

SAN MATEO COUNTY
ENERGY EFFICIENCY CLIMATE ACTION
PLAN
FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT REPORT
SCH# 2012052039

Prepared for:

SAN MATEO COUNTY
555 COUNTY CENTER, FIRST FLOOR
REDWOOD CITY, CA 94063-1665

Prepared by:

PMC[®]



2729 PROSPECT PARK DRIVE, SUITE 220
RANCHO CORDOVA, CA 95670

APRIL 2013

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

This document contains public comments received on the Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR) for the proposed San Mateo County Energy Efficiency Climate Action Plan (EECAP; proposed project). The Draft EIR was circulated for public review from February 21, 2013, to April 8, 2013. A public hearing was held on the Draft EIR for this project on March 27, 2013. This Final EIR includes written responses to environmental issues raised in comments on the Draft EIR and also includes responses that clarify, correct, or amplify text in the Draft EIR, as appropriate. Also included are text changes made at the initiative of the lead agency (County of San Mateo). These changes do not alter the conclusions of the Draft EIR. This document has been prepared in accordance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA; Public Resources Code Sections 21000–21177).

In accordance with CEQA regulations, the County released a Notice of Preparation (NOP) for public review on May 10, 2012. The County distributed the NOP to responsible agencies, interested parties and organizations, as well as to private organizations and individuals that have stated an interest in the project. The purpose of the NOP was to provide notification that an EIR for the project was being prepared and to solicit guidance on the scope and content of the document. At the close of the public review period (June 19, 2012), no comment letters had been received by the County. The County conducted a scoping session on Tuesday, June 12, 2012. No agency representatives or members of the public attended the scoping session.

1.2 PROJECT UNDER REVIEW

The project consists of the adoption of the EECAP and proposed adoption of recommendations of amendments to the General Plan and Subdivision, Building, and Zoning Regulations. The County of San Mateo has a long-standing commitment to implementing environmental programs and proactively working to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. The EECAP builds on this early leadership and demonstrates the County's continued commitment to reducing GHG emissions. The EECAP is intended to streamline future environmental review of projects within the unincorporated county by following the CEQA Guidelines and meeting the Bay Area Air Quality Management District's (BAAQMD's) expectations for a Qualified GHG Reduction Strategy.

The EECAP will act as an implementation tool to identify programs, policies, and actions to reduce GHG emissions. The reduction measures described in the EECAP are consistent with the goals, policies, and programs contained in the General Plan.

A number of regulatory documents intended to address the environmental effects of climate change through reductions in GHG emissions have guided the creation of the EECAP. The EECAP was prepared to be consistent with all of the GHG regulatory provisions. For a complete description of the project, see Section 2.0, Project Description, of the Draft EIR.

1.3 TYPE OF DOCUMENT

This document is a program-level EIR and, in certain instances, may function as a first-tier EIR for later projects based on the specific project. It is assumed, however, that subsequent projects will still require additional environmental review. The County will review each application on a project-by-project basis and, based on the details and specifics of the project, will determine the appropriate environmental review.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The EIR is an informational document intended to disclose to decision-makers and the public the environmental consequences of approving and implementing the proposed project. The preparation of the Final EIR focuses on the responses to significant environmental issues raised in comments on the Draft EIR. CEQA Guidelines Section 15132 specifies the following:

The Final EIR shall consist of:

- a) The Draft EIR or revision of the draft.
- b) Comments and recommendations received on the Draft EIR, either verbatim or in summary.
- c) A list of persons, organizations, and public agencies commenting on the Draft EIR.
- d) The responses of the lead agency to significant environmental points raised in the review and consultation process.
- e) Any other information added by the lead agency.

This document contains the list of agencies and persons commenting, comments received, and responses to the significant environmental points raised in the comments and text changes made at the initiative of the lead agency. These changes do not alter the conclusions of the Draft EIR. The Draft EIR is hereby incorporated by reference.

The County of San Mateo, as the lead agency, must certify that the EIR, which includes both the Draft EIR and the Final EIR, adequately discloses the environmental effects of the project and has been completed in conformance with CEQA and that the decision-making bodies independently reviewed and considered the information contained in the EIR prior to taking action on the project (CEQA Guidelines Section 15090). Adoption of the recommended amendments to the General Plan and the EECAP does not require action by any other agencies.

1.4 ORGANIZATION OF THIS DOCUMENT

For this Final EIR, comments and responses are grouped by comment letter. As the subject matter of one topic may overlap between letters, the reader must occasionally refer to one or more responses to review all the information on a given subject. To assist the reader, cross-references are provided. The comments and responses that make up the Final EIR, in conjunction with the Draft EIR, as amended by the text changes, constitute the EIR that will be considered for certification by the County of San Mateo.

The Final EIR is organized as follows:

Section 1 – Introduction: This section includes a summary of the project description and the process and requirements of a Final EIR.

