



San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan Update Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Report (SEIR)

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Planning Commission Meeting – October 19, 2022

San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan Update Background

- San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan Adopted in 2014
 - Certified Program EIR (State Clearinghouse # 2014042025)
 - Analyzed impacts of 1,706 dwelling units and 243,110 square feet of commercial space
 - Identified 5 significant and unavoidable effects related to Aesthetics (scenic views), Cultural Resources (loss of historic resources), Noise and Vibration (temporary construction effects), Cumulative Traffic at San Pablo Avenue/Cutting Boulevard (reduced level-of-service, or LOS)
 - City Council found the environmental, economic, fiscal, social, and housing benefits of the Plan outweighed its adverse impacts
- Update to the Adopted Plan Initiated in 2019
 - Changes to Plan area, form-based code, etc.
 - Increased development: 2,500 dwelling units, 100,000 square feet of commercial space
 - If adopted, Plan could support 4,206 dwelling units and 343,110 square feet of commercial space in a transit-oriented corridor

San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan Update

Draft SEIR Background

- The Draft SEIR for the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan Update was released on July 19, 2022 (State Clearinghouse #2014042025).
 - Still a Program EIR that evaluates a long-term plan, identifies mitigation for future development projects, and streamlines environmental review of future projects
 - Not a new EIR, but a supplement to the certified 2014 EIR (CEQA Guidelines §15163)
 - Focus on the differences between the approved Plan and the updated Plan pursuant to current CEQA statute and guidelines
- Development of the Draft SEIR included:
 - Notice of Preparation (Nov 2020)
 - City/Agency coordination
 - Public notice, scoping meeting, and comments
 - VMT study (instead of LOS analysis)
 - GHG emissions estimates
 - Research and analyses on 14 environmental issue areas

Draft SEIR Findings and Public Review

- The Draft SEIR (Chapters 4 thru 19):
 - Identifies 14 potentially significant impacts in 6 different resource areas
 - Included 14 mitigation measures to reduce adverse effects
 - Concluded 4 impacts would remain significant and unavoidable, even with mitigation: Aesthetics (scenic views), Cultural Resources (loss of historic resources), Noise and Vibration (temporary construction effects)
 - Only one new supplemental impact identified (tribal cultural resources)
- Draft SEIR Public Review Occurred July 19 to September 2, 2022 (45 days)
 - Presented to Environmental Quality Committee
 - Presented to Planning Commission, and Design Review Board (public comments received)
 - 8 written comment letters received
 - 6 letters from individuals and organizations
 - 2 agency letters (Department of Toxic Substances Control and East Bay Municipal Utility District)
 - 73 individual comments

Summary of Draft SEIR Public Comments

- Department of Toxic Substances Control
 - General concerns regarding release of hazardous materials during construction and information on when to request DTSC regulatory concurrence
- East Bay Municipal Utility District
 - General concerns regarding installation of pipelines in contaminated soil and cumulative impacts, information on requirements for water supply assessments, requirements for water service connections, future recycled water service opportunities, and water conservation opportunities
- Organizations (Environmental Quality Committee)
 - Requests and concerns regarding Draft SEIR greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions thresholds, GHG analysis methodology, and lack of mitigation for reducing GHG emissions, such as natural gas prohibitions/all-electric construction, enhanced EV-readiness
- Individuals
 - Requests and concerns regarding Draft SEIR GHG thresholds, analysis, and mitigation

San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan Update Final SEIR

- The City has reviewed the modifications made to the Updated Plan and the public comments received on the Draft SEIR and prepared a Final SEIR that:
 - Provides responses to comments received on the Draft SEIR (Final SEIR Chapter 2)
 - Makes minor corrections to the Draft SEIR (Final SEIR Chapter 3)
 - Changes to the Plan's form based code did not result in any substantial revisions to the Draft SEIR's impact analyses
- No changes to Draft SEIR impact conclusions or mitigation measures
 - CEQA does not require mitigation for potential effects found not to be significant
- If adopted, the Plan Update will continue to result in 4 significant and unavoidable effects: Aesthetics (scenic views), Cultural Resources (loss of historic resources), and Noise and Vibration (temporary construction effects)

Next Steps

- **Tonight's Action**

- Recommend the City Council adopt an update to the San Pablo Avenue Specific Plan and certify the SEIR for the Plan Update.

- **November 15th City Council Meeting -**

- Potential Actions**

- The City Council will decide whether to adopt the Plan Update, certify the SEIR, and adopt a Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program
- SEIR certification will require the City Council to determine the benefits of the Plan outweigh its significant effects and adopt specific written findings and statements of overriding considerations for each significant and unavoidable impact

Final SEIR Availability

- **City Website**

<https://www.el-cerrito.org/396/San-Pablo-Avenue-Specific-Plan>

- **Hardcopy Locations**

El Cerrito City Hall

10890 San Pablo Avenue

El Cerrito, CA 94530

Monday to Thursday, 9 AM to 1 PM

El Cerrito Library

6510 Stockton Avenue

El Cerrito, CA 94530

Tuesday to Thursday, 10 AM to 8 PM

Friday and Saturday, 9 AM to 5 PM

