to the management and guidance of this fund will allow the community to go well beyond Google's unparalleled monetary contribution, attracting and leveraging other funding sources, and enhancing community power to define and drive outcomes beneficial to all.

This project is transformative for San Jose. It not only meets all the city requirements, it includes what San Jose staff have calculated as \$1 Billion of value in voluntary project features, and then offers an additional \$200 million in negotiated community benefits. This development is a picture of a development that is good for the community and the region. From creating a model of community and stakeholder engagement to incorporating environmental sustainability, innovative development, housing affordability, and transit friendly design, it hits all the marks for a proposal that is truly in its own league. The Downtown West project provides a pathway to smart, inclusive, and sustainable growth for the region, the City, and for the betterment of our communities. For these reasons, the Leadership Group is proud to support the Downtown West Mixed-Use plan before you

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Vince Rocha', with a stylized, flowing script.

Vince Rocha
Senior Director, Housing and Community Development
Silicon Valley Leadership Group

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The Core Companies

Kelly Snider
Kelly Snider Consulting

Jennifer Van Every
The Van Every Group

STAFF

Leslye Corsiglia
Executive Director

TRANSMITTED VIA EMAIL

April 26th, 2021

Planning Commission
City of San José
200 E. Santa Clara St.
San José, CA 95113

Dear Chair Caballero, Vice Chair Bonilla, and Commissioners Case, Garcia, Lardinois, Oliverio, and Torrens:

RE: Downtown West Proposal and Development Agreement

On behalf of Silicon Valley at Home and our members, we are writing to express our support for Google's Downtown West proposal for Diridon Station. As a member of the Station Area Advisory Group (SAAG), SV@Home has been actively involved in all community engagement and policy development efforts around Diridon from the very beginning. We believe that the Google Team has remained committed to this engagement throughout this process, and deserves credit for the broad support they will receive. We would like to especially thank San José city staff for all of their hard work to make the Downtown West Development Agreement possible as well as all of the members of the community who have shaped this project.

SV@Home is especially excited about the residential components of Google's proposal, which will bring 4,000 new homes alongside new office space, neighborhood-serving retail, open space, and bike-ped infrastructure, creating the vibrant district we all want to see at Diridon. Of the 4,000 new homes, 25% of them will be deed-restricted affordable to lower and moderate income families. We are supportive of Google's approach to achieving these 1,000 affordable homes through a combination of land dedication and some on-site inclusionary. As the Planning Commission knows well, land is always one of the most challenging pieces of the development puzzle for affordable housing developers, and by dedicating land developers can access more funding and create more affordable homes.

We want to highlight Google's commitment to front-loading key pieces of the affordable housing development, including the dedication of their first affordable housing parcel soon after overall project approval. This first parcel dedication would be an important opportunity for San José to partner with Santa Clara County to leverage Measure A funds to reach the deepest levels of affordability and help our neediest neighbors. Making this a reality, however, will require that the San Jose City Council and Staff make it a priority. While we appreciate, and support Google's recommendation to ensuring there will be funding in place to support these standalone affordable developments through the allocation of Commercial Linkage Fees, this and other policy decisions will require City action and commitment to meeting ambitious timelines and goals for affordable development in the Station Area. Early resources for the development of the Autumn Street site should be a high priority.

April 26, 2021

Re: Downtown West Proposal and Development Agreement

Page 2 of 2

Additionally, we are excited to support Google's commitment to provide a total of \$200 million in funding to the community, including \$154.8 million for the new Community Stabilization and Opportunity Pathway Fund. This Fund will provide real resources for affordable housing production, preservation, and housing stability/tenant protection in addition to addressing other community needs. This is a critical step towards an inclusive partnership with the people of San Jose, and a realization of the consensus that this project offers an opportunity to respond to the breadth of needs facing the city as it continues to grow. The fact that the community will have a say in how the funds will be used over time is an important and innovative component of this Fund. However, realizing the broadly shared goal of mitigating displacement has become an immediate and pressing need as the city works through the impact of the pandemic. Targeted early resources should prioritize these needs.

Google's Downtown West proposal will catalyze additional much-needed residential development throughout the Station Area and we urge the Planning Commission to move it forward. However, it is important to note that the proposal is just a part of the entire Station Area and the concomitant approval of the amendments to the Diridon Station Area Plan (DSAP) will lay out the ground rules for development across the entire 240-acre area, including overall development capacity, heights, and the Affordable Housing Implementation Plan. We have included more comments about the greater DSAP plan in an accompanying letter.

Sincerely,



Leslye Corsiglia
Executive Director





4/27/2021

Chair Mariel Caballero and Members of the Commission
City of San Jose Planning Commission
200 E. Santa Clara St.
San Jose, CA 95113

Re: Item 8A, Downtown West Mixed-Use Plan

Dear Chair Caballero and Members of the Commission:

Google and the City government have agreed to a Development Agreement for the Downtown West project that could put \$154.8 million into a community fund grounded in racial justice, and governed by grassroots leaders. This is the biggest community benefits fund of its kind in our region, and the first to empower communities of color with the authority to direct tens of millions towards preventing displacement and creating economic opportunity for local residents.

This comes in addition to commitments by Google creating a path for thousands of workers to good union jobs building and running their proposed Downtown West campus and supporting thousands of affordable homes for San José families between the project and Google's existing Affordable Housing Fund to help offset tech's role in our housing crisis.

This agreement is the result of four years of organizing. It happened because residents came out to town hall meetings back in 2017 and shared their hopes and needs, signed onto our community vision for the project, marched with us through downtown and at Google's headquarters, emailed City leaders and testified at City Council meetings, and so much more. Together, we made clear that the project must not destabilize our communities.

Google's team and City leaders listened. They've worked with our coalition of housing advocates, community organizations, and labor groups to jointly design this grassroots-governed community fund to address the community's greatest concerns and to give the most impacted power over decisions.

The fund will be governed by a 13-member Community Committee that reflects the diversity of San José and will have the final say on funding solutions:

- At least five members must have personal lived experience with the root causes of displacement, including two from the eastside and one from downtown.
- The other eight will have expertise fighting racial injustice in areas like housing, workers' rights, education, and small business.

