
2. SUMMARY

This EIR chapter includes a summary description of the proposed action (the Bayside Gardens project), a list of associated environmental issues to be resolved, a summary identification of significant impacts and mitigation measures associated with the proposed project, an identification and comparative evaluation of possible alternatives to the proposed project, and a summary of anticipated mitigation implementation procedures.

This summary should not be relied upon for a thorough understanding of the details of the project, its individual impacts, and related mitigation needs. Please refer to chapter 3 for a complete description of the project, chapters 4 through 15 for a complete description of identified impacts and associated mitigation measures, and chapter 17 for an evaluation of alternatives to the project.

2.1 PROPOSED PROJECT

2.1.1 Proposed Development Program

The project applicant, BHV Innisfree Ventures, LLC, representing the property owner, Syufy Enterprises, has proposed the Bayside Gardens project on an approximately 14.13-acre project site located at 557 East Bayshore Road at the northern edge of Redwood City. The proposed project site is located on the San Francisco Bay side of U.S. Highway 101 (Bayshore Freeway) and is currently occupied by the Century Park 12 Theater, a 12-screen, 3,645-seat cinema complex, plus an associated expansive parking area with 901 surface spaces.

The proposed development program calls for a change in the General Plan designation and zoning classification of the project site from commercial to high density residential/planned development, demolition of the existing 12-screen cinema complex, and redevelopment of the site with a high density residential and retail development. The project includes approximately 600 rental apartments and associated recreational facilities (e.g., recreation center, two swimming pools, sports court, and play lawns), plus approximately 8,300 square feet of ground-floor retail floor area fronting on East Bayshore Road. The project would also provide approximately 1,208 on-site parking spaces, including 1,168 structured spaces and 40 surface spaces. The project includes improvements to an existing on-site public trail parallel to an existing, adjacent, off-site segment of the Bay Trail along the south side of the Smith Slough tidal channel. Vehicular, bicycle, and pedestrian access would be provided from East Bayshore Road.

The project would have a residential density of approximately 42.5 dwelling units per gross acre in three residential structures up to 60 feet (4 stories) in height, with the retail component on the ground floor of one of the 4-story structures. Three parking structures up to 55 feet in height (4.5 levels) would connect to each of the three residential structures.

2.1.2 Required Approvals from the City of Redwood City

Implementation of the proposed project would require the following approvals from the City of Redwood City:

- (a) Certification of the final environmental impact report;
- (b) Approval of a General Plan Amendment and Zoning Map Amendment in order to permit residential uses on the project site, and at a density (approximately 42.5 units per gross acre) above the current Redwood City Strategic General Plan maximum allowable residential density of 40 dwelling units per net acre;
- (c) Subdivision map approval;
- (d) Planned Development Permit approval;
- (e) Approval of a parking variance for the number of parking spaces proposed on-site;
- (f) Design Review (Architectural) Permit approval;
- (g) Improvement plan approval;
- (h) Grading permit approval;
- (i) Building permit approval; and
- (j) Various other approvals including water hook-up permit (including water supply assessment adoption) and sewer hook-up permit.

2.1.3 Other Required Approvals and Consultations

The project is also expected to require approvals from the following trustee and responsible agencies:

- (a) City/County Association of Governments of San Mateo County (C/CAG) approvals both in its designated role as the County's Congestion Management Agency and as the County's Airport Land Use Commission;
- (b) San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC) approval; and

- (c) Regional Water Quality Control Board approval (water quality certification).

Other public agencies with more limited project review or consultation roles (e.g., if improvements are needed to the project site's drainage outfall at Smith Slough) might include the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and/or State Department of Fish and Game.

