

## 2. Introduction

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Pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, Chapter 14 California Code of Regulations, Section 15378[a], the Strive San Mateo General Plan 2040 (General Plan 2040 or proposed General Plan) and proposed Climate Action Plan (CAP) update are considered a “project” subject to environmental review as its implementation is “an action [undertaken by a public agency] which has the potential for resulting in either a direct physical change in the environment or a reasonably foreseeable indirect physical change in the environment.” The assessment in this Final Environmental Impact Report (EIR) is intended to inform the City’s decision-makers, other responsible agencies, and the public-at-large of the nature of the proposed project and its effect on the environment.

### 2.1 PROPOSED PROJECT

The proposed project includes replacing the City’s existing General Plan 2030, which has a buildout horizon to 2030, with an updated General Plan 2040. The proposed project would build off the existing General Plan 2030 to provide a framework for land use, transportation, and conservation decisions through the horizon year of 2040. The proposed project would also update the buildout projections used in the City’s Climate Action Plan (CAP) to be consistent with the updated General Plan 2040. Development within the city would largely be focused within the ten General Plan Land Use Study Areas. The Study Areas include areas near transit; areas where current buildings are aging, vacant, or not maintained; or areas where property owners have expressed interest in considering redevelopment of the property. Refer to Figure 3-3, *Study Area Boundaries*, in Chapter 3, *Project Description*, of the Draft EIR for the proposed project’s ten General Plan Land Use Study Areas.

The proposed CAP update does not include any substantive updates to the strategies in the existing CAP.

### 2.2 EIR SCOPE

This Final EIR identifies and analyzes program specific potential impacts of the project which were determined in the Draft EIR. The analysis of the Draft EIR discloses the specific short-term impacts (construction) and long-term impacts (operation) that would occur as a result of project approval and implementation.

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### 2.3 ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW PROCESS

#### 2.3.1 DRAFT EIR

Pursuant to Public Resources Code Section 21080(d)<sup>1</sup> and CEQA Guidelines Section 15063,<sup>2</sup> the City determined that the proposed project could result in potentially significant environmental impacts and that an EIR would be required. In compliance with CEQA Section 21080.4, the City circulated the Notice of Preparation (NOP) of a Draft EIR for the for the City of San Mateo General Plan Update to interested agencies and persons on January 12, 2022 for a 30-day review period. The scoping period for this Draft EIR was between January 12 and February 11, 2022, during which, interested agencies and the public could submit comments about the proposed project. The scope of the Draft EIR was established by the City of San Mateo through the EIR scoping process and includes an analysis of both the proposed project's impacts and cumulative impacts in the following issue areas:

- Aesthetics
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Cultural Resources
- Energy
- Geology and Soils
- Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Land Use and Planning
- Noise
- Population and Housing
- Public Services
- Recreation
- Transportation
- Tribal Cultural Resources
- Utilities and Service Systems
- Wildfire
- CEQA-Mandated Assessment Conclusions:
  - Impacts Found Not to Be Significant
  - Significant Unavoidable Impacts
  - Significant and Irreversible Changes
  - Growth Inducement

The Draft EIR was available for review by the public and interested parties, agencies, and organizations for a 45-day comment period starting on August 11, 2023, and ending on September 25, 2023. During the comment period, the public was invited to submit written comments on the Draft EIR via mail or e-mail to the City of San Mateo Community Development Department.

#### 2.3.2 FINAL EIR

Upon completion of the 45-day review period for the Draft EIR, the City reviewed all comments received and prepared written responses for each comment. These letters are included in Appendix G, *Comments Received on the Draft EIR*, of this Final EIR. This Final EIR includes written responses for each comment received during the public review period. This Final EIR consists of the Draft EIR, the comments received on the Draft EIR, and the responses to those comments, and describes any changes to the Draft EIR that have resulted from the comments received.

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<sup>1</sup> The CEQA Statute is found at California Public Resources Code, Division 13, Sections 21000 to 21177.

<sup>2</sup> The CEQA Guidelines are found at California Code of Regulations, Title 14, Division 6, Chapter 3, Sections 15000 to 15387.

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Upon recommendations by the Planning Commission at a public hearing, the City Council will review the Final EIR as the decision-making body for the proposed project. A City Council public hearing will be scheduled to concurrently consider certification of the Final EIR and a decision on the project. If the City Council determines that the project may be approved, the City Council will adopt and incorporate into the project all feasible mitigation measures identified in the EIR and may also require changes to the proposed project.

In some cases, the City Council may find that certain mitigation measures are outside the jurisdiction of the City to implement, or that there are no feasible mitigation measures for a given significant impact. In that case, the City Council would have to adopt a statement of overriding considerations that determines that economic, legal, social, technological, or other benefits of the proposed project outweigh the unavoidable, significant effects on the environment.

The City Council may also find that the project does not satisfy the required findings for approval and decide to reject the project on that basis. Community input is encouraged at all Planning Commission and City Council public hearings.

### 2.3.3 MITIGATION MONITORING

Public Resources Code Section 21081.6 requires that the lead agency adopt a monitoring or reporting program for any project for which it has made mitigation findings pursuant to Public Resources Code 21081. Such a program is intended to ensure the implementation of all mitigation measures adopted through the preparation of an EIR. The Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program for the proposed project will be completed and available to the public prior to certification of this EIR.

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