The fund will focus on undoing racial inequity in neighborhoods experiencing displacement on the top priorities identified by our community:

- **Stable housing:** Preserving affordable homes, funding legal aid and tenant organizing, and piloting new ownership models where our homes belong to our community rather than private corporations.
- **Economic opportunity:** Providing pathways to good jobs for local residents of all ages and backgrounds, from early childhood education, to apprenticeships in careers like construction and IT, to help founding small businesses.

When we started on this journey, we said we wanted this project to be a new model for how the tech sector can develop without displacement. This agreement gives the communities most at risk real power over resources and together with the commitments creating a path to thousands of good union jobs and affordable housing, we're creating that new model. By listening to community and labor leaders, working together to design solutions to the community's biggest concerns, and giving power to those most impacted, Google's Downtown West project sets a new standard for future developments.

While it has been a long journey to get where we are, this only shows that when we come together and organize as a community, we win.

Regards,

Maria Noel Fernandez, *Campaign Director*, Silicon Valley Rising

Jean Cohen, *Executive Officer*, South Bay AFL-CIO Labor Council

Derecka Mehrens, *Executive Director*, Working Partnerships USA

Alison Brunner, *CEO*, Law Foundation of Silicon Valley

Enrique Fernandez, *Business Manager*, Unite HERE Local 19

Poncho Guevara, *Executive Director*, Sacred Heart Community Service

David Huerta, *President*, Service Employees International Union-United Service Workers West (SEIU-USWW)

Camille Lllanes-Fontanilla, *Executive Director*, SOMOS Mayfair

Maria Maldonado, *NorCal Field Coordinator*, Fight for \$15

Reverend Ray Montgomery, *Executive Director*, People Acting in Community Together (PACT)

Mayra Pelagio, *Executive Director*, Latinos United for a New America

BUSINESS • News

Google eyes first downtown San Jose village site and project timing

Old San Jose phone company building, nearby properties in first Google village development zone



Google Downtown West neighborhood in downtown San Jose, showing Meander section of the development, outlined in red. Note: boundaries are approximate, conceptual, and subject to change. Office buildings are grey, housing sites are sand or brown, purple buildings are activity hubs, including restaurants, retail, cultural, and entertainment amenities.

By **GEORGE AVALOS** | gavalos@bayareanewsgroup.com | Bay Area News Group

PUBLISHED: April 14, 2021 at 5:45 a.m. | UPDATED: April 15, 2021 at 8:34 a.m.

SAN JOSE — Google's first property purchase for its downtown San Jose transit village was an aging telephone company building — and now that area is slated to be the spot for the neighborhood's first development sites.



Office buildings, housing, and a cultural center would be part of the initial stages of the development of the Downtown West transit-oriented neighborhood that Google has proposed for a mile-long stretch near the Diridon train station and SAP Center — if city officials give a final go-ahead to the project.



Downtown West neighborhood being developed by Google in downtown San Jose, showing Meander section of the project, outlined in red. Note: boundaries are approximate, conceptual, and subject to change. //

In December 2016, a Google affiliate paid \$55 million for an unremarkable Pacific Bell building at 145 S. Montgomery St., which wound up being the first of dozens of transactions in a years-long assembly of land for the Downtown West neighborhood.

Now, this site, and several others near the phone company property are slated to be transformed into a Downtown West first phase that would sprout in a section of the development that's dubbed The Meander.

The Meander's southern section begins in the vicinity of Park Avenue and South Montgomery Street and then runs north along Montgomery Street to around West San Fernando Street, according to a Google spokesperson. The Meander also runs along Autumn Street between Montgomery Street on the south to San Fernando Street on the north, Google said. The boundaries are preliminary and subject to possible adjustment. These sites are generally south of the train station.

As for the timing: The tech titan has said it hopes to break ground on the first new buildings in 2023. Google aims to launch the construction of streets and other crucial infrastructure in 2022, if the project is approved.



Google's description of The Meander site, the known locations of the company's property purchases as compiled by this news organization, and an overview released this month by the search giant provide an idea about the general location of the first phase of development — as well as the types of buildings in the first phase.

"It is a great mixed-use part of the plan," Alexa Arena, Google's development director for San Jose, said during a presentation on April 9 to the San Jose Downtown Association. "It includes residential and office uses, it includes a cultural building."

The Google site plan released this month shows that the cultural hub could be located in an existing brick building leased to San Jose Taiko, which offers classes and performances related to Asian and other cultures.



150 S. Montgomery St., a downtown San Jose building owned by Google. //

Other structures in The Meander section of the neighborhood such as the phone company building and a former industrial products site, as well as surface parking lots, are slated to be bulldozed to clear the way for the first phase.

The San Jose Planning Commission is due to vote this month on a Downtown West development agreement, including a community benefits package proposed by Google. The City Council is slated to vote by the end of May on the development agreement.

The transit-oriented neighborhood that Google has proposed would include office buildings, homes, shops, restaurants, activity hubs, cultural centers, hotel facilities, and open spaces.



“We’re really excited about this first phase,” Arena said.



145 S. Montgomery St. in downtown San Jose, an old telephone company building owned by Google, and the first property bought by the search giant as part of a years-long land assembly of properties for the tech company’s Downtown West neighborhood. //

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George Avalos | Business reporter
George Avalos is a business reporter for the Bay Area News Group.



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Google's downtown San Jose transit village project offers \$200 million in community benefits

Google Downtown West plan includes \$200 million fund for community benefits



SITELAB urban studio, Google

Autumn Street section of the Downtown West neighborhood in downtown San Jose proposed by Google, showing future buildings near the Diridon train station, concept. In a bid to get San Jose's final blessings on its broad downtown vision, Google has offered to pony up \$200 million in community benefits as part of its plans to build a transit-oriented village where as many as 20,000 people could work.

By **MAGGIE ANGST** | mangst@bayareanewsgroup.com and **GEORGE AVALOS** | gavalos@bayareanewsgroup.com | Bay Area News Group
PUBLISHED: April 6, 2021 at 5:00 a.m. | UPDATED: April 7, 2021 at 10:48 a.m.



