

CYPRESS POINT PROJECT ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE

1. INTRODUCTION

As defined by the State of California, environmental justice is the equal treatment of people of all races, cultures and incomes when it comes to environmental laws, regulations and policies. (Government Code Section 65040.12(e))

Consistent with State and Coastal Commission policies, this report addresses the subject of environmental justice with respect to the proposed Cypress Point housing development project. The evaluation includes the identification of environmental justice communities in the project vicinity as well as a characterization of existing environmental stressors. The potential effects of the project on both environmental justice communities and environmental burdens are assessed.

2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The proposed project is an affordable housing development on a parcel in the Coastal Zone of San Mateo County within the unincorporated community of Moss Beach.

MidPen proposes to develop a 10.875-acre vacant parcel (Assessors' Parcel Number 037-022-070) located to the northeast of the intersection of Carlos Street and Sierra Street in Moss Beach, an unincorporated community within San Mateo County, California. The total developed area of the site is proposed to total approximately 235,000 square feet. MidPen has clustered the development on the site in order to retain the forested open space on the northern portion of the parcel. To the extent feasible, MidPen would retain the vegetation adjacent to Carlos Street and Sierra Street along the perimeter of the site or add vegetation to shelter the site visually from neighbors. Altogether, MidPen proposes to maintain approximately half of the site as undeveloped.

MidPen proposes the development of 71 affordable housing units on this lot at a density of 6.5 units per acre. Approximately 22 two-story buildings holding 2-4 units each would provide a mixture of 1, 2, and 3-bedroom units, including a combination of two-story townhouses and ADA-accessible¹ 1-story flats. All of the units, except for the manager's apartment, would be affordable to households earning up to 80 percent of the Area Median Income (AMI). It is expected that the Cypress Point project would provide housing for approximately 213 people, including adults and children. Because this project is intended to contribute to improving the jobs-housing balance and jobs-housing fit in coastal San Mateo County, preference for housing would be given to residents and/or workers in the area.

¹ Americans with Disabilities Act.

In addition to the housing units, the development would include an approximately 3,200 square foot community building, that will include the manager's office, a community room, kitchen, computer room, laundry, and maintenance and storage areas. The project plan also includes several outdoor amenities, including landscaping, upper and lower greens, a community garden, barbecue areas, a children's play area, and a public walking trail.

3. REGULATORY SETTING

Beginning in 1999, the State of California enacted a series of bills that incorporated the concepts of environmental justice in state law. As a result of these enactments, the term and concept of "environmental justice" has been defined in the California Government Code. Government Code Section 65040.12 (e) defines "environmental justice" as:

"The fair treatment of people of all races, cultures, and incomes with respect to the development, adoption, implementation and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies."

California Public Resources Code Section 71113 further directs the California Environmental Protection Agency (Cal EPA) to address environmental justice concerns throughout the agency's five departments. An element of this statute directs Cal EPA to "Recommend procedures for collecting, maintaining, analyzing, and coordinating information relating to an environmental justice strategy." In response to this directive, Cal EPA identified the Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (OEHHA) as the lead state agency for the assessment of health risks posed by environmental contaminants.

As identified by Cal EPA and OEHHA, understanding and addressing the cumulative vulnerability of communities most impacted by pollution is critical to minimizing environmental health and justice disparities. The agencies define cumulative vulnerability as "the exposure, public health, or environmental effects from the combined emissions and discharges, in a geographic area, including environmental pollution from all sources, whether single or multi-media, routinely, accidentally, or otherwise released accounting for sensitive populations and socio-economic factors. (Cal EPA 2016)

To assess varying levels of vulnerability throughout the state, the OEHHA has developed a screening tool (CalEnviroScreen) that can be used to develop a comprehensive picture of the burdens California communities face from environmental pollutants and their vulnerability to health and economic impacts. The third iteration of this tool (CalEnviroScreen 3.0) was released on January 30, 2017.

The California Coastal Commission has responded to State directives regarding environmental justice by introducing a proposed strategy in February 2017:

The California Coastal Commission's commitment to diversity and environmental justice recognizes that the Coastal Act is an inherently equitable law, designed to protect California's coast and ocean commons for the benefit of all the people. In keeping with that aspirational vision, the Commission as an agency is committed to protecting coastal

resources and providing public coastal access and lower-cost recreation for everyone, regardless of race, ethnicity, socio-economic status or place of residence. The Commission recognizes that our conservation mission is best advanced with the participation and leadership of people from diverse backgrounds, cultures, races, color, religions, national origins, ethnic groups, ages, disability status, sexual orientation, and gender identity. The Commission is committed to full consideration of environmental justice principles as defined in Government Code 65040.12, consistent with Coastal Act policies, during the planning, decision-making, and implementation of all Commission actions, programs, policies and activities...

