

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Monday, September 25, 2023 3:26 PM
To: Manira Sandhir <msandhir@cityofsanmateo.org>
Cc: Zachary Dahl <zdahl@cityofsanmateo.org>; Alex Khojikian <akhojikian@cityofsanmateo.org>
Subject: DEIR for proposed San Mateo 2040 Genreal Plan - comments

Dear Ms. Sandhir,

As a former San Mateo Planning Commissioner (14 years total, 1970's and 1990's) I am familiar with large EIR's. I've reviewed them by the inch and the pound! This current one for the proposed General Plan (over 1000 pages) is well beyond what most everyone - me included - will want to review and comment on, page by page. Instead I am focusing on two issues.

Noise is a significant issue in San Mateo. Much of the noise we experience is related to traffic (another significant issue) . I reviewed the noise studies and am puzzled that a better range of locations and a better choice of duration and times of day and days of the week were not used. It is usually most helpful to start "at home", with what we know best, so I looked very closely at the noise study on the upper part of West Hillsdale Blvd. The proposed General Plan will allow for greatly intensified development in the W. Hillsdale Blvd/Campus Drive area. Any such increase will certainly funnel much larger volumes of traffic onto Hillsdale Blvd (and likely 31st Ave.) toward the east of the area, especially since the alternative, State Route 92, is so frequently congested. So what evaluation does the DEIR give us? Fifteen minutes on a late Friday morning in mid November on the flat (therefore quieter) part at 931 W. Hillsdale. May I point out that this timing avoids the morning and afternoon commutes - both for CSM, other local schools and the regular workforce. Using a Friday, in a time when work from home was common, especially toward the end of the week, also creates an understatement of the existing conditions. and using a flat spot, when much of Hillsdale has steep roadway (in excess of 14%) also avoids revealing the effect of increased engine noise going uphill and the combined engine/tire noise from increased speed going both uphill and downhill. The measurement did manage to capture *one* of the buses that now use this route *every 20 minutes - from 6AM to 11PM!*, but missed the common noisy situation of 2 buses passing each other. All in all, a pretty useless baseline evaluation for this location. I can only wonder what people who live near the other areas the DEIR evaluated would think of where/when/how those measurements were taken.

Project Alternatives are very poorly chosen for a project this all encompassing. The community has been discussing a range of alternative development intensities (often called A, B and C for land use) which would result in a range of impacts. Those impacts are not necessarily a smooth continuum as development increases. In many community situations there is an as of now unidentified "tipping point" where impacts become much greater and require much stronger alternate mitigations, as opposed to "more of the same". Ignoring the community understanding of the proposed General Plan in favor of a less than adequate "alternative" of reduced noise (largely through reduced traffic) is not responsive to the CEQA guidelines for requirements in the DEIR. This "alternative" suggests "enhanced" TDM mitigations like subsidies for transit passes, e-bikes, ride

sharing and bicycles. Those tools, and many others, should be an automatic part of our city process. employed *right now*, aside from any connection to a new General Plan. Even back before 2000, project approvals included conditions for TDM measures, across properties and area boundaries. How does this kind of already existing approach rise to the level of the basis for a project alternative? It doesn't.

Of course the alternatives also make mention of ;the environmentally superior choice. This is given lip service by saying it aligns with the only alternative "studied", thus skirting any real discussion. It probably would have been omitted altogether if not for the clear requirement in CEQA guidelines.

The bottom line for me is that you have a DEIR which does not meet legal requirements and which relies on inadequate studies.

This document needs a major overhaul prior to certification. .

Karen Herrel
West Hillsdale Blvd.
San Mateo