SAN JOSE — In a bid to get San Jose's final blessings on its broad downtown vision, Google has offered to pony up \$200 million in community benefits as part of its plans to build a transit-oriented village where as many as 20,000 people could work.

The proposal includes money for anti-displacement efforts and affordable housing, two urgent concerns that have galvanized the community. Some previous critics of the project said the new proposal is a significant step forward.

"While working in collaboration with the city and our community to transform our western downtown into a vibrant urban village, Google has also crafted a new national model for transforming the relationship between tech and the surrounding community," San Jose Mayor Sam Liccardo said in an interview.

Google has proposed the development of a transit-oriented neighborhood near the Diridon train station and SAP Center that would include office buildings, homes, shops, restaurants, activity hubs, cultural centers, hotel facilities, and open spaces.



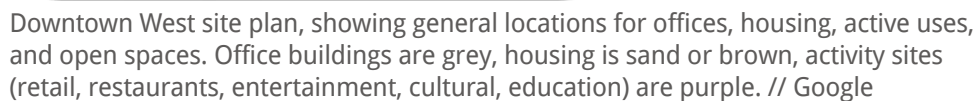
Gateway section near Water Company Building within Google's Downtown West transit-oriented neighborhood in downtown San Jose, concept. // SITELAB urban studio, Google

The details released Tuesday mark the first time the Mountain View-based search giant has outlined specific efforts it will undertake for the community, after months of closed-door negotiations with the city, including:

— 1,000 affordable homes that Google would pay to build on company-owned land within the San Jose project. Additional affordable homes would be funded through special fees paid by the search giant or by [Google providing the land for housing development](#) at sites near the transit village.



- The remaining \$50 million in the fund would be spread throughout these other efforts, including local hiring, career exploration, and awarding design and construction contracts for the office buildings to local, small and diverse businesses.



The city will turn to community leaders for help in distributing the funding.



"By putting \$150 million and real decision-making power in the hands of grassroots leaders in neighborhoods at risk of displacement, this project sets a new model for how tech development can keep families housed and lift the quality of blue-collar jobs," said Maria Noel Fernandez, campaign director with Silicon Valley Rising, an umbrella organization of community groups.



San Fernando Street area of Google's proposed Downtown West transit-oriented neighborhood in downtown San Jose, showing buildings in the project near a light rail line and existing building, concept. // SITELAB urban studio, Google

"City staff and Google did a really great job at trying to balance our immediate needs with our future needs," City Councilmember Dev Davis said.

The community benefits package is in addition to \$250 million in public benefits such as park fees and transportation improvements that the city mandates, Liccardo said.

Separate from the community benefits package, Google estimates the value to the city of other features in the project will be at least \$1 billion. Among these benefits are a more walkable, connected city with multiple modes of transportation and transit, cutting-edge infrastructure upgrades, 15 acres of new parks and open spaces, onsite solar generation in Downtown West, no increases in greenhouse emissions, and widescale use of recycled water.

"The Downtown West project is the cornerstone to all development that will occur in the broader Diridon Station Area," said Bob Staedler, principal executive with Silicon Valley Synergy, and a representative of the Diridon Area Neighborhood Group, or DANG. "DANG appreciates Google's willingness to work with neighbors."



Google also will preserve several historically significant buildings and structures, including the historic San Jose Water Co. building, the century-old Kearney Pattern Works and Foundry building, and the “dancing pig” sign that is part of the former Stephen’s Meat Products site.

“Every major US city would flip and subsidize heavily to get a jobs-housing generating development like this,” said Mark Ritchie, president of Ritchie Commercial, a real estate firm. “We are very lucky to have a generous Google in our midst. Everyone should walk that neighborhood to see how underutilized it currently is.”

The tech titan says that it hopes to break ground on the first new buildings in 2023 and that it is aiming to launch construction of streets and other crucial infrastructure in 2022 if the city approves a project that will reshape a wide section of downtown.



Creek bridge and nature areas near Diridon train station in Google’s Downtown West project in downtown San Jose, concept. SITELAB urban studio, Google

The San Jose City Council is expected to make a final decision on the development agreement by late May.

“Right now, what you have in that area is the Shark Tank, the train station, a collection of old industrial buildings, some businesses, and homes,” said Scott Knies, executive director with the San Jose Downtown Association.

“Downtown West is going to be a new community,” Knies said. “It will not be a walled-off spaceship. It will be part of the streets, it will provide open space, housing, transit, nature areas. This is the way a city is supposed to work.”

Yet even beyond the game-changing development aspects, city officials suggested that the community benefits are of the type that hasn’t been seen in connection with a project in San Jose.



"Google's commitment to build thousands of units of housing and to ensure a quarter of them will be rent-restricted to enable real affordability is as concrete of a commitment as we have ever seen from a major employer wishing to expand its footprint in a city," Liccardo said.

77 South Montgomery Street in Do...

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From the Silicon Valley Business Journal:

<https://www.bizjournals.com/sanjose/news/2021/04/06/google-200m-downtown-west-community-benefits.html>

Google promises \$200M worth of community benefits under Downtown West plan for San Jose

Apr 6, 2021, 5:00am PDT **Updated: Apr 7, 2021, 10:33am PDT**

Google LLC plans to devote \$200 million to homeless services, job opportunities for local residents and other items as part of an effort to ensure its proposed San Jose project benefits the community at large.

The technology giant detailed its community benefits plan in a draft of its 30-year development agreement with the City of San Jose. The city posted the draft contract for the project, dubbed Downtown West, on its website Tuesday.

"I'm proud that together with the City of San José, community, and local



GOOGLE LLC

Google LLC plans to devote \$200 million to homeless services and job opportunities for local residents, among other items, to ensure its Downtown West project in San Jose, rendered, will benefit the community at large.

organizations, we developed a project agreement with community benefits that focus on social equity and will help San José come back stronger from the pandemic's impacts," Alexa Arena, Google's San Jose development director, said in a prepared statement. "Downtown West is a great example of a new way to approach development, where community is placed front and center."

As part of Downtown West, which will be located near Diridon Station, Google is planning to build offices, housing and retail space. If approved by the City Council and built out as designed, the project would bring millions of square feet of commercial space and thousands of housing units in what would be the largest development in downtown's history.