As applied to the Cypress Point project, the draft Coastal Commission policy focuses on the provision of public coastal access and low-cost coastal recreation for all, and an opportunity for meaningful participation in the decision-making process.

4. METHODS

CalEnviroScreen is a science-based mapping tool that helps identify California communities that are most affected by many sources of pollution, and where people are often especially vulnerable to pollution’s effects. The tool uses environmental, health, and socioeconomic information to produce scores for every census tract² in the state. The scores are mapped so that different communities can be compared. For example, an area with a high score is one that experiences a much higher pollution burden than areas with low scores.

The CalEnviroScreen tool is composed of a suite of 20 statewide indicators of pollution burden and population characteristics associated with increased vulnerability to pollution’s adverse health effects. The indicators fall into four broad categories, as illustrated below.

POLLUTION BURDEN	Exposures	Contact with pollution
	Environmental Effects	Adverse economic conditions caused by pollution
POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS	Sensitive Populations	Populations with biological traits that may magnify the effects of exposure to pollution
	Socioeconomic Factors	Community characteristics that result in increased vulnerability to pollution

² As defined by the federal Department of Commerce, Census Bureau, Census tracts are small, relatively permanent statistical subdivisions of a county, averaging populations of 4,000 persons. To maintain a target population within each tract, the geographic boundaries of census tracts can change over time in response to population change (Census Bureau 2018).

These categories are further divided into measurable indicators, as illustrated below.

Pollution Burden		Population Characteristics
Exposures		Sensitive Populations
Ozone (an air pollutant)	PM _{2.5} (fine dust; an air pollutant)	Asthma
Pesticide Use	Traffic	Cardiovascular disease
Drinking Water Contaminants	Toxic Releases from Facilities	Low-birth weight infants
Environmental Effects		Socioeconomic Factors
Solid Waste sites and facilities		Poverty
Hazardous Waste Cleanup Sites		Unemployment
Groundwater Threats		Educational Attainment
Impaired Water Bodies		Linguistic Isolation
Hazardous Waste generators and facilities		Housing Burdened Low Income Households

CalEnviroScreen ranks communities based on data that are available from state and federal government sources. The model uses a weighted scoring system to derive average pollution burden and population characteristics scores for each census tract throughout the state. Once all characteristics are scored, the model calculates a final CalEnviroScreen score by multiplying the pollution burden and population characteristics components together. The model then compares the score to all other census tracts in the state and assigns a comparative rating presented in the form of a percentile. The lower the percentile, the less polluted and/or less sensitive the area is. Thus, the percentile measures the relative pollution burdens and vulnerabilities in a census tract compared to all others in the state. It is not a measure of health risk.

4.1 CALENIROSCREEN RESULTS

Moss Beach-specific information developed by CalEnviroScreen for each of the 20 indicators is presented in Table 1. In general, residents of the census tract containing Moss Beach are exposed to relatively low levels of air pollutants, toxic air contaminants, traffic, polluted surface waters and groundwater, and facilities that emit or process hazardous chemicals or solid waste. However, Table 1 reveals a relatively high prevalence of drinking water contaminants, pesticide use, and hazardous waste generators and facilities. Residents of the Moss Beach census tract exhibit relatively low incidences of population characteristics that would result in a sensitivity to pollution. As assessed by CalEnviroScreen, residents of the census tract containing Moss Beach are exposed to a cumulative pollution burden less than residents of 86 percent of all census tracts in California.

Table 1 CalEnviro Screen Results for Moss Beach (Census Tract 6081613600)

Category	Indicator	Score	Percentile
Exposures			
Ozone	Mean of summer months (May-October) of the daily maximum 8-hour ozone concentration (ppm), averaged over three years (2012 to 2014).	0.03	7.58
PM _{2.5}	Annual mean concentration of PM _{2.5} (average of quarterly means, µg/m ³), over three years (2012 to 2014).	8.69	30.70
Diesel Emissions	Spatial distribution of gridded diesel PM emissions from on-road and non-road sources for a 2012 summer day in July (kg/day).	2.09	6.40
Drinking Water Contaminants	Drinking water contaminant index for selected contaminants .	707.60	82.65
Pesticide Use	Total pounds of selected active pesticide ingredients (filtered for hazard and volatility) used in production-agriculture per square mile, averaged over three years (2012 to 2014).	544.24	85.84
Toxic Releases from Facilities	Toxicity-weighted concentrations of modeled chemical releases to air from facility emissions and off-site incineration (averaged over 2011 to 2013).	78.43	23.25
Traffic Density	Traffic density – Sum of traffic volumes adjusted by road segment length (vehicle-kilometers per hour) divided by total road length (kilometers) within 150 meters of the census tract boundary (2013).	134.52	2.58
Environmental Effects Indicators			
Cleanup Sites	Sum of weighted sites within each census tract. (Data downloaded December 2016).	6.00	48.25
Groundwater Threats	Sum of weighted scores for sites within each census tract. (Data downloaded December 2016).	5.00	32.03
Hazardous Waste Generators and Facilities	Sum of weighted permitted hazardous waste facilities and hazardous waste generators within each census tract. (Permitted hazardous waste facilities was downloaded December 2016, Hazardous waste data is from 2012-2014).	0.20	60.50
Impaired Water Bodies	Summed number of pollutants across all water bodies designated as impaired within the area (2012).	2.00	29.25

