

Responses to Verbal Comments on the Draft SCEA

This section summarizes the oral comments received during the Planning Commission hearing for the Draft Sustainable Communities Environmental Assessment (SCEA) prepared for the 3200 East Foothill Boulevard Project.

The Planning Commission hearing took place on February 28, 2018. Oral comments were provided by four (4) Planning Commissioners and seven (7) members of the public. Responses to the oral comments received during the Planning Commission hearing are included herein.

Any changes made to the text of the Draft SCEA correcting information, data, or intent, other than minor typographical corrections or minor wording changes, are noted in the Final SCEA as changes from the Draft SCEA. Where a comment results in a change to the Draft SCEA text, a notation is made in the response indicating that the text is revised. Changes in text are signified by strikeouts (~~strikeouts~~) where text is removed and by underlined font (underlined font) where text is added.

Responses to Comments at the February 28, 2018 Planning Commission Hearing

Comments provided by the Commissioners and members of the public are summarized below. Responses to each comment have been provided.

Commenter: Felicia Williams, Commissioner

Commissioner Williams: Comment 1

Commissioner Williams conveyed that it was difficult to tell which traffic and transportation mitigation measures from the Southern California Association of Government's (SCAG) 2016 RTP/SCS EIR were required for the proposed project. She further asked how the mitigation measures were determined.

Response

SCAG mitigation measures for traffic and transportation as provided in the Draft SCEA are to be implemented as appropriate and as required. Public Resources Code Section 21155.2 requires the SCEA to incorporate all feasible mitigation measures set forth in prior applicable environmental impact reports. Commissioner Williams appears to be referring to Mitigation Measure MM-TRA-1(b), which is a mitigation measure from SCAG's RTP/SCS EIR that lists a menu of potential mitigation measures for the lead agency to consider. Mitigation Measure TRA-1 implements the relevant portions of SCAG's Mitigation Measure MM-TRA-1(b) and the project level and includes the project-specific measures that address the potential impact of the project. Mitigation Measure TRA-1 includes unbundled parking, provision of Metro passes, bus stop improvements, and an annual TDM Survey as required strategies to be implemented into the TDM plan.

Commissioner Williams: Comment 2

Commissioner Williams asked how it can be ensured that development projects sited next to transit actually result in traffic and transportation reductions that are anticipated.

Response

The project has been conditioned to implement TDM measures above and beyond the City's Trip Reduction Ordinance (TRO) requirements to reduce the project impact to a less than significant level. Based on guidance provided by the California Air Pollution Control Officers Association (CAPCOA) in the Quantifying Greenhouse Gas Measures manual and on the professional judgement of the City's DOT, the additional TDM measures would reduce the project's vehicle trips/capita to below the City's threshold of significance. Mitigation Measure TRA-1 further includes a TDM survey requirement to maximize the effectiveness of TDM Plan. As identified by CAPCOA, a TDM survey can further reduce vehicle usage by enhancing the effectiveness of the TDM plan. The TDM annual survey required by City's TRO allows staff to monitor the effectiveness of the TDM measures and adjust them as needed.

Commissioner Williams: Comment 3

Commissioner Williams stated that she did not see bike lockers or electric vehicle chargers included in the plans for the proposed project. Commissioner Williams asked when considerations for such features occur during project development and whether or not it was the responsibility of the lead agency (City of Pasadena) or the SCEA to include such considerations.

Response

Section 17.46.310 of the Pasadena Municipal Code provides the requirements for electrical vehicle charging stations and Section 17.46.320 provides the standards for bicycle parking. Therefore, the project must comply with these requirements and standards.

Commissioner Williams: Comment 4

Commissioner Williams requested that an analysis of traffic impacts to Foothill Boulevard resulting from adding a southern access point for the proposed project be included in the SCEA.