2.2 ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

As provided for in CEQA statutes and guidelines, the environmental focus of this EIR is limited to those areas of controversy or issues known to the City (the Lead Agency), including concerns identified as possibly significant by the City in its preliminary review (Initial Study) of the proposed project, and by other interested agencies and individuals in response to the City's Notice of Preparation (NOP).¹ As described in the Introduction to this EIR, these areas of environmental concern include:

- (a) land use,
- (b) visual factors,
- (c) population and housing,
- (d) transportation and circulation,
- (e) biological resources,
- (f) hydrology and water quality,
- (g) infrastructure and public services,
- (h) soils and geology,
- (i) public health and safety,
- (j) noise,
- (k) cultural and historic resources, and
- (l) air quality.

2.3 EIR FINDINGS OVERVIEW

The basic project objectives are to respond to identified market demands in the Redwood City subregion for rental housing and take advantage of the particular freeway proximity, Bayfront view, and recreational advantages presented by the project site.

Key findings and recommendations identified in this EIR are listed below:

- (1) The proposed change in project site land use from commercial to high density residential would be inconsistent with Redwood City Strategic General Plan policies calling for: (a) location of high density residential only where necessary support services and facilities, including transit,

¹The Notice of Preparation and Initial Study are included in appendix 21.1 of this EIR.

can be provided; (b) promotion of higher residential densities "at locations near or within commercial and financial centers, employment centers, and transportation terminals," such as the downtown, downtown periphery, El Camino Real corridor, or Woodside Road corridor; and (c) compatible and harmonious land use relationships (the residential use would be inserted into an existing commercial/industrial area, adjacent to East Bayshore Road auto commercial uses on each side, and adjacent to mini-storage and industrial uses).

(2) Construction of a high-density residential development on the proposed project site would result in incompatibilities with adjacent existing auto retail, mini-storage, and industrial (Alan Steel and Supply) land uses that could be reduced with design refinements (buffering, etc.), but not to less-than-significant levels.

(3) The adverse visual impacts of the proposed project, including its visual inconsistencies with the existing predominately commercial/industrial character of the local East Bayshore Road frontage, and the impacts of the proposed intensive array of four-story residential structures and 4.5-level parking structures on local views from the Bay Trail and Bair Island Wildlife Refuge, could be reduced with various suggested design refinements to less-than-significant levels.

(4) Added project traffic (i.e., the net increase over traffic from the existing 12-screen cinema) would result in significant increases in PM peak hour delay (more than 5 additional seconds) at the Blomquist Street/Maple Street intersection (assuming completion of the Blomquist extension) unless a four-way stop, traffic signal, or roundabout is installed.

(5) Added project-plus-cumulative traffic would result in significant increases in AM peak hour delay (more than 5 seconds) at the Veterans Boulevard/Whipple Avenue intersection, unless a dedicated eastbound right-turn lane (already identified as needed in the *Redwood City Traffic Impact Mitigation Fee Study*) and an additional (second) westbound left-turn lane are added to this intersection.

(6) Extending SamTrans transit service along East Bayshore Road to adequately serve the project (no public bus route currently operates along East Bayshore Road east of Maple Street) may not be economically feasible.

(7) Potential project construction period impacts on sensitive biological resources along and within the adjacent Smith Slough tidal channel would require mitigation. Mitigations are identified in the EIR, including the coordination requirements and mitigation protocols of state and federal agencies with jurisdiction over these resources (BCDC, CDFG, RWQCB, NMFS, and USFWS).

(8) Unless adequate finished grade elevation allowances for sea level rise and on-site settlement are incorporated into the project's final grading plan, future "highest estimated tide" conditions could result in project flooding.

(9) The City does not currently have sufficient water supply to meet identified project and cumulative municipal water service demands. Some combination of new water transfers, water recycling and water conservation measures would be necessary to meet projected demands.

(10) The City's current allocated sewage treatment capacity from the South Bayside System Authority (SBSA) is already being exceeded, and thus is inadequate to serve the project. To serve the project and anticipated cumulative increases in demand, the City would need to purchase additional sewage treatment capacity and may also need to provide additional sewage transmission capacity to the SBSA treatment plant on Radio.

