

September 12, 2023

To: Planning Commission

Subject: Comments on San Mateo General Plan Draft EIR

4.1 AESTHETICS

1. San Mateo deserves the best Objective Design Standards since there are many distinct neighborhood zones. Each neighborhood has its own visual and physical character and deserves respect. (Action CD 7.6: Objective Design Standards)
2. Commercial development adjacent to residential. New infill building designs need to respect existing community character, using established building designs found in San Mateo. Encourage new developments to be compatible and harmonious with building types and architectural styles prevalent in San Mateo especially with the surrounding residential neighborhoods and Downtown Historic District. (Action CD 8.7)
3. Project Design Review for proposed projects in the Downtown and surrounding neighborhoods by a qualified historic preservation architect/consultant. Aesthetics of new illuminated contemporary glass buildings will have an impact on existing older neighborhoods and the Historic Downtown.
4. Street lighting standards - More green street lamps are needed at dark residential intersections and longer residential blocks. This impacts safety for pedestrians and bicyclists in Equity Priority and underserved neighborhood areas in the Central Neighborhood and North Central Neighborhood.
5. Title 25 Signs - protect the character of older residential neighborhoods, and prohibit neon commercial signs on new tall buildings facing towards surrounding residential neighborhoods at night. Housing is at the upper levels in new buildings. Prohibit older lighted outdoor billboards advertising alcohol in Equity Priority Neighborhoods along 101 which generate blight. (Policy CD 6.5: US 101 Frontage, Policy CD 6.6: Signage, Policy CD 6.10 Nighttime Lighting)
6. Neighborhood Beautification - Encourage drought tolerant green landscaping in residential neighborhoods and commercial projects and expand the tree canopies in front yards and plant more street trees through street tree plan. Especially in Equity Priority Neighborhoods.

4.4 CULTURAL RESOURCES

1. Neighborhood preservation and protections are needed. We need updated surveys in Central, North Central Neighborhoods, and other older neighborhoods as possible Historic Districts. We need protection of pre-war homes and small duplexes for middle and low-income families in Equity Priority Neighborhoods.
2. Avoid demolition of homes in older neighborhoods. Preserve the visible exteriors from the street of existing Craftsmen, Spanish and Tudor Revival, and Victorian homes in older neighborhoods. Follow the existing patterns in the neighborhoods. The home need to be compatible with the existing neighborhood. Historic Resources - Page 189
3. New infill building designs need to respect existing community character, using established building designs found in San Mateo. Encourage new developments to be compatible and harmonious with building types and architectural styles prevalent in San Mateo. Policy LU 4.2 - Quality of Downtown Development.
4. There will be a new Historic District called the Yoshiko Yamanouchi House at 1007 East 5th Avenue. There are 9 resources on the property which include: 3 buildings, 3 sites, and 3 structures. Documentation will be provided for the Draft EIR, for protection from adverse environmental impacts.
5. Demolition permits should be issued at the same time as building permits, and not before.

4.11 NOISE - The impact of the build-out results in the unacceptable cumulative traffic noise within the EIR study areas. No mitigation measures are available according to the EIR.

1. Existing noise contours - the areas along S Amphet/Idaho are in the 65-70 dab range. Since higher sound walls haven't been constructed along Highway 101, can the City plant more trees along the sound wall between Poplar and 3rd Avenue and 5th Avenue and Folkstone. North Central, Central, and Sunnybrae would benefit. Italian Cypress trees will grow to 30 feet and will require little maintenance. Ryland Bay in Bay Meadows has trees planted trees along the sound wall. Page 403.

2. Temporary construction noise - stagger the projects so the noise, GHG, truck impacts, vibration impacts are not so severe. There will be 17 new projects in Area 4. Five projects have been completed in the Downtown. Can you take the trucks out through state highways through El Camino Real, 92, to 101 to reduce the dust and toxic pollution. There can be up to 90 trucks a day from Windy Hill's Block 21 project. We need to reduce construction impacts in Equity Priority Neighborhoods. Page 408
3. Place more receptacles and monitors for noise, construction vibrations and water down dust impacts between 3rd, 4th and 5th Avenues in Central and North Central Neighborhoods to monitor adverse environmental impacts with multiple new construction projects. Noise monitors are lacking on the map on page 394.
4. Reduce the heights to 3 stories in land-use map especially 4th & 5th Avenues and west side of S Delaware in the Central Neighborhood - (Residential Low II). By reducing heights in (Mixed Use High I and Mixed Use High II) in the Downtown, this will reduce the cut-through traffic volumes and the noise impacts in the Central and North Central Neighborhoods.