Response

The proposed project design includes northern and southern driveways on the western boundary of the project site along North Kinneloa Avenue. The northern driveway allows ingress and egress from the project site. In response to concerns raised at the Commission meeting, the applicant has revised the project to include ingress and egress from the project site at the southern driveway as well. The City's CEQA traffic analysis guidelines does not evaluate a project's traffic impact to a street segment or intersection. The CEQA traffic analysis is provided as Appendix H of the SCEA, and the conclusions of the traffic analysis are discussed Section 17 of the Draft SCEA, *Transportation and Traffic*. The Department of Transportation also reviewed the proposed modification of the southern driveway along Kinneloa Avenue and determined that it does not result in any revisions to Section 17 or Appendix H of the SCEA. The proposed driveway modification would not cause a significant impact to street segments or intersections.

Commissioner Williams: Comment 5

Commissioner Williams requested more information for understanding the process of updating City TOD parking requirements, stating that there should not be different requirements for different parts of the City.

Response

City TOD parking requirements are not specific to the proposed project. The TOD section of the Zoning Code was approved by the City Council in Text Amendments to the City's Zoning Code which may be initiated by the Planning Commission, City Council and the City Manager.

Commissioner Williams: Comment 6

Commissioner Williams stated that once the City has a Climate Action Plan, the City should make sure that the project developer submits plans demonstrating compliance with AB 32 goals. She further stated that this could be something addressed later.

Response

The Climate Action Plan was adopted on March 5, 2018. All development projects analyzed through an EIR, ND, MND, SCEA, or Class 32 exemption whose analysis was not complete as of March 5, 2018 are subject to Climate Action Plan requirements. Although the project is not required to comply with the Climate Action Plan (CAP), the SCEA included a Greenhouse Gas Emissions (GHG) analysis that concluded that the project would be consistent with the AB 32 statewide target of 1990 emission levels by 2020. Moreover, the project is consistent with the City's CAP pursuant to Option B "GHG Efficiency" of the CAP Consistency Checklist. As shown in Table 14 of the SCEA, the project is estimated to generate 2.2 MT of CO₂e per service person per year, which is below the CAP's efficiency threshold of 4.56 MT of CO₂e per service person per year for projects with a first operation year of 2021-2025.

Commenter: Michael Williamson, District 7 Commissioner

Commissioner Williamson: Comment 1

Commissioner Williamson stated that his concerns are regarding traffic and parking issues with the proposed project, especially with Transportation Demand Management (TDM) program requirements. Commissioner Williamson requested to clarify that the purpose of the meeting was only to discuss the information currently provided for the proposed project and that the Planning Commission would be able to make suggestions for the project, such as reduced parking, during later meetings specifically for the project description.

Response

The City's Department of Transportation (DOT) developed TDM programs for businesses in the City and monitors their implementation. The anticipated 23 percent reduction in vehicle traffic from the proposed project would be achieved through implementing the TDM program, which includes strategies to reduce vehicle use such as providing unbundled resident parking, providing discounted transit passes, and improving local transit facilities. These strategies are included as part of the menu of potential traffic mitigation measures included in SCAG's RTP/SCS EIR mitigation measure

TRA-1(b). Therefore, the project-specific Mitigation Measure TRA-1 would implement the relevant portions SCAG's mitigation measure. See Appendix B of the Draft SCEA, which included discussion and analysis of applicable mitigation measures. The Planning Commission will be able to make additional suggestions for the proposed project when making its recommendation to the City Council.

Commissioner Williamson: Comment 2

Commissioner Williamson requested more data on parking utilization for other newly developed projects and more background on transit-oriented development (TOD) requirements and what options can be traded or implemented to reduce parking for the proposed project.

Response

Mitigation Measure TRA-1 and SCAG RTP/SCS Mitigation Measure TRA-1(b) include several options for encouraging reduced parking for the proposed project. The requirements of Mitigation Measure TRA-1 include use of unbundled parking, providing discounted Metro passes to encourage transit use, and improving local bus facilities to enhance accessibility. Other options provided in SCAG RTP/SCS Mitigation Measure TRA-1(b) include, but are not limited to, providing vanpools for residents and employees, providing bicycle parking and locker facilities, use of subsidized transit passes. Implementation of Mitigation Measure TRA-1 would reduce vehicle trips and thereby reduce on-site parking demand.