Section 2 – Errata: This section lists the text changes to the Draft EIR.

Section 3 – Comments and Responses: This section contains a list of all of the agencies or persons who submitted comments on the Draft EIR during the public review period. It also contains the comment letters received on the Draft EIR and a response to each comment. Responses are provided after the letter in the order in which the comments appear. Where appropriate,

responses are cross-referenced between letters. The responses following each comment letter are intended to supplement, clarify, or amend information provided in the Draft EIR or refer the commenter to the appropriate place in the document where the requested information can be found. Those comments not directly related to environmental issues may be discussed or noted for the record.

1.5 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION AND REVIEW PROCESS

The County of San Mateo notified all responsible and trustee agencies and interested groups, organizations, and individuals that the Draft EIR on the proposed project was available for review. The following list of actions took place during the preparation, distribution, and review of the Draft EIR:

NOTICE OF PREPARATION

In accordance with Section 15082 of the CEQA Guidelines, the County prepared a Notice of Preparation of an EIR for the project on May 10, 2012. This notice was circulated to the public, local, state, and federal agencies, and other interested parties to solicit comments on the project. The County held a scoping meeting on Tuesday, June 12, 2012.

DRAFT EIR PUBLIC NOTICE/PUBLIC REVIEW

The Draft EIR was circulated for public review and comment for a period of 45 days from February 21, 2013, to April 8, 2013. A public hearing was held on the Draft EIR for this project on March 27, 2013.

Copies of the Draft EIR were available for review at:

- County of San Mateo, Planning and Building Department, 455 County Center, 2nd Floor, Redwood City, CA 94063
- County website: <http://www.co.sanmateo.ca.us/planning/rechargesmc/index.html>

2.0 ERRATA

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents minor corrections and revisions made to the Draft EIR initiated by the public, the lead agency, and/or consultants based on their ongoing review. Revisions herein do not result in new significant environmental impacts, do not constitute significant new information, and do not alter the conclusions of the environmental analysis. New text is indicated in underline, and text to be deleted is reflected by a strikethrough, unless otherwise noted in the introduction preceding the text change. Text changes are presented in the page order in which they appear in the Draft EIR.

2.2 CHANGES AND EDITS TO THE DRAFT EIR

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The text in the fourth paragraph on page 1.0-1 has been revised as follows:

The Notice of Preparation (NOP) was submitted to the State Clearinghouse for public review on ~~Friday, May 12~~ Thursday May 10, 2012.

2.0 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

No changes were made to this section.

3.0 ENVIRONMENTAL SETTING AND ANALYSIS

No changes were made to this section.

3.1 AESTHETICS

No changes were made to this section.

3.2 AIR QUALITY

No changes were made to this section.

3.3 BIOLOGICAL RESOURCES

No changes were made to this section.

3.4 CULTURAL RESOURCES

No changes were made to this section.

3.5 GREENHOUSE GASES AND CLIMATE CHANGE

The text in the last row in Table 3.5-3 on page 3.5-5 has been revised as follows:

~~These estimates anticipate the sea level in the Bay Area will rise 16 inches by mid-century and 55 inches by the end of the century.~~

2.0 ERRATA

4.0 PROJECT ALTERNATIVES

No changes were made to this section.

5.0 OTHER CEQA CONSIDERATIONS

No changes were made to this section.

6.0 REPORT PREPARERS

No changes were made to this section.

3.0 COMMENTS AND RESPONSES

3.1 LIST OF COMMENTERS

The following individuals and representatives of organizations and agencies submitted comments on the Draft EIR:

Letter	Individual or Signatory	Affiliation	Date
A	Hilda Lafebre	SamTrans	April 8, 2013
B	Hilda Lafebre	Caltrain	April 8, 2013

3.2 COMMENTS AND RESPONSES

3.2.1 REQUIREMENTS FOR RESPONDING TO COMMENTS ON A DRAFT EIR

CEQA Guidelines Section 15088 requires the lead agency to evaluate all comments on environmental issues received on the Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR; DEIR) and prepare a written response. The written response must address the significant environmental issue raised and must provide a detailed response, especially when specific comments or suggestions (e.g., additional mitigation measures) are not accepted. In addition, the written response must be a good faith and reasoned analysis. However, lead agencies need only to respond to significant environmental issues associated with the project and do not need to provide all the information requested by comment, as long as a good faith effort at full disclosure is made in the EIR (CEQA Guidelines Section 15204).

CEQA Guidelines Section 15204 recommends that commenters provide detailed comments that focus on the sufficiency of the Draft EIR in identifying and analyzing the possible impacts on the environment and ways in which the significant effects of the project might be avoided or mitigated. CEQA Guidelines Section 15204 also notes that commenters should provide an explanation and evidence supporting their comments. Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15064, an effect shall not be considered significant in the absence of substantial evidence.

CEQA Guidelines Section 15088 also recommends that where the response to comments results in revisions to the Draft EIR, those revisions be noted as a revision to the Draft EIR or in a separate section of the Final EIR.

