



Planning Commission Staff Report

May 14, 2008
Item 6.a.

- SUBJECT:** Review of the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for a Specific Plan Amendment to the Stoneridge Drive Specific Plan for the Staples Ranch Project
- PROPERTY OWNER/
APPLICANT:** Alameda County Surplus Property Authority (ACSPA)
- PURPOSE:** To provide an opportunity for the Commission to: (1) receive background information from staff regarding the DEIR prepared for the Stoneridge Drive Specific Plan Amendment and Staples Ranch project; (2) receive public comments regarding the DEIR; and (3) provide Commission comments regarding the DEIR.
- GENERAL PLAN:** *Alameda County General Plan—Mixed-Use/Business Park*

City of Pleasanton General Plan—Medium Density Residential (2 to 8 dwelling units per gross acre) and High Density Residential (greater than 8 dwelling units per gross acre); Parks and Recreation; and Retail/Highway/Service Commercial, Business and Professional Offices
- SPECIFIC PLAN:** Stoneridge Drive Specific Plan
- ZONING:** 122.5 acres of the project site are located in unincorporated Alameda County and are currently zoned Agriculture by Alameda County. 1.5 acres of the project site are located in the City of Pleasanton and are zoned Planned Unit Development-Medium Density Residential (PUD-MDR). The entire site would be rezoned for Planned Unit Development (PUD), if the proposed project were approved.
- LOCATION:** Located at the southwestern intersection of the I-580 Freeway and El Charro Road (Staples Ranch).
- ATTACHMENTS:** 1. Exhibit A: Draft Environmental Impact Report (previously distributed)

BACKGROUND

In October 1989 the City Council adopted the Stoneridge Drive Specific Plan (SDSP), a specific land use plan for 293 acres located east of the Pleasanton Meadows subdivision and bordered by Trenery Drive on the south, I-580 on the north, and El Charro Road to the east. The City’s 1986 General Plan called for the development of a Specific Plan for the area and designated the area with a mix of low, medium, and high density residential; commercial; parks; and school land uses. The land use designations were intended to be conceptual, with final land uses and densities determined by the SDSP.

Since 1989, all of the SDSP area has been constructed with the exception of the 124 acre Staples Ranch property. Currently the site is designated for service commercial and light industrial uses, retail and service commercial uses, and a 17.2 acre community park. The Alameda County Surplus Property Authority (ACSPA) proposes to amend the 1989 SDSP to revise planned land use designations, development intensities, circulation patterns, and financial obligations. The ACSPA is the owner of the project site, and Hendrick Automotive Group, Continuing Life Communities (CLC), and Fremont Land propose to develop portions of the property. The conceptual site plan for Staples Ranch is shown below in Figure 1.



FIGURE 1
Staples Ranch—Proposed Conceptual Site Plan

Initiatives

Two petitions for citizens' initiatives titled the Open Space, Park, and Green Belt Initiative and the Eastern Gateway Initiative, were sponsored by Pleasanton residents that could have impacted the Staples Ranch development. However, at the November 8, 2007 joint City Council and Planning Commission workshop, the initiative sponsors, the Friends of Pleasanton and a resident group opposing the proposed initiatives, Pleasanton First, presented the City Council and Planning Commission with a joint statement expressing support for moving forward with reviewing project applications and for incorporating the project area into the City of Pleasanton. In addition to expressing support for certain aspects of the projects, the groups also requested that the City initiate a more comprehensive master plan process for the community park site and that the park planning process be an open, transparent process involving the community at large. The Parks and Recreation approved the Master Plan at its meeting of April 10 and City Council review is expected within the next 60 days. At the request of the City, Fremont Land has temporarily suspended addressing matters raised at the November 8 Joint Workshop pending outcome of the park master plan process. A copy of the joint statement is available on the Staples Ranch web site, www.staplesranch.org.

A third initiative is still pending and, depending on the approval process, could have application to CLC's senior continuing care facility proposed on the western portion of the Staples Ranch site. Signatures for this initiative are being verified, with final results to be submitted in May 2008. This third initiative, Save Pleasanton's Hills and Housing Cap, if adopted by voters, clarifies the definition of a "housing unit" and if it takes effect prior to the approval of the project would likely require some of CLC's proposed senior housing units to be included as part of Pleasanton's housing cap of 29,000 units. This initiative would not impact the other development proposals at Staples Ranch.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Alameda County Surplus Property Authority (ACSPA) proposes to amend the 1989 Stoneridge Drive Specific Plan to revise land use designations, circulation improvements, and financial obligations for the Staples Ranch site. The proposed 124 acre Staples Ranch development would include an approximately 37 acre auto mall to accommodate the relocation of the Pleasanton Auto Mall, a 45 acre senior continuing care community with a health center, an 11 acre commercial/retail development, a 17 acre community park, and a 5 acre neighborhood park that includes a storm water detention basin. Access to the auto mall, future commercial development and the community park would be from a new road off El Charro Road, with no through connection to Stoneridge Drive except for emergency vehicles. A new two lane bridge would extend Stoneridge Drive over the Arroyo Mocho and provide access to the proposed senior continuing care community and parks. A detailed project description is provided in the Project Description (Section 2) of the DEIR.