Commissioner Williamson: Comment 4

Commissioner Williamson stated a concern about the dwelling unit types included in the proposed project, specifically noting that the City generally does not need more studio units but does need more two- and three-bedroom units.

Response

This concern is noted. The Draft SCEA analyzes the project proposed by the applicant, but City decision makers may consider changes to the project as part of their discretionary review.

Commenter: Donald Nanney, District 4 Commissioner

Commissioner Nanney: Comment 1

Commissioner Nanney stated that one of the slides presented by the project architect showed that a pedestrian avenue to access the Sierra Madre Villa Gold Line station appeared to cut through the property of the existing Kaiser medical building and asked if the project applicant would have rights to cut through the adjacent property.

Response

The applicant is not proposing crossing through the medical property. Pedestrians would be able to access the Sierra Madre Villa Station by traveling east along the public sidewalk at the project frontage past the Kaiser Permanente medical building, crossing to the east side of the Sierra Madre

Villa Avenue/East Foothill Boulevard intersection, and then going south along Sierra Madre Villa Avenue to the station adjacent to the I-210 freeway overpass.

Commenter: Patricia Keane, District 2 Commissioner

Commissioner Keane: Comment 1

Commissioner Keane asked the location of the closest signalized intersection for crossing Foothill Boulevard in the north-south direction after project completion.

Response

The project would extend Santa Paula Avenue through the project site and the applicant would construct a signalized intersection with pedestrian crosswalks to facilitate the street extension.

Commissioner Keane: Comment 2

Commissioner Keane asked to clarify whether the signalized intersection would be for pedestrians only.

Response

The signalized intersection would only allow pedestrians to cross Foothill Boulevard from Santa Paula Avenue to the project site. Vehicle traffic coming south from Santa Paula would only be able to go left or right from the intersection, but not straight through into the project site.

Commissioner Keane: Comment 3

Commissioner Keane asked to clarify how vehicle through-movements to the project site would be prevented from Santa Paula Avenue.

Response

The project design includes an island in the middle of Foothill Boulevard that would prevent vehicles from traveling in the north-south direction from Santa Paula Avenue.

Commissioner Keane: Comment 4

Commissioner Keane commented that if the City is planning to increase density with development projects, development should be focused around transit stops while also considering potential impacts to the surrounding community, such as potential traffic impacts. Commissioner Keane asked to clarify how the SCEA considers potential cumulative impacts from other projects.

Response

The proposed project would be located adjacent to a transit stop and the Draft SCEA examines potential impacts of the project upon the surrounding community. A cumulative project list is provided in Appendix A of the SCEA. The SCEA relies on the EIR for the City's General Plan, which analyzes potential cumulative impacts. Furthermore, the City's travel demand model includes the land use alternatives for each City parcel in the General Plan update.

Commissioner Keane: Comment 5

Commissioner Keane stated that the project should include additional suggestions for other ways to encourage people not to use their cars.

Response

Mitigation Measure TRA-1 and SCAG RTP/SCS Mitigation Measure TRA-1(b) include several options for encouraging reduced vehicle use by future project occupants. The requirements in Mitigation Measure TRA-1 include use of unbundled parking, providing discounted Metro passes to encourage transit use, and improving local bus facilities to enhance accessibility. Options provided in SCAG RTP/SCS Mitigation Measure TRA-1(b) include, but are not limited to, providing vanpools for residents and employees, providing bicycle parking and locker facilities, use of subsidized transit passes. Implementation of any of these options would help reduce resident vehicle use. City decision makers may consider additional conditions as part of their discretionary review of the project.

Commissioner Keane: Comment 5

Commissioner Keane stated that the goal for the area is to encourage a transition to pedestrian-friendly uses within a TOD area and that site permeability and connectivity for the proposed project needs to be explored. Commissioner Keane further noted that the project currently only includes semi-public areas and stated that because the general area around the project site is going to continue to grow, the proposed project needs to include opportunities for more public access to the site.

