

Final EIR: General Plan/Sonoma Blvd Specific Plan

STATEMENT OF OVERRIDING CONSIDERATIONS

General. The City is considering approval of the Propel Vallejo General Plan Update and Sonoma Boulevard Specific Plan project, which includes an updated General Plan and the Sonoma Boulevard Specific Plan (“proposed Project”).

Pursuant to CEQA Guidelines Section 15093, the City Council must adopt a Statement of Overriding Considerations for the significant and unavoidable impacts of the project in connection with approval of the project. The City Council believes that many of the unavoidable environmental effects identified in the EIR will be substantially lessened by mitigation measures adopted with the EIR and implemented with future development under the project. Even with mitigation, the City Council recognizes that the implementation of the project carries with it significant and unavoidable environmental effects, as identified in the EIR.

The following significant unavoidable environmental impacts were identified in the EIR.

- 1) Impact AQ-2A: Despite implementation of the proposed General Plan policies, criteria air pollutant emissions associated with the proposed Project would cause a substantial net increase in emissions that exceeds the BAAQMD regional significance thresholds.
- 2) Impact AQ-2B: Despite implementation of the proposed General Plan policies, criteria air pollutant emissions associated with the proposed Project construction activities would generate a substantial net increase in emissions that exceeds the BAAQMD regional significance thresholds.
- 3) Impact AQ-5: Implementation of the proposed Project would cumulatively contribute to air quality impacts in the San Francisco Bay Area Air Basin (SFBAAB).
- 4) Impact GHG-1: Implementation of the proposed Project would directly and indirectly generate greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions.
- 5) Impact GHG-2: Implementation of the proposed Project would conflict with an applicable plan, policy, or regulation for the purpose of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases.
- 6) Impact NOI-3: Implementation of the proposed Project would cause a substantial permanent increase in ambient transportation-related noise levels in the Project Area.
- 7) Impact NOI-7: Implementation of the proposed Project would cause a substantial cumulative increase in ambient transportation-related noise levels in the Project Area.
- 8) Impact TRANS-1 (GP): Implementation of the proposed Project would conflict with an applicable plan, ordinance, or policy establishing measures of effectiveness for the performance of the circulation system, taking into account all modes of transportation, including mass transit, non-motorized travel, and relevant components of the circulation system, including, but not limited to intersections, streets, highways and freeways, pedestrian and bicycle paths, and mass transit.

Overriding Considerations

The City Council has carefully considered each significant unavoidable project impact in reaching its decision to approve the project. Even with mitigation, the City Council recognizes that implementation of the project carries with it unavoidable adverse environmental effects, as identified in the EIR. The City Council specifically finds that, to the extent that the identified significant adverse impacts for the Project have not been reduced to acceptable levels through feasible mitigation or alternatives, there are specific economic, legal, social, technological or other benefits, including region-wide or statewide environmental benefits that outweigh the project's significant unavoidable impacts and support approval of the project. Any one of these benefits as set forth below is sufficient to justify approval of the project. The substantial evidence supporting the various benefits is in the record as a whole.

The following statement identifies the reasons why, in the City's judgment, specific benefits of the Project outweigh the significant and unavoidable effects. The City finds that each of the Project benefits discussed below is a separate and independent basis for these findings. The reasons set forth below are based on the Final EIR and other information in the administrative record.

Economic Benefits

1. The Project updates the existing General Plan to address concerns about and to promote economic prosperity.
2. The Project would promote a vibrant economy by supporting a diversity of business and employment opportunities.
3. The Project provides for new employment-related land uses that are anticipated to accommodate 26,532 new jobs.
4. The Project allows the City greater opportunities to remain a competitive and innovative business destination in the regional development environment, which would support increased property and sales tax revenues.

Environmental Benefits

1. The Project updates the existing General Plan to address concerns about climate change and greenhouse gas emissions.
2. The Project recognizes the importance of linking land use and transportation planning.
3. The Project concentrates growth in existing corridors and nodes, and thereby results in fewer impacts from the construction of new infrastructure, maximizes use of existing impervious surfaces, provides multi-modal transportation opportunities, and reduces vehicle miles traveled, which translates into air quality and greenhouse gas emissions benefits and increases in resources and energy efficiency.
4. The Project concentrates growth at urbanized locations, some with existing uses and, as a result, potential future development would consist largely of either redevelopment of existing buildings and/or sites, selective demolition of existing structures and replacement with new construction, or new infill development adjacent to existing uses, all of which would serve to lessen environmental impacts.

5. The Project includes policies that encourage conservation of water and energy resources in conformance with the City's sustainability goals.
6. The Project includes policies and mitigation measures, enforceable through the MMRP, that protect sensitive habitat areas.
7. The Project is in conformance with the principles of planning sustainable communities by meeting both the present and future housing needs of the City.
8. The Project is consistent with key planning documents, including Plan Bay Area, which is the Bay Area's Regional Transportation Plan (RTP)/Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS), as well as SB 375, the Sustainable Communities and Climate Protection Act.

Social Benefits

1. The Project updates the existing General Plan to address concerns about public health.
2. The Project plans for citywide equity by providing job and housing opportunities to support a greater balance of land uses in the City.
3. The Project would encourage mixed-use development to help improve walkability and quality of life for residents and the region by providing the opportunity for a better jobs/housing balance.
4. The proposed Specific Plan establishes a vision for one of Vallejo's most important north-south streets that serves as an important gateway to Vallejo's historic core and is rich in amenities and appealing places.