Included in Google's package of community benefits for the project is an approximately \$154 million "Community Stabilization and Opportunity Pathways" fund. It's intended to support programs such as affordable housing preservation, homeless prevention and homeless services. The fund's full amount will be paid out as Google constructs the office portion of its mixed-use village, a company spokesperson said. And assuming the San Jose City Council gives final approval to Downtown West, Google will pay part of that amount up-front, the spokesperson said.

San Jose residents will be able to offer suggestions on how and where the fund's money is spent, creating a unique opportunity for the city, Nanci Klein, San Jose's economic development director, told the Silicon Valley Business Journal.

"Over the many months now in working with the community, the desire to have decision-making in the hands of the community has

been repeated many times," Klein said. "We have done research, and we can't find a fund that does that."

The City Council will set the guidelines for the fund's priorities and nominate 13 people for a so-called "Community Advisory Committee," Klein and a Google spokesperson said. The committee will work with a fund manager appointed by the City Council to solicit grant proposals, screen applicants and allocate fund money. That money, as well as the other items in Google's community benefits package, are all intended to assist people who are of low income, Klein said.

Google's announcement also drew praise from community groups that have, in the past, been cautious or critical of the tech titan's downtown designs.

"Google didn't just say, 'Here's what we think is important,' and throw money at that," said Maria Noel Fernandez, director of organizing and civic engagement for Working Partnerships USA and a leader of the organization's Silicon Valley Rising program.

"They sat down with us, we brought in experts we both trusted, and we came up with a really innovative community fund focused on housing and good jobs, grounded in racial and economic justice, and governed by people with lived experience facing these challenges," she said in an email to the Business Journal.

Downtown West sets a new model for how tech development can keep families housed and lift the quality of blue-collar jobs, said Fernandez, the campaign director of Silicon Valley Rising, which represents a coalition of labor, faith and community-based organizations.

Mayor Sam Liccardo told the Business Journal that Google's community benefits package addresses affordable housing, community programs, and job and learning opportunities "in a more impactful way than we've ever seen from any other expansion of employment in this Valley." The package "is one piece of a larger picture that shows that Google is not coming to San Jose either as a savior or a supplicant, but as a community partner," he said.

It also serves as a model for how a tech company can work in harmony with a community, which flies in the face of other large employers trying over the years to squeeze "every kind of subsidy and tax break known to humanity" out of cities and states, Liccardo said. The benefits package and other investments Google is making in San Jose also puts the city on a path to be the one to lead the United States out of the Covid-19 pandemic in a successful and equitable fashion, he said.

Laura Winter, a member of the Diridon Station Area Advisory Group (SAAG) and co-founder of the Diridon Area Neighborhood Group (DANG), said Google's outline of its community benefits plan addresses the SAAG's concerns on project-related issues such as the amount of affordable housing and new job and learning opportunities. SAAG is comprised of 38 member organizations appointed by the City Council to provide input to the city on land use, development, transportation and construction plans affecting the Diridon Station Area, which encompasses the Downtown West project site.

A representative of the St. Leo's neighborhood, which is adjacent to the planned development, Winter also said she appreciates the time Google has spent listening to DANG's concerns and

committing to an ongoing dialogue. The group is made up of three neighborhood associations whose areas meet at the doorstep to Downtown West.

Some of the other noteworthy community benefits and items stipulated in Google's draft development agreement with the City of San Jose include:

25% affordable housing in the Diridon Station area. This amount of affordable housing is comprised of land Google is dedicating to the city for affordable housing, representing 600 future units; the use of commercial linkage fees; on-site affordable housing distributed among market-rate buildings; and the payment of affordable housing "in-lieu" fees.

A 30% "local hire goal" for Downtown West's on-site building construction.

A more-than-\$250 million investment by Google to satisfy the City of San Jose's project requirements that's in addition to its \$200 million community benefits package. More than two-thirds of that money will go toward making at least 20% of Downtown West's residences affordable. The rest will be used to construct nearly 5 acres of parks and trails dedicated to the city as well as local transportation improvements.

Later this spring, the San Jose City Council will consider for approval Google's plans for Downtown West. The City Council should vote on it by May, Liccardo said last month.

Matthew Niksa

Commercial real estate reporter
Silicon Valley Business Journal



BUSINESS

Google, San Jose Release Long-awaited Development Agreement for Downtown West Project

By **Janice Bitters** [@janicebitters](#) / April 6, 2021

18



A rendering of Google's Downtown West development near the development's "gateway" into downtown. (Courtesy of Google)

Google and San Jose on Tuesday released a long-awaited [proposed development agreement](https://www.sanjoseinside.com/?s=google&search+submit=GO) (<https://www.sanjoseinside.com/?s=google&search+submit=GO>) for a massive, mixed-use office campus that could rise around Diridon Station.

The [agreement outlines](https://www.sanjoseca.gov/your-government/departments-offices/planning-building-code-enforcement/planning-division/projects-of-high-interest/google-project) (<https://www.sanjoseca.gov/your-government/departments-offices/planning-building-code-enforcement/planning-division/projects-of-high-interest/google-project>) the campus, called Downtown West, that Google wants to build in the 10th largest city in the country, but also the \$200 million community benefits package and about \$1 billion in other "features" it's willing to offer up in exchange for the green light to construct the new campus.

The multinational tech giant aims to build about 6.5 million square feet of offices—though it is studying the impacts of building up to 7.3 million square feet of office space in its proposal.

Those offices, some of which could reach about 290 feet high, would be surrounded by 4,000 new homes, a spate of hotel rooms and 500,000 square feet of retail. All of that would sit within about 80 acres around the city's transit hub that officials hope will eventually become one of the busiest transit stations on the West Coast where light rail, Caltrain, BART and high-speed rail would intersect, carrying 100,000 daily passengers.

"I'm proud that together with the City of San Jose, community, and local organizations we developed a project agreement with community benefits that focus on social equity and will help San José come back stronger from the pandemic's impacts," said Alexa Arena, Google's San Jose development director. "Downtown West is a great example of a new way to approach development, where community is placed front and center."