(11) The project would introduce a high density residential use within the planning area of the San Carlos Airport and, although outside the designated Avigation Easement Review Area for the airport, may nevertheless warrant the granting of an Avigation Easement over all or a portion of the site which would mandate buyer/renter awareness and, perhaps, other safety measures.

(12) The EIR identifies and compares the environmental impacts of a range of commercial and residential development alternatives for the project site, including a new state-of-the-art, 20-screen cinema use, a "big box" retail use, an auto retail use, a mixed auto retail/high density residential use, and a reduced intensity (300-unit) residential use. All would result in reduced land use, visual, traffic, infrastructure, public services, noise and air quality impacts in comparison to the proposed project; however, none of the evaluated commercial choices would meet most of the applicant's basic project objectives.

(13) The EIR authors have been unable to identify a specific alternative site in the downtown, downtown periphery, El Camino Real corridor, Woodside Road corridor, or elsewhere in Redwood City that would feasibly meet most of the basic project objectives--i.e., construction of a consolidated, high-density residential project of this general scale with good interregional access and high site amenity (e.g., views, recreational benefits, etc.).

2.4 SUMMARY OF IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

Each significant impact and associated mitigation measure identified in this EIR is summarized in the following Table 2.1, SUMMARY OF IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES. The summary table has been organized to correspond with the more detailed impact and mitigation discussions in chapters 4 through 15 of this EIR. The table is arranged in five columns: (1) impacts, (2) potential significance without mitigation, (3) mitigation measures, (4) mitigation responsibility, and (5) potential significance with mitigation. In those instances where more than one measure may be required to mitigate an identified impact to a less-than-significant level, a series of mitigation measures is listed.

For a complete description of the environmental setting, impacts, and mitigation measures associated with each particular topic of concern, please refer to chapters 4 through 15 of this EIR.

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2.5 SUMMARY OF ALTERNATIVES

2.5.1 Identified Alternatives

The California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) requires that EIRs contain an analysis of alternatives to the proposed project that would reduce or eliminate environmental impacts. Chapter 17 of this EIR contains the analysis of alternatives to the proposed project. The major characteristics of the alternatives addressed are described below:

- **Alternative 1: No Project (Current Site Status).** As required by the CEQA Guidelines (section 15126.6[e][1]), this alternative assumes that the applicant-proposed conversion of the site from commercial to residential use would not occur and the project site would remain in its present condition with the existing 12-screen cinema continuing to operate.
- **Alternative 2: Current General Plan/Zoning Buildout Scenario: All Retail (“Big Box”).** Alternative 2 assumes redevelopment of the General Plan designated "commercial" site with a one-story “big box” retail store. In order to accommodate City parking requirements on-site (i.e., one space per 200 square feet of retail floor area) and retain the same BCDC easement/trail provisions as the proposed project, a one-story retail store of up to 160,000 square feet is assumed.
- **Alternative 3: Current General Plan/Zoning Buildout Scenario: 20-Screen Cinema.** This alternative assumes redevelopment of the General Plan designated "commercial" site with a new, state-of-the-art 20-screen cinema complex with 4,356 seats, replacing the existing 12-screen, 3,645-seat cinema complex. The alternative would also retain the same BCDC easement/trail easement provisions as the proposed project.
- **Alternative 4: Current General Plan/Zoning Buildout Scenario: Auto Dealership.** This alternative assumes redevelopment of the General Plan designated "commercial" site with an auto dealership, with approximately 74,305 square feet of auto showroom/office space, 30,960 square feet of auto service station space, parking for approximately 1,110 cars (361 spaces for employees and visitors, and 749 spaces for vehicle inventory) and the same BCDC easement provisions as the proposed project.
- **Alternative 5: Mixed Use: Auto Dealership and Residential.** This alternative assumes that the project site would be developed as a mixed use project, with both an auto dealership and an apartment complex. The northern approximately 60 percent of the site (8.65 acres) near the Bay would be developed with a four-story apartment complex with up to 292 units, a residents’ recreational center and pool, and 4.5-level parking structure for 555 cars. The southern approximately 40 percent of the site (5.48 acres) along East Bayshore Road would be developed with an auto dealership with a 28,800-square-foot auto showroom/office, 12,000-square-foot auto service station, parking for 430 cars (140 spaces for employees and visitors, and 290 spaces for vehicle inventory) and the same BCDC easement trail provisions as the proposed project.