4.15 TRANSPORTATION

1. What does the reconstruction of the 3rd/4th Avenue Interchange consist of? When will this occur? We need better lighting for the pedestrians and bicyclists on the overpass at night. Page 486
2. Bicycle network - Bicycle boulevards include traffic calming and low traffic volumes such as 5th Avenue from S Delaware to S Amphlett. Keep 5th Avenue as a local street versus an Arterial. This is a conflict in the General Plan and needs to be addressed in the General Plan EIR. Page 494, Page 491 Proposed Street Classification Fig 4.15-1.
3. 42% of GHG emissions in San Mateo originate from vehicular trips generated by San Mateo residents and businesses. Why does San Mateo generate such a high percentage of GHG emissions? We need solutions to increase deficiencies in transit, bicycle, and pedestrian modes. Page 495
4. The proposed project increases the use of roadway facilities in the EIR study study. This increases cut-through traffic volumes, GHG emissions, VMT and noise levels. Why are the current TDM strategies not working well?

5. Policy C 6.5 states to implement neighborhood traffic calming on residential streets to reduce cut-through traffic volumes to address noise impacts. We need to implement traffic calming on 5th and 9th Avenues from S Delaware to S Amhlett. Do not reclassify these streets to Arterials. Equity Priority Neighborhoods need more traffic calming. Page 500

6. Policy C 6.6 - Do not put a truck route on 5th Avenue from S Delaware to S Amphlett on 5th Avenue a proposed bike boulevard. Do not put a truck route on S Humboldt from 4th to 9th Avenue. We need to make the streets safer for the bicyclists on 5th and S Humboldt, to and from the 3rd/4th Avenue overpass.

7. Reduce VMT, GHG emissions, traffic volumes, diesel particulates, and noise on 5th and 9th Avenue with traffic circles and keep the 4-way stop signs. San Mateo Glendale Village has traffic circles and 4-way stop signs. Nelson Nygaard suggested long narrow traffic circles on 9th Avenue in the 2006 Central Neighborhood Long Term Strategy report, along with the TAP studies. Page 501 Equity Priority Neighborhoods

8. Action - C 3.9 - Currently the Downtown Mall is on B Street from 2nd to 3rd Avenues. Please extend this Pedestrian Mall from 3rd Avenue to 5th Avenue to reduce the traffic volumes. Page 502

Other Transportation questions in the Draft EIR:

9. Increase Traffic Demand Measures (TDM) measures to reduce vehicle cut-through traffic through residential streets at 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, and 9th Avenues and reduce traffic noise.

10. Reduce the heights to 3 stories in land-use map especially 4th & 5th Avenues and west side of S Delaware in the Central Neighborhood - (Residential Low II). By reducing heights in (Mixed Use High I and Mixed Use High II) in the Downtown, this will reduce the cut-through traffic volumes through these streets.

11. What are the ADT volumes on Peninsula and Poplar Avenues from Delaware to S Humboldt? Are they included in the Draft EIR? It is difficult to locate current ADT traffic volumes information on streets in the Draft EIR. Traffic volumes needs to be listed in the Table of Contents.

12. What is the percentage of Burlingame traffic that use the Poplar Exit in San Mateo?

13. What is the percentage of traffic from the Poplar Exit will redirect to 3rd, 4th, and 5th Avenues if the Peninsula Interchange is built? Has that traffic volume been included in the ADT numbers for 3rd, 4th, 5th Avenues and S Humboldt in the Draft EIR for 2040?

14. We need a separate study for the 6 grade separations. Why do we need these many separations between 1st Avenue and 9th Avenues, if new developments are suppose to use Caltrain? Why doesn't Peninsula Avenue have a grade separation? Grade separations are designed to move more vehicular traffic and grade separations will increase VMT and diesel particulates in the Equity Priority Neighborhoods. What other mitigations do you propose to reduce these additional adverse environmental impacts?

15. Central has been an underserved neighborhood and the Equity Priority boundaries should be extended to 9th Avenue (both sides) and include streets from Delaware to S Amphlett. This Draft EIR for 2040 is proposing 5 arterials in the Central Neighborhood with no residential protections. We do not want any parking removed on 5th Avenue or adding more traffic lanes. We need to reduce the traffic noise and volume, decrease the VMT, and the diesel particulates. In 2006, the TAP studies gave us 2250 to 3390 cars on 5th and now this will increase to 10,210 ADT with existing and new projects. Do not reclassify 5th and 9th Avenues, but keep the current street classifications for these 2 streets.

16. What is causing traffic to decrease on 3rd and 4th Avenues between S Humboldt and Delaware and increase on 5th Avenue a local street east of S Delaware in these projections? Traffic has increased on S Delaware between 5th and 9th Avenues since 2015, and construction workers are now parking on S Delaware between 7th and 9th Avenues, and 7th Avenue between Delaware and Eldorado. Developers need a parking plan for their construction workers, or park on the vacant lot at Block 21. Page 993

17. Neighborhood Traffic Management Program is a living document and needs to be updated to better address cut-through traffic volumes. It needs more flexibility to address the traffic impacts on local, collector and arterials in residential neighborhoods.

Thank you.

Best,

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