Table 1 CalEnviro Screen Results for Moss Beach (Census Tract 6081613600)

Category	Indicator	Score	Percentile
Solid Waste Sites and Facilities	Sum of weighted solid waste sites and facilities (as of December 2016).	0.00	0.00
Sensitive Population Indicators			
Asthma	Spatially modeled, age-adjusted rate of emergency department (ED) visits for asthma per 10,000 (averaged over 2011-2013).	35.43	34.20
Cardiovascular Disease	Spatially modeled, age-adjusted rate of emergency department (ED) visits for AMI per 10,000 (averaged over 2011-2013).	4.52	8.28
Low Birth Weight Infants	Percent low birth weight, (averaged over 2006-2012).	4.69	43.53
Socioeconomic Factor Indicators			
Educational Attainment	Percent of the population over age 25 with less than a high school education (5-year estimate, 2011-2015).	8.60	34.63
Housing Burdened Low Income Households	Housing Burdened Low Income Households. Percent of households in a census tract that are both low income (making less than 80% of the HUD Area Median Family Income) and severely burdened by housing costs (paying greater than 50% of their income to housing costs). (5-year estimates, 2009-2013).	13.10	26.43
Linguistic Isolation	Percent limited English-speaking households, (2011-2015).	3.10	23.28
Poverty	Percent of the population living below two times the federal poverty level (5-year estimate, 2011-2015).	11.20	8.99
Unemployment	Percent of the population over the age of 16 that is unemployed and eligible for the labor force. Excludes retirees, students, homemakers, institutionalized persons except prisoners, those not looking for work, and military personnel on active duty (5-year estimate, 2011-2015).	2.80	1.98
Pollution Burden Summary Score		4.20	29.40
Population Characteristics Summary Score		2.48	12.40
Overall CES 3.0 Score		10.39	13.99

Source: California OEHHA, CalEnviroScreen 3.0, CES3Results, CES#.0FINAL results; April 2018.

5. DEMOGRAPHIC SETTING

Table 2 compares the general demographic characteristics used to identify sensitive populations in Moss Beach, San Mateo County as a whole, and the state of California, using information provided by the Census Bureau. This analysis uses a number of demographic factors to identify environmental justice communities in an area, including the social characteristics of the population (poverty, low educational attainment, housing burden, linguistic isolation, and unemployment), and over-representation of populations and communities sensitive to pollution or that could suffer undue pollution burdens (children, the elderly, persons of color or of non-European ethnicity).

Table 2 Demographic Characteristics of Moss Beach Compared to San Mateo County and California			
	Population Characteristics		
	Moss Beach^a	San Mateo County	California
Total Population	6,018 persons	754,748 persons	38,654,206 persons
Age	Percent		
<i>Children Under 10</i>	11.4	12.3	13.1
<i>11-64 years</i>	76.7	73.1	74.0
<i>Elderly 65 and Over</i>	11.9	14.6	12.9
Race or Ethnicity	Percent		
<i>Hispanic</i>	20.5	25.1	38.6
<i>White</i>	70.9	40.4	38.4
<i>African American</i>	0.6	2.3	5.6
<i>Native American</i>	0.2	1.5	0.8
<i>Asian American</i>	4.4	26.6	13.7
<i>Other</i>	3.4	4.1	2.9
Income	Median Income, 2016, in Dollars		
<i>Household</i>	\$90,486	\$98,546	\$63,783
Language Spoken at Home^b	Percent		
<i>Speak Only English</i>	41.6	53.5	56.0
<i>Speak a Language Other than English</i>	58.4	46.5	44.0

a Information is for census tract that includes Moss Beach and surrounding areas.

b There is an inconsistency between the Race or Ethnicity data and the Language Spoken at Home data that we are unable to reconcile.