- **Alternative 6: Reduced Intensity Multi-Family Residential.** Alternative 6 assumes that the project site would be developed with a predominantly multi-family residential apartment concept similar to the proposed project, but at the lower rather than the higher end of the General Plan described density range for the *Residential High Density* designation--i.e., at 21.25 rather than 42.5 units per acre, which would yield approximately 300 rather than 600 residential apartments, plus similar parking ratio provisions and the same 8,300 square feet of ground-floor retail space and BCDC easement/trail provisions as the proposed project.
- **Alternative 7: Alternative Sites.** The City's General Plan calls for development of high intensity residential development only where the necessary supporting services and facilities, including transit, can be readily provided, and where land use incompatibilities can be minimized. In particular, the General Plan encourages location of high density residential development near or within the City's financial center, employment centers, transportation hubs, and transit corridors. This alternative addresses the question whether there currently is such an alternative location in the City where development of a high density residential project similar to the proposed 600-unit project could feasibly occur, achieving most of the basic project objectives while avoiding or lessening some of the significant environmental effects identified in this EIR.

2.5.2 Conclusions: Environmentally Superior Alternative

The CEQA Guidelines (section 15126[e][2]) stipulate, "If the environmentally superior alternative is the 'no project' alternative, the EIR shall also identify an environmentally superior alternative among the other alternatives." The comparative evaluation in chapter 17 of this EIR indicates that all of the identified alternatives (except "no project") would result in environmental impacts ranging from "less-than-significant" to "significant and unavoidable," and all (except "no project") would require mitigation to reduce potentially significant impacts to less-than-significant levels. Other than the "no project" alternative, **Alternative 3: Current General Plan/Zoning Buildout Scenario: 20-Screen Cinema**, would result in the least adverse combination of environmental impacts and therefore would be the "environmentally superior" alternative. However, Alternative 3 would not attain the basic project objectives of meeting identified demands in the Redwood City subregion for multi-family (apartment) residential units in close proximity to the freeway and with attractive visual and recreational amenities (e.g., a Bayfront location). Of the identified alternatives that do meet most of the basic project objectives, **Alternative 6: Reduced Intensity (300 unit) Multi-Family Residential**, would result in the least adverse combination of environmental impacts and therefore would be the "environmentally superior" alternative. These conclusions are based on the overall reduction in land use compatibility, off-site transportation, infrastructure and public service demand (except water demand), noise, and air emissions impacts associated with these alternatives as compared with the proposed project and other three feasible alternatives.

2.6 MITIGATION IMPLEMENTATION

For those mitigation measures identified in this EIR that are included as conditions of project approval, a mitigation monitoring program would be formulated by the City for use to ensure effective mitigation implementation. Implementation of most of the mitigation measures recommended in this EIR would be subject to effective monitoring through the City's normal General Plan, zoning, subdivision, Planned Development Permit, design review (Architectural Permit), grading, and building permit approval procedures, as well as during associated plan check and field inspection procedures. However, to satisfy CEQA section 21081.6 of the Public Resources Code, a documented record of mitigation implementation will be necessary. Chapter 19 of this EIR includes a suggested Mitigation Monitoring Checklist for City staff use in meeting the requirements of section 21081.6 (i.e., in establishing the "who, what, when, and how" aspects for each mitigation measure from this EIR that is ultimately required).