If completed, the mega-campus could employ around 25,000 people, according to Google. Those jobs, along with the tax dollars and the community benefit money the company has promised would offer a life-line to San Jose as it—and cities across the country—recover from the Covid-19 pandemic, Mayor Sam Liccardo said.

"This makes San Jose a national model for how we can rebuild equitably after this pandemic as cities throughout the country will be struggling mightily to address epic levels of unemployment and dislocation in their communities," he told San Jose Inside. "San Jose is finding the path through this partnership and one that will pay benefits to our surrounding community for many years to come."



A rendering of Google's Downtown West development along San Fernando. (Courtesy of Google)

Community Benefits

Part of that path includes about \$200 million in community benefits promised by Google, including a \$150 million nest egg called the Community Stabilization and Opportunity Pathways Fund. Google will contribute money to the new fund as it builds its project, contributing about \$21.2 million for every 1 million square feet of office space completed, according to city data.

The project will likely take more than a decade to build, but some money would be approved up-front if Google gets the final approval on the development from the city's elected officials, according to Google and city data.

As money comes into the fund, a third-party would manage it while a committee made up of residents would advise how the money should be spent, focusing on things like historically underrepresented communities, affordable housing, homelessness prevention or services and small business assistance.

The development agreement also comes with a promise to use local and diverse businesses to construct the project. Google also says it will gift the city nearly an acre of land ripe for affordable housing and build about 1,000 affordable homes in its own residential buildings.

"We are excited that Google's announcement today includes a big commitment to housing in the Downtown West proposal," Leslye Corsiglia, executive director for nonprofit Silicon Valley @ Home said. "As housing advocates, we hope this action serves as a catalyst for housing development in the ... Diridon Station Area, which has the capacity to add up to 15,000 new homes."

The tech giant has promised to host field trips, career days, and computer science workshops for students that come from underserved communities to promote STEM careers to students.

The development agreement is the result of years of negotiations, not only with the city, but also with community groups that emerged in recent years to tell Google what they wanted from a campus rising on the west end of the city's downtown.

A key request was around parks, public art and retaining some buildings of historical significance. About 15 acres of parks, plazas and trails would weave throughout the 80-acre development, according to the development agreement. The Diridon Area Neighborhood Group [DANG], a community led collective is happy about that.

“DANG appreciates Google’s willingness to work with neighbors now,” said Bob Staedler, a spokesperson for the group. “They’ve laid the groundwork to create a long-term positive working relationship with all area stakeholders. DANG also appreciates Google’s contribution to new and existing parks and the programs that will benefit the broader community.”



A rendering of Google's Downtown West development. (Courtesy of Google)

A Long Way

It's been nearly four years since San Jose officials gathered in a parking lot near the iconic Stephen's Meats “dancing pig” sign to announce that the rumors were true: Google was considering a massive, mixed-use corporate campus in the city's Diridon Station area—possibly up to 6 million square feet—and it could replace or reinvent the industrial-looking backdrop they stood before that day.

The project, if it came to fruition, would be a boon for San Jose, promised Mayor Sam Liccardo and other city council members standing side-by-side behind a portable podium. But first, they'd kick off negotiations with the tech giant to come up with a series of agreements about the potential development. Nothing was for-sure, city officials repeated.

Even so, the buzz, excitement and—for some wary residents—dread the June 6, 2017 announcement set off hasn't let up, even in the middle of a global pandemic.

Since then, the project has grown steadily. Today, the office space alone that Google proposes would surpass the 6 million square feet the company reportedly envisioned for the overall development in 2017.

Now the question is whether it will be approved after almost four years of negotiations and an overhaul of the zoning guidelines and boundaries for the 262 acres around Diridon Station that will also be up for a vote this spring (<https://www.sanjoseca.gov/your-government/departments/planning-building-code-enforcement/planning-division/citywide-planning/area-plans/diridon-station-area-plan>).

San Jose council members are tentatively expecting to vote on the development agreement May 25.

Before then, residents will have several chances to hear the details. The agreement will be presented on April 14 to the Station Area Advisory Group (SAAG), the committee tasked with recommending changes to the zoning and design guidelines around Diridon Station.

After that, an April 17 community meeting will precede an April 28 Planning Commission meeting to go over the details of the agreement.

Read the development agreement on the city of San Jose website (<https://www.sanjoseca.gov/your-government/departments-offices/planning-building-code-enforcement/planning-division/projects-of-high-interest/google-project>).



**Artist conceptual rendering, subject to change*

A rendering of Google's Downtown West development along Autumn Street. (Courtesy of Google)

Janice Bitters is managing editor for Metro Silicon Valley. Email tips to jbitters@weeklys.com (<mailto:jbitters@weeklys.com>). Follow her on Twitter at [@janicebitters](https://twitter.com/JaniceBitters) (<https://twitter.com/JaniceBitters>).