Sources: California OEHA, CalEnviroScreen 3.0, CES3Results, Demographic Profile, April 2018; U.S. Bureau of the Census, American Community Survey, ACS Demographic and Housing Estimates, 2012-2016 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates, San Mateo County and California, April and May 2018.

With respect to the concentration of children and the elderly, the residents of Moss Beach are similar to the percentage of these groups both in San Mateo County and throughout the state. The population of the Moss Beach area is characterized by substantially lower percentages of persons of color or of differing ethnicities than are present in San Mateo County and the state.

Based on this demographic characterization and the results of the population characteristics evaluation of CalEnviroScreen, the census tract including Moss Beach is composed of a significantly smaller percentage of people of color than either the surrounding County of San Mateo or the State of California. The median income of households within both the Moss Beach census tract and San Mateo County is significantly higher than California as a whole. The percentage of persons living in the Moss Beach census tract who speak a language other than English at home is higher than for San Mateo County or California as a whole. However, CalEnviroScreen data indicates that only 23.3 percent of all California households have fewer language isolated households than the Moss Beach census tract.

6. COASTAL ACCESS

The 10.875-acre proposed project site is located approximately 800 feet east of the coast, separated from the Pacific Ocean by Carlos Street, Highway 1, and the grounds of the Montara Water & Sanitary District. The nearest coastal access point is located at the Point Montara Light Station, accessed via 16th Avenue from Highway 1, approximately 0.2 miles northwest of the MidPen project site.

Because the project site is located east of State Route 1, on the opposite side from the coast, project implementation would not affect coastal access for any environmental justice communities or preclude lower cost recreation uses.

7. PUBLIC OUTREACH

During the project's conceptual stage, MidPen Housing conducted voluntary outreach to better understand the community's concerns prior to submitting a pre-application. MidPen held three community open houses in 2016 on March 16, July 11, and August 18. Information about the open houses was widely distributed and publicized in multiple local newspapers. More than 100 community members attended each open house. MidPen recorded all comments, which included translating comments submitted in Spanish, providing responses on a project website and email list, and providing a one-page Spanish summary of all comments on the project website (MidPen 2018). In addition to the community open houses, MidPen created an email address for communications regarding the project, shared project staff's direct contact information, offered additional outreach through small group meetings or one-on-one meetings, and maintained a project website with information available in both English and Spanish.

The County of San Mateo sponsored a public workshop on September 20, 2017 from 6 pm to 8 pm at the El Granada Elementary School in El Granada, California Per Section 6415.4 of the County of San Mateo Zoning Regulations, the purpose of the public workshop was to allow community members and public agency representatives the opportunity to provide project

input prior to the preparation of final development plans. The County of San Mateo and MidPen Housing arranged for a lead facilitator and four co-facilitators/recorders from the Peninsula Conflict Resolution Center, several of whom were able to translate Spanish. The team asked if Spanish translation was needed as attendees entered the room, and the lead facilitator reiterated the availability of Spanish translation during the workshop. Members of the public also had an opportunity to provide public input on the project on September 27, 2017 at a meeting of the Midcoast Community Council (an elected advisory body representation the region where the project is located).

8. ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE RESULTS

With respect to Statewide and Coastal Commission environmental justice standards, in Moss Beach:

- The local census tract is composed of a significantly smaller percent people of color than either San Mateo County or the State of California.
- The local census tract is composed of a significantly larger percentage of persons who speak a language other than English at home than either San Mateo County or the State of California, though this is contradicted by CalEnviroScreen data.
- The household median income in both the local census tract and San Mateo County is significantly higher than the State of California.
- There are no identified sensitive environmental justice communities based on health measures or socioeconomic criteria
- The existing cumulative pollution burden is low (less disproportionately burdened than 86% of the State).
- Convenient and low cost coastal access is available in the vicinity of the project site.

As proposed, the Cypress Point project would support the environmental justice goals of providing access to coastal resources to low-income persons or communities, and would not have any adverse environmental justice effects for the following reasons:

- The Cypress Point project will support environmental justice goals by providing a source of housing, in proximity to coastal resources, for low and moderate income residents
- The Cypress Point project would not add to cumulative environmental burdens or impacts
- For the three indicators of environmental pollution for which the Moss Beach is below the 50th percentile (pesticides, drinking water contaminants, and hazardous waste generators facilities), implementation of the Cypress Point project would not contribute to the generation or release of any of these pollutants. Also, water for the project would be provided by Montara Water and Sanitary District, which provides water for the surrounding communities of Montara and Moss Beach.
- The project was developed through extensive public engagement including the provision of translation services.
- The proposed project would not adversely affect existing coastal access in the vicinity, and would provide low and moderate income project residents with access to low or no cost coastal recreation.

9. REFERENCES

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