Response

This comment is noted. Publicly accessible areas within the project site would be located along the entire northern street frontage where retail uses would be located, in the center of the site lining the extension of Santa Paula Avenue, and along the public pedestrian promenade and pathway in the northwestern portion of the site. Decision-makers may consider requirements for additional provision of publicly accessible areas as part of their discretionary review.

Commenter: Violet Coker, Carpenters/Contractors Cooperation Committee (C/CCC)

Violet Coker: Comment 1

Ms. Coker stated that the C/CCC would be monitoring the project closely because the project developer was currently using a subcontractor on another project in the City of Anaheim who is the subject of a current lawsuit for wage theft.

Response

This comment is noted. However, this is not a comment on the adequacy of the Draft SCEA and raises no environmental issues specific to the proposed project.

Commenter: Dan Austin, Owners of Hastings Village Shopping Center (3333 East Foothill Boulevard) and Hastings Ranch Shopping Center (3699 East Foothill Boulevard)

Dan Austin: Comment 1

Mr. Austin expressed support for the proposed project, particularly the quantity of housing units because of new customer potential.

Response

This support is noted.

Commenter: Cathy V., Community Member

Cathy V.: Comment 1

Ms. V. requested that the City staff redo the traffic analysis, stating that the analysis should include monitoring at the Foothill Boulevard/Sierra Madre Boulevard intersection because the City has plans to reduce Orange Grove Boulevard to one lane, which would significantly impact traffic on Foothill Boulevard.

Response

The CEQA thresholds for traffic analysis are Vehicle Trips per capita and Vehicle Miles Traveled per capita. The City's CEQA thresholds do not include evaluation of vehicular performance at individual intersections and the Foothill Boulevard/Sierra Madre Boulevard intersection is not a Los Angeles County Congestion Management Plan (CMP) intersection. The traffic analysis is provided as Appendix H of the SCEA, and the conclusions of the traffic analysis are discussed Section 17 of the Draft SCEA, *Transportation and Traffic*.

Commenter: Laura Ellersieck, Community Member

Laura Ellersieck: Comment 1

Ms. Ellersieck noted that her comments concerned traffic impacts to Foothill Boulevard and stated that the project driveway on Kinneloa Avenue should not be exit-only but, rather, should be maximized to keep traffic off of Foothill Boulevard to the extent possible.

Response

As discussed in Section 17, *Transportation and Traffic*, vehicular access to the project site is proposed along a total of four driveways: two driveways along Kinneloa Avenue south of Foothill Boulevard and two driveways on Foothill Boulevard. Both driveways proposed on Kinneloa Avenue are now proposed to facilitate both ingress and egress as well as have queuing space to accommodate three car lengths.

Laura Ellersieck: Comment 2

Ms. Ellersieck stated a concern about potential traffic impacts during project construction and suggested adding a condition to establish a liaison that community members could contact for complaints regarding construction activities or incidents, such as leftover dirt in nearby roadways or excessive dust from construction equipment.

Response

As discussed in Section 3, *Air Quality*, the proposed project would be required to be consistent with SCAG RTP/SCS Mitigation Measure MM-AIR-2(b), which includes requirements for project construction activities. These requirements include implementation of strategies such as dirt stabilization, use of watering trucks, development of a construction traffic plan, and minimizing land disturbance, to prevent potential impacts to local air quality and traffic conditions. Furthermore, the project includes a condition of approval requiring the applicant to provide a contact that community could use to report construction incidents.

Commenter: Sue Mossman, Pasadena Heritage Commission member

Sue Mossman: Comment 1

Ms. Mossman stated support for the cultural resources mitigation plan included in the proposed project, particularly with the testing tower.

Response

This support is noted.

Commenter: Diane Kirby, Co-President of Lower Hastings Ranch Homeowners Association

Diane Kirby: Comment 1

Ms. Kirby stated that she does not believe the Draft SCEA is adequate to protect nearby residents from impacts resulting from prior site contamination, particularly in the well and groundwater.