The DEIR also reviews four project alternatives, in addition to the proposed project: 1) a No Project (no build) Alternative; 2) an Existing Specific Plan Alternative; 3) an Ice Center Alternative, in which an ice center is contemplated on the community park; and 4) an Open Space Alternative in which the community park is primarily open space with trails, native landscaping, and similar features. A detailed description of each alternative is provided in the Alternatives (Section 5) of the DEIR.

EIR DESCRIPTION

The principal purpose of the DEIR is to provide a basis for the review of the Stoneridge Drive Specific Plan Amendment by decision makers and the public. The EIR is also intended for use by responsible agencies in considering any actions they must take or permits they must issue for the plans to be implemented.

The DEIR consists of five main chapters:

1. Project summary and introduction of the EIR;
2. Project description;
3. Environmental analysis of the project;
4. Analysis of other CEQA topics, including cumulative and growth inducing impacts; and
5. Description and analysis of alternatives to the project.

The EIR was prepared by consultants and City staff and reviewed by the ACSPA. This process provided the opportunity for the environmental consultants to recommend mitigations and the ACSPA to comment. This approach has allowed for a more interactive exchange of information between staff and the consultants who evaluated the environmental consequences of the plans, and the applicant.

EIR PROCESS

The process for requiring, preparing, and adopting an EIR is outlined in the CEQA Guidelines. It consists of the following primary steps that have either been conducted to date by the City or are scheduled for the future:

1. Determination by the lead agency (City of Pleasanton) that the proposed project could have a significant effect on the environment and thus, requires the preparation of an EIR. (January 17, 2006).
2. Circulation of a Notice of Preparation of an EIR to all pertinent agencies and the general public. The purpose of the Notice is to inform the public that an EIR is going to be prepared and to provide 30 days for interested parties to request what the document address and relevant matters of environmental concern to them. (March 26, 2007 - April 30, 2007).
3. Environmental scoping meeting for members of the public to discuss the potential impacts and the environmental review process with City staff and consultants and to provide comments on environmental matters to be addressed in the DEIR. (April 11, 2007).
4. Preparation of the DEIR by City staff and consultants in accordance with the CEQA guidelines and in response to all comments provided by agencies and other parties to date. (Draft available April 16, 2008).

5. Circulation of the DEIR to agencies and interested members of the public for 45 days. (April 16, 2008-June 4, 2008).
6. Public hearing by the Planning Commission to receive comments from the public and to provide comments of its own on the DEIR. (May 14, 2008).
7. City staff and environmental consultants prepare the written "Response to Comments" document that addresses all written comments received by the City during the 45 day DEIR review period and verbal comments made at the May 14, 2008 Planning Commission public hearing. (May 14, 2008 – June 16, 2008).
8. Public hearing by the Planning Commission to formalize its recommendations to the City Council regarding the certification of the Final EIR (DEIR and Response to Comments documents). (June 25, 2008).
9. Public hearing by the City Council regarding the certification of the Final EIR (FEIR) documents. (August 5, 2008).

The 45 day comment period for agencies and all members of the public to submit written comments on the DEIR extends through June 4, 2008. Responses to all verbal comments provided at the May 14, 2008 Commission meeting and all written comments submitted by June 4, 2007 will be addressed by the EIR consultant and staff in the FEIR which will be reviewed by the Planning Commission and City Council at public hearings.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

The DEIR addresses a wide range of potentially significant environmental impact areas including:

- Aesthetics and Visual Quality
- Air Quality
- Biological Resources
- Hazards and Hazardous Materials
- Hydrology and Water Quality
- Land Use and Agricultural Resources
- Noise
- Population, Employment, and Housing
- Transportation
- Water Supply
- Growth Inducing Impacts
- Cumulative and Other CEQA Impacts
- Impacts in Alternative Scenarios

A brief summary of impacts and mitigations for each of these areas is presented below. A more detailed summary is provided in Table S-2 of the DEIR.

Aesthetics and Visual Quality

The site is currently vacant. As such the proposed land uses within the project area would substantially change the existing visual character from rural open space to urban development. There are no mitigation measures available to mitigate the loss of rural character, short of leaving large portions of the project area undeveloped, which would be incompatible with the project's objectives. Since no mitigation measures are available, this would result in a significant unavoidable impact.

The proposed project would create new sources of light and glare. The mitigation measures require lighting plans from all of the developers and establish lighting criteria. The criteria would require extensive shielding, lower exterior lighting levels in the auto mall vehicle storage areas, and lower lighting levels by existing and proposed dwelling units. The mitigations would require lower light standards (poles) at the auto mall by CLC, lower light standards on roof tops, and all interior lighting to be turned off during non-operational evening hours, with the exception of lighting needed for security reasons.

Air Quality

The development of the project would result in short term air quality emissions as a result of construction activities. The proposed mitigation measures require the project to implement all appropriate dust control measures recommended by the Bay Area Air Quality Management District, such as watering all active construction areas at least twice daily, and sweeping (with water sweepers) all paved access roads, parking areas, and staging areas at construction sites.

The proposed project would result in operational emissions of reactive organic gasses (ROG) and nitrogen oxides (NOx) and respirable particulate matter (PM