



SIERRA
CLUB
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June 1, 2005

Dear Planning Commissioners:

I am writing on behalf of the Sierra Club to express our strong support for transit-oriented development plans like the proposed update to the North San Jose Area Development Policy.

Stopping sprawl and promoting infill development are top Sierra Club priorities. In the Bay Area, 500,000 acres of open space and farmland are at risk of being developed over the next 25 years. Avoiding the loss of agricultural lands, critical wildlife habitat, and other valuable open space requires cities and other public jurisdictions to promote smart growth, infill development, and the efficient and attractive development of lands within our urban growth boundaries.

The proposed North San Jose Area Development Policy Update appears to be just the kind of smart growth plan cities should be promoting. In particular the Sierra Club wishes to support the following features of the proposed update:

- housing and neighborhood-serving businesses near jobs
- intensification of development near transit
- creation of a rich pedestrian environment near transit corridors
- preservation of cultural assets that draw people to more urban living
- promotion of green building

The Sierra Club would like to raise a question regarding the project's traffic impacts that are labeled significant and unavoidable in the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR). Specifically according to the DEIR:

- "The project as it is proposed will have significant unavoidable traffic impacts on 38 intersections. (**Significant Unavoidable Impact**)" *North San Jose Development Policies Update DEIR*, page 174
- "The project as proposed will add significant additional traffic to 72 freeway segments operating at LOS F. (**Significant Unavoidable Impact**)" *North San Jose Development Policies Update DEIR*, page 174

Because San Jose is now proposing a mixed use project, including employee housing, which should require less outside access to this site than single-use industrial development would require and because San Jose is proposing a maximum of pedestrian friendly, transit oriented mobility within the site, we believe the traffic impacts cited may be more dire than necessary. If the city maximizes planning for pedestrian amenities, neighborhood-serving retail and institutions, mass transit improvements and methods of discouraging through traffic to the area traffic impacts should be reduced to a level that would make North San Jose a more desirable place to live and work.

For this reason, the Sierra Club requests the City of San Jose reopen the transportation and other relevant sections of this DEIR to develop a program that results in a pedestrian friendly region supported by mass transit improvements and minimizes access by automobiles.

Then, we urge the City of San Jose to revise its General Plan to reflect the current thinking on transportation for densely developed communities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Melissa Hippard". The signature is written in black ink on a light-colored background.

Melissa Hippard, Director