3.2.2 COMMENTS RECEIVED AT THE HEARING FOR THE DRAFT EIR

The County of San Mateo held a public hearing on the Draft EIR for the project on March 27, 2013. This public hearing was held as an information item of the San Mateo County Planning Commission and was attended by several members of the public. Although both the public and Commissioners commented on the project, no comments were provided on the Draft EIR.

3.2.3 COMMENT LETTERS AND RESPONSES TO COMMENTS

Written comments on the Draft EIR are reproduced on the following pages, along with responses to those comments. To assist in referencing comments and responses, comment letters are coded with a letter designation and each issue raised in the comment letter is bracketed with a line and assigned a number (e.g., Comment Letter A, comment 1: A-1).



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GENERAL MANAGER/CEO

April 8, 2013

Matt Seubert
Project Planner
San Mateo County Planning and Building Department
455 County Center, 2nd Floor
Redwood City, CA 94063

Re: Draft Environmental Impact Report – Energy Efficiency Climate Action Plan (EECAP)

Dear Mr. Seubert:

The San Mateo County Transit District (SamTrans) is an operator of bus, shuttle and paratransit services through the communities in San Mateo County. SamTrans is pleased to provide the following comments to the Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR) for the San Mateo County Energy Efficiency Climate Action Plan (EECAP).

As providers of public transportation, SamTrans supports the County's proposed strategies to reduce vehicle trips, vehicle miles traveled and traffic congestion and therefore reducing the transportation related emissions and energy consumption. In particular, the strategies to create an impact fee program that funds capital transit improvements and expanding public transit are desirable strategies.

The nature of our operations will assist in implementing the goals and objectives of the EECAP through strategic projects and initiatives such as El Camino Real-Grand Boulevard Initiative, the new SamTrans Service Plan and the Senior Mobility Initiative. These SamTrans programs are examples of our commitment to assist the San Mateo County in meeting its goals of reducing greenhouse gas emissions, energy consumption, fuel combustion and adaptation to climate change locally.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the draft environmental document for the EECAP initiative and look forward for a continuous partnership on these efforts.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Hilda Lafebre".

Hilda Lafebre
Manager, Capital Project & Environmental Planning

Cc: April Chan, Executive Officer-Planning & Development
Douglas Kim, Director of Planning

A-1

SAN MATEO COUNTY TRANSIT DISTRICT
1250 San Carlos Ave. – P.O. Box 3006
San Carlos, CA 94070-1306 (650)508-6200

Letter A – Hilda Lafebre, SamTrans

Response A-1: The comment expresses support for the EECAP strategies to reduce vehicle trips, vehicle miles traveled, and traffic congestion, thereby leading to a reduction in transportation-related emissions and energy consumption. This is not a comment on the adequacy of the EIR, but on the merits of the project. No response is required.



Letter B

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MICHAEL J. SCANLON
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

April 8, 2013

Matt Seubert
Project Planner
San Mateo County Planning and Building Department
455 County Center, 2nd Floor
Redwood City, CA 94063

Re: Draft Environmental Impact Report- San Mateo County Energy Efficiency Climate Action Plan- Comments

Dear Mr. Seubert

The Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board (JPB) is the operator of Caltrain, the commuter rail service that serves communities in San Francisco, San Mateo and Santa Clara counties. The JPB is pleased to provide the following comments to the Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR) for the San Mateo County Energy Efficiency Climate Action Plan (EECAP).

The EECAP serves as the San Mateo County's greenhouse gas reduction strategy and is a tool to identify the County's plan to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and adapt to climate change locally. The JPB supports these efforts and the objectives of the EECAP to reduce energy consumption, reduce fuel combustion through more efficient transportation and land use patterns.

As providers of public transportation through Caltrain's commuter rail, the JPB looks forward to the implementation of proposed strategies to reduce vehicle trips, vehicle miles traveled and traffic congestion and therefore reducing the transportation related emissions.

The nature of our operations will assist the County in meeting the EECAP goals through the implementation of strategic projects and initiatives such as the Caltrain Modernization Program and its Electrification Project which are consistent with the County's and regional objectives of reducing GHG emissions. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this very important initiative and look forward to working together in achieving the EECAP goals and objectives.

Sincerely yours,

Hilda Lafebre, DBIA
Manager, Capital Project & Environmental Planning

Cc: April Chan, Executive Officer-Planning & Development

B-1

PENINSULA CORRIDOR JOINT POWERS BOARD
1250 San Carlos Ave. – P.O. Box 3006
San Carlos, CA 94070-1306 650.508.6269

Letter B – Hilda Lafebre, Caltrain

Response B-1: The comment expresses support for the EECAP strategies to reduce energy consumption and fuel combustion through more efficient transportation and land use patterns. This is not a comment on the adequacy of the EIR, but on the merits of the project. No response is required.