Response

As discussed in Section 9, *Hazards and Hazardous Materials*, plans for site remediation and additional assessment have been approved by the DTSC and would be implemented by Ninyo & Moore as described in their Remedial Action Workplan (RAW). In addition to the actions provided in the RAW, the DTSC would require the property owner to conduct a Preliminary Groundwater Investigation (PGI) consisting of the installation of four groundwater monitoring wells to test for potential perchlorate contamination. Furthermore, with implementation of Mitigation Measures HAZ-1 through HAZ-4, if groundwater contamination is discovered, appropriate actions to contain, remove, and transport the waste would be taken in accordance with all applicable local, state, and federal regulations. Overall, implementation of the DTSC-approved remediation actions, along with compliance with all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations and implementation of

Mitigation Measures HAZ-1 through HAZ-4 would reduce potential hazardous impacts to the surrounding community to a less than significant level.

Diane Kirby: Comment 2

Ms. Kirby stated that she had contacted DTSC several times regarding her concerns about prior contamination of the project site, but did not receive any response.

Response

This comment is noted, but is not a comment on the adequacy of the Draft SCEA. DTSC will oversee the remediation program for the project site.

Diane Kirby: Comment 3

Ms. Kirby stated concerns about potential health risks from placing residents next to a freeway and suggested that the developer should be required to work with Caltrans to install sound walls and plantings on both sides of the freeway. She further stated that the City should not allow any residential development along the freeway without these mitigation measures.

Response

The comment is related to the impact of the environment on the project, rather than the impact of the project on the environment. In *California Building Industry Association v. Bay Area Air Quality Management District* the Supreme Court determined that CEQA generally does not require an analysis of how existing environmental conditions will impact a project's future users. As a result, this comment does not apply to the SCEA.

Outside of CEQA, a Health Risk Assessment (HRA) was prepared as a part of the City's review of the project. As discussed in the HRA, although proximity of the site to the I-210 Freeway would expose sensitive receptors to potentially significant health risks from vehicle toxic air contaminant emissions, implementation of recommended strategies would remove at least 90 percent of potential emissions and reduce overall health risks to below State thresholds. The recommended strategies included installation of forced air mechanical ventilation systems with filter screens with a minimum MERV 13 rating that would remove airborne particulate matter, including portable air filters in each unit, providing future residents with a brochure describing the need to maintain the filter screens for the air ventilation system, and weatherproofing of windows and doors.

Diane Kirby: Comment 4

Ms. Kirby stated that future lessees should be given information and/or notification about prior site contamination prior to occupancy.

Response

This suggestion is noted and will be considered by City decision makers as they review the project. Occupancy permit for the project would not be issued until on-site contamination has been remediated to meet DTSC standards.

Diane Kirby: Comment 5

Ms. Kirby stated that she did not see analysis about increased need for police or paramedics resultant from the increased density facilitated by the proposed project.

Response

As discussed in Section 15, *Public Services*, future residents generated from development of the proposed project would be adequately served by existing fire and police protection facilities and no expanded facilities would be needed. Further, as discussed in Section 17, *Transportation and Traffic*, item e, the proposed project would not result in inadequate emergency access for police or fire protection services.

Commenter: Laura Rodriguez, Community Member

Laura Rodriguez: Comment 1

Ms. Rodriguez stated that her main concern regards the hazards analysis of the SCEA, which mentions the possibility of lingering hazards concerns involving groundwater contamination. Ms. Rodriguez further stated that the SCEA conveys that potential groundwater contamination impacts would be addressed in the future. Ms. Rodriguez stated that this is unacceptable and that the public needs to see the groundwater remediation plans referenced in the report.

Response

See the response to Diane Kirby Comment 1. In addition, details regarding groundwater remediation activities are provided in Mitigation Measures HAZ-1 through HAZ-4 on page 126 of the Draft SCEA in Section 9, *Hazards and Hazardous Materials*. Overall, the Mitigation Measures state that if groundwater contamination is detected, the contaminated soil and water would be excavated, stored, transported off-site, and disposed. Further, remediation activities would be conducted in compliance with all applicable local, state, and federal regulations.