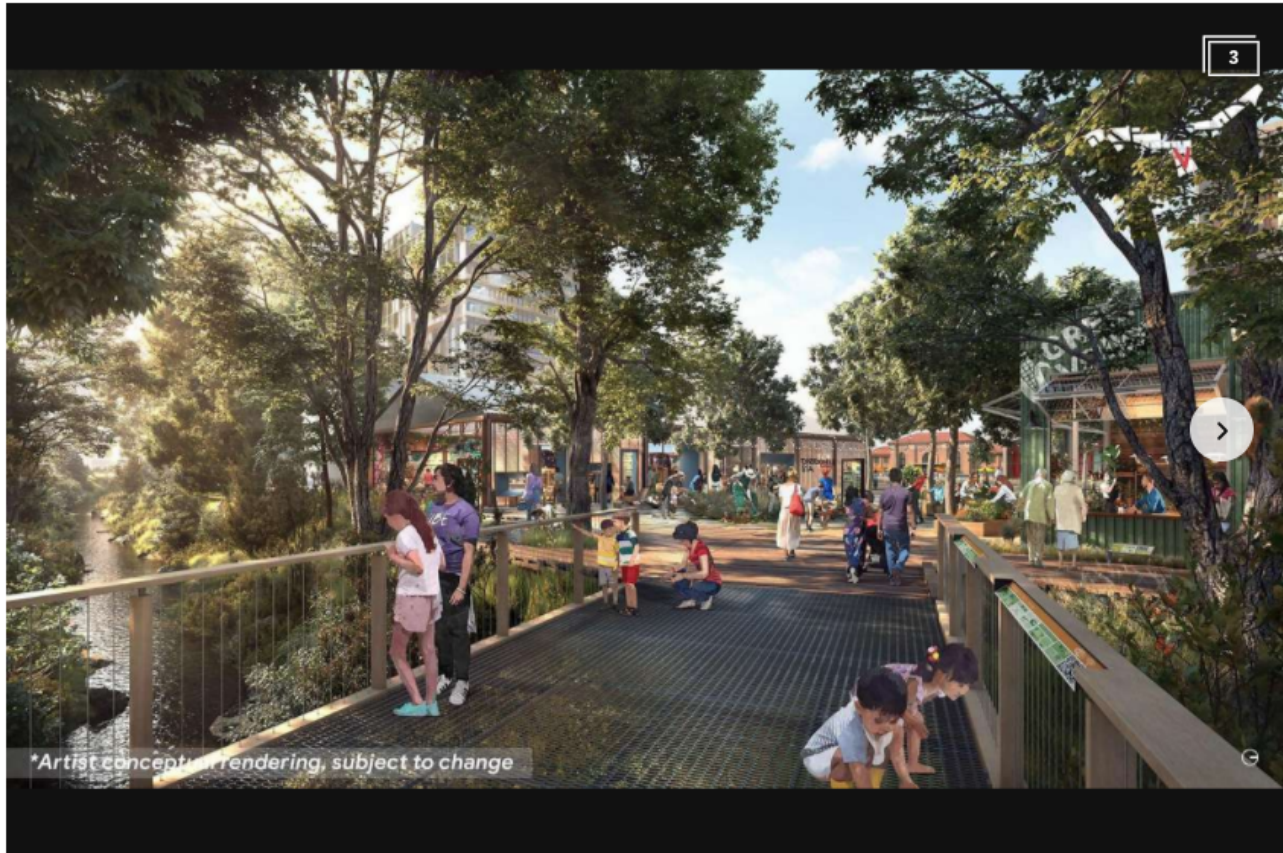
BIZ & TECH

Google's San Jose megaproject offers \$200 million in community benefits, 1,000 affordable homes



Roland Li

April 6, 2021 | Updated: April 6, 2021 6:10 p.m.



1 of 3



An artist's rendering of Google's proposed megaproject next to Diridon Station in San Jose.

Google /

Google plans to provide \$200 million in community benefits and 25% affordable housing at its San Jose megaproject near Diridon Station, a key step as it moves toward potential final approval next month.

The company is proposing one of the biggest projects in Silicon Valley history, with 7.3 million square feet of office space — more than 2 ½ times as large as Apple's new headquarters. The project, branded as Downtown West, also calls for up to 4,000 homes and 500,000 square feet of additional retail and other community space.

The project is on top of the Mountain View company's \$1 billion-plus investment plan for California real estate this year and a testament that remote work isn't halting the growth of some tech giants.

"I'm proud that together with the City of San Jose, community, and local organizations we developed a project agreement with community benefits that focus on social equity and will help San Jose come back stronger from the pandemic's impacts," Alexa Arena, Google's San Jose development director, said in a statement.

The community benefits fund will be shaped by the City Council's priorities and includes money for job training, homeless aid and small business support. Funding will be paid out during the construction of the project, which is expected to take over a decade.

San Jose Mayor Sam Liccardo supports the project, which he said can be a crucial economic engine after the pandemic has weakened the local economy. The project is expected to provide \$74 million in one-time local taxes and fees and more than \$100 million in new annual tax revenue.

"The benefits to our community come in many different forms," Liccardo said. "They've committed in a concrete way to address our community needs."

He said Google's approach was a major contrast to approaches by other companies that have sought tax breaks and public subsidies for development projects, such as Amazon's second headquarters search. The Google project will also inject vitality into San Jose's downtown, he said.

"We're trying to build a downtown worthy of America's 10th-largest city," Liccardo said. "We have been a suburban community for decades. Google is giving us an opportunity to realize ... a city built for people rather than a city built for cars."

The project spans more than 80 acres near Diridon Station, where connections to BART and high-speed rail are planned.

The BART extension to Diridon Station along with Sunnyvale suffered a setback when funding was removed from the \$1.9 trillion federal stimulus. Liccardo said officials plan to apply for Department of Transportation funding this summer.

Silicon Valley Rising, a coalition of labor, faith and community groups, said the project will provide major benefits to the area.

“Google and the City listened to our four years of organizing, coming together and really collaborating with the community to develop a different kind of project by committing to the most affordable units in San Jose’s history, good jobs for the people serving the industry, the largest community benefits fund our region has ever seen and a community governance structure,” Maria Noel Fernandez, the group’s campaign director, said in a statement.

The project has critics, including some neighbors who said in 2018 that it would increase nearby housing costs, leading to protests at a public hearing.

In December, the Santa Clara County Airport Land Use Commission voted against the project, citing the height of its tall buildings near the city’s airport. The City Council and Planning Commission can overrule that vote with a two-thirds majority.

The San Jose Sharks said last year that while they support development, they are concerned with traffic and transit access. The hockey team wants the city to preserve or replace 4,850 parking spaces within a third of the mile of SAP Center.

A final City Council vote is expected in late May.

*Roland Li is a San Francisco Chronicle staff writer. Email: roland.li@sfgchronicle.com
Twitter: [@rolandlisf](https://twitter.com/rolandlisf)*

“By putting \$150 million and real decision-making power in the hands of grassroots leaders in neighborhoods at risk of displacement, this project sets a new model for how tech development can keep families housed and lift the quality of blue-collar jobs.”

-- Maria Noel Fernandez, Campaign Director, Silicon Valley Rising

The Mercury News, April 6 (Maggie Angst and George Avalos)

[Google releases new details of development deal for downtown San Jose project](#)

“We are excited that Google’s announcement today includes a big commitment to housing in the Downtown West proposal said. “As housing advocates, we hope this action serves as a catalyst for housing development in the ... Diridon Station Area, which has the capacity to add up to 15,000 new homes.”