Laura Rodriguez: Comment 2

Ms. Rodriguez stated a concern about potential traffic impacts on Foothill Boulevard as traffic is already heavy all day in this area and becomes gridlocked at the Sierra Madre Villa Avenue/Foothill Boulevard intersection. She stated that the report only includes a few solutions for transportation impacts, such as discounted Metro EZ passes for five years, and does not provide analysis of what would happen after the five-year time period.

Response

See the response to Cathy V. Comment 1. As discussed in Section 17, *Transportation and Traffic*, the Pasadena DOT determined that implementation of strategies under Mitigation Measure TRA-1, which include provision of discounted Metro EZ passes for five years, would reduce potential traffic impacts to a less than significant level. Mitigation Measure TRA-1 also includes provisions for Pasadena DOT to conduct an annual TDM Survey for five years after project completion. Per CAPCOA, "The most effective commute trip reduction measures combine incentives, disincentives, and mandatory monitoring, often through a transportation demand management (TDM) ordinance." Incentives such as transit fare subsidies, transit stop improvements, and improving

transit amenities; and disincentives such as unbundling parking passes which requires development tenants to pay for parking, would encourage the use of alternative modes of travel. Subsidized transit passes and parking fees encourage the user to consider public transit to avoid traffic, parking, and car maintenance. It is not expected, at the end of the five year period, that traffic impacts would increase to a potentially significant level. The commuter's travel behavior cannot be expected to change after receiving transit subsidies for five years. Individuals that began using Metro passes at the beginning of the period will likely continue to do so considering the adjacency and frequency of several public transportation options.

Laura Rodriguez: Comment 3

Ms. Rodriguez stated the City needs to rework the traffic mitigation measures currently in the report.

Response

See the response to Cathy V. Comment 1 and Laura Rodriguez Comment 2.

Laura Rodriguez: Comment 4

Ms. Rodriguez stated concerns about traffic impacts from the project driveways and stated that the driveway for the proposed project on Foothill Boulevard should be right-turn only.

Response

See the response to Patricia Keane Comment 3. Installation of an island in the middle of Foothill Boulevard would only allow right-turn capability from the project driveway along Foothill Boulevard at the northeastern corner of the project site.

Laura Rodriguez: Comment 5

Ms. Rodriguez stated confusion about the comment period start and end dates.

Response

The comment period for the proposed project was provided on the Notice of Availability published for the proposed project, which was distributed to community members in the area surrounding the project site. As provided in the Notice of Availability, the comment period began on February 8, 2018 and was scheduled to end on March 9, 2018. Following the meeting, the comment period was ultimately extended to March 26, 2018 at the request of a commenter.

Commenter: Jim Brennan, Community Member

Jim Brennan: Comment 1

Mr. Brennan stated a concern about potential traffic impacts generated by the proposed project, especially the proposed 800 plus parking spaces in combination with traffic impacts generated by other developments proposed for the area, such as the Home Depot site and the Panda Inn site.

Response

See responses to Michael Williamson Comment 1 and Patricia Keane Comment 4.

Jim Brennan: Comment 2

Mr. Brennan asked who would pay for the street dividers.

Response

This comment is noted. However, this is not a comment on the adequacy of the Draft SCEA and raises no environmental issues specific to the proposed project. Economic considerations are beyond the scope of CEQA. While it is not clear what specific improvements are referenced in the comment, the developer would be responsible for improvements related to construction of the project.

Jim Brennan: Comment 3

Mr. Brennan stated a concern about the proposed signalized intersection at Santa Paula Avenue and Foothill Boulevard that having three total stoplights on Foothill Boulevard between Kinneloa Avenue and Sierra Madre Villa Avenue seemed unnecessary.

Response

Signalized intersections currently exist at Kinneloa Avenue at Foothill Boulevard, Santa Paula Avenue at Foothill Boulevard, and Sierra Madre Villa Avenue at Foothill Boulevard. Signal improvements will be coordinated with the proposed CIP Project #75095 Adaptive Traffic Control Network - Phase 2, where advanced signal technology will be deployed along corridors to improve overall system performance and user safety. Work along Foothill Boulevard between Sierra Madre Boulevard and Michillinda Avenue is part of this phase.