-- Leslye Corsiglia, Executive Director, Silicon Valley @ Home

San Jose Inside, April 6, 2021 (Janice Bitters)

[Google, San Jose Release Long-awaited Development Agreement for Downtown West Project](#)

“DANG appreciates Google’s willingness to work with neighbors now. They’ve laid the groundwork to create a long-term positive working relationship with all area stakeholders. DANG also appreciates Google’s contribution to new and existing parks and the programs that will benefit the broader community.”

-- Bob Staedler, Representative, Diridon Area Neighborhood Group

San Jose Inside, April 6, 2021 (Janice Bitters)

[Google, San Jose Release Long-awaited Development Agreement for Downtown West Project](#)

“Downtown West is going to be a new community. It will not be a walled-off spaceship. It will be part of the streets, it will provide open space, housing, transit, nature areas. This is the way a city is supposed to work.”

-- Scott Knies, Executive Director, San Jose Downtown Association

The Mercury News, April 6 (Maggie Angst and George Avalos)

[Google releases new details of development deal for downtown San Jose project](#)

"Google didn't just say, 'Here's what we think is important,' and throw money at that. They sat down with us, we brought in experts we both trusted, and we came up with a really innovative community fund focused on housing and good jobs, grounded in racial and economic justice, and governed by people with lived experience facing these challenges."

-- Maria Noel Fernandez, Campaign Director, Silicon Valley Rising

Silicon Valley Business Journal, April 6, 2021 (Matthew Niksa)

[Google would provide \\$200M worth of community benefits under Downtown West plan for San Jose](#)

"The Downtown West project is the cornerstone to all development that will occur in the broader Diridon Station Area. DANG appreciates Google's willingness to work with neighbors."

-- Bob Staedler, Representative, Diridon Area Neighborhood Group

The Mercury News, April 6 (Maggie Angst and George Avalos)

[Google releases new details of development deal for downtown San Jose project](#)

“I think for all of us as members of SAAG we've seen how far this set of conversations is involved and I think the strong community benefits package we saw is because the City and the Google team listened. They worked, they iterated, reviewed best practices, engaged with so many in the community, and came up with what I think is really a bottle or developments in the tech sector around how to address the issues of displacement, and how to not just not just to put money at a problem and throw money at a problem, but really think intensely about what kind of power structure can help those in the communities most impacted by displacement and have a voice in co-developing those strategies.”

-- Jeffrey Buchannan, Working Partnerships, SAAG, 04.14.2021

We're very excited to see this development agreement. We engage ourselves in a community learning model and so we agree that community relations be at the helm of the decision making around the fund, particularly the community that this fund has to serve. They're the best position to determine priorities and assess the effectiveness of investments into their neighborhoods. So, really happy to see that. We're also really pleased to see that the fund is focusing on anti displacement...”

-- Kiyomi Yamamoto, Law Foundation of Silicon Valley, SAAG, 04.14.2021

“I just really wanted to express our organization's strong support for the housing components that were presented as part of the downtown West proposal. I really want to thank the City and Google for all their hard work on this DA and those housing components. I think these 4,000 new homes are hopefully going to really help jumpstart other housing developments that we want to see across the station area, and are key to creating that vibrant neighborhood I think everybody wants to see.”

-- David Meyer, SV@HOME, SAAG, 04.14.2021

“We just want to recognize the collaborative nature of this whole process, and we appreciate seeing the commitment that's been made to the T.O.D. plan. This really aligns with high speed rails statewide policy of providing housing around their station areas. We know this isn't the finish line and we all have a lot of work left to do, but we do look forward to continuing to work together so that we can implement both our project and other projects successfully in the Diridon Area.”

-- Kelly Doyle, California High Speed Rail, SAAG, 04.14.2021

“I think the community benefits are well thought out, both in substance and also in timing - that early land and payment for job readiness and community stabilization is well thought out to address the problems and prevent problems like displacement that could otherwise be caused by a project like this. I think one of the other things that gets lost yet with all the benefits and all the kind of good things is the focus on connections - this proposal does great job of working on connections like bike-rail-ped, open space, connecting neighborhoods, it's clear that the city, and Google have thought a lot about that, and I appreciate that.”

-- Jason Baker, SV Leadership Group, SAAG, 04.14.2021

“Because at the end of the day, Google really listened and the City listened, and I believe that is why we have an amazing agreement here that has so many benefits for the community and for working people. So, not only has Google committed to community benefits, but they've also made commitments to make sure that we have high quality, blue collar jobs from the people building this campus and the future service workers who will be working on this campus, and that's going to make a major difference in people's lives.”

-- Sarah McDermott, Unite Here Local 19, SAAG, 04.14.2021

“I want to first thank Google and City staff for coming together to bring a development agreement of this caliber. And to be real honest with you, I always thought we would get here. I thought that we had willing partners on both sides, and I am delighted and anxious to welcome Google and the new development it brings to my neighborhood, soon. What I would like to say though is that Google is setting the standard; their development standards for design, infrastructure, fee structure, and community outreach are top notch.”

-- Kathy Sutherland, Delmas Park, SAAG, 04.14.2021

“I'd just like to say that those of us in this room, the neighborhood's, really appreciate Google's willingness to work with the neighbors, and they really laid the groundwork for creating a very positive, long term working relationship with all of the area's stakeholders.

-- Laura Winter, St. Leo's, SAAG, 04.14.2021

VICTORY!

We won a San José Community Fund from Google built around community power and racial justice.

The draft "development agreement" for the Downtown West project between Google and the City of San José was just released. Here's what's in it:



Silicon Valley
RISING



svrising • Follow



svrising We've got some huge news: Google and the City government have agreed to a Development Agreement for the Downtown West project that could put \$150 million into a community fund grounded in racial justice, and governed by grassroots leaders!

This is the biggest community benefits fund of its kind in our region, and the first to empower communities of color with the authority to direct tens of millions towards preventing displacement and creating economic opportunity for local residents.

Swipe through to learn more.

#GoogleCampus #GoodJobs



171 likes

APRIL 6

Log in to like or comment.

[source](#)



SiliconValleyRising @SVRising · Apr 8

...

" @Google committed to the most affordable units in San Jose's history, good jobs for the people serving the industry, the largest **community benefits** fund our region has ever seen and a **community** governance structure."



Law Foundation of Silicon Valley

April 6 at 8:28 AM · 🌐



Everyone, no matter who they are, should have an opportunity to live and thrive in San Jose. This belief has driven the work of the community partners advocating for protections against homelessness and displacement as a result of the Google Campus. Our work continues but we're proud to share our efforts over the years have resulted in a Community Stabilization Fund.

Read our full statement here:

<https://www.lawfoundation.org/news/google>

Community Stabilization Fund Established to Combat Displacement & Homelessness

Everyone, no matter who they are, should have an opportunity to live and thrive in San Jose. That is why we stand in support of the Community Stabilization Fund that was announced today as part of the Development Agreement between Google and the City of San Jose.



LAWFOUNDATION.ORG

**Community Input Shapes Google's Downtown West's
Social Infrastructure Plan — Law Foundation of Silicon...**



Law Foundation

@LawFoundationSV



Replying to [@LawFoundationSV](#)

The Community Stabilization Fund will ensure that as Google builds properties and hires new employees to live and work in SJ, those most acutely at risk of displacement will benefit, specifically Latinx and AAPI communities in East SJ and downtown.



Law Foundation

@LawFoundationSV



Replying to [@LawFoundationSV](#)

We hope that this Fund serves as a model for future dev. projects, & inspires companies to take a deeper look at their social responsibility programs to ensure that communities of color are able to live and thrive in Silicon Valley. (/Thread)



Somos Mayfair

April 6 at 4:21 PM · 🌐



Huge news we're celebrating today! SOMOS is proud to be a part of this campaign: we will always advocate for including community voice at decision-making tables.

We've still got work ahead of us, but this is one step closer towards a San Jose that is known for its equity, affordable housing, economic opportunity, and anti-displacement work.

Swipe through to learn more.

[#GoogleCampus](#) [#GoodJobs](#) [#CommunityPower](#) [#CommunityOrganizing](#) [#RacialJustice](#)
[#SanJoseCalifornia](#) [#ESSJ](#) [#408California408](#) [#sanjose](#) [#CommunityControl](#)



z-ahoura
@ahoura_z



A LOT to learn about [@CityofSanJose](#) - [@Google](#) Community Benefit Agreement, could be a stellar example of an anti-displacement anchor-based revitalization: Google's downtown SJ transit village project offers \$200 million in community benefits [mercurynews.com/2021/04/06/goo...](https://www.mercurynews.com/2021/04/06/google-community-benefit-agreement/) via [@mercnews](#)



Jaime Raul Zepeda for State Senate @JaimeRaulZepeda · Apr 7



"Perhaps the biggest new was **Google's** plan to contribute \$200 million in **community benefits**, demonstrating the company's desire to establish itself as a fully engaged corporate citizen."

Corporate engagement done right @Google 🙌



IBEW Local 332 @332Ibew · Apr 7



Local 332 applauds **Google's community benefits** plan, which will create good union jobs as well as affordable housing. We are excited to help build this project! [#UnionStrong](#) [#1u](#)

Community Governance Promotes Racial Justice



victoriousvic21 • Follow

East San Jose, San Jose



After nearly four years of organizing for justice in the Google campaign, we've won commitments from Google, including a multi-million dollar community fund to promote economic development and keep families in their home.

Now, the City of San José and Google are negotiating the terms of the community fund.

We're fighting to ensure our community has a say in how those millions are spent. Grassroots leaders of color — people with firsthand experience living through and fighting against, racial injustice in areas like housing, workers' rights and public health — need to have true governing power to decide where the money goes.



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MARCH 24



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SV@Home
@SVatHome



"We are excited that Google's announcement today includes a big commitment to housing in the Downtown West proposal" - [@leslye_vfc](#), [@SVatHome](#)'s Executive Director...



San Jose Inside @sanjoseinside · Apr 6

The long-awaited proposed development agreement between @CityofSanJose and @Google outlines what the tech giant wants to build near Diridon Station and the \$200 million community benefits package that would come with the project. bit.ly/3cTURzL

↻ SiliconValleyRising Retweeted



Bay Rising Action @bayrisingaction · Apr 8

...

ICYMI: @SVRising had a huge victory this week. This agreement with @Google is a direct result of 4 years of brilliant community organizing.

MUST-READ THREAD @SVRising!



SiliconValleyRising @SVRising · Apr 6



VICTORY



After 4 years of organizing, we won a San José Community fund from @Google built around community power and racial justice.

The draft development agreement for the Downtown West project between Google and the City of San José was just released. Here's what's in it:

[Show this thread](#)



Maria Noel Fernandez

@MariaNoelSJ



I am so proud to have worked alongside so many folks that got us to today. After 4 years of organizing [@SVRising](#), [@google](#) and City leaders announce a landmark community benefits deal addressing displacement, racial injustice & community power in San Jose.



Si se puede is proud to support this campaign!

VICTORY!

We won a San José
Community Fund
from Google
built ground

2

Google has also made
commitments to:

- **Build or subsidize over 2,000 affordable homes** in San José between Downtown West and Google's existing \$250 million regional Affordable Housing Fund.
- **Good jobs for blue-collar workers** building and operating the campus.

1

Google will put \$150 million into
a community-controlled fund.

This fund will be used to prevent displacement and create economic opportunity.

This will be the **largest community benefits fund in our region.**

3

The fund will be governed by
the community.

The fund will be **governed by a 13-member Community Advisory Committee that reflects the diversity of San José.**

At least five members must have personal experience with the root causes of displacement, including two from the east side and one from downtown.



For Working Families

@P4WF

...

A big win for workers and community in San Jose!



Jeffrey Buchanan @JRBInSV · Apr 6

After 4 years of organizing, @SVRising, @google and City leaders announce a landmark community benefits deal addressing displacement, racial injustice & community power in San Jose. In addition to creating a path to thousands of units of affordable housing & good union jobs. [twitter.com/SVBizCRE/statu...](https://twitter.com/SVBizCRE/status/1514111111111111111)

[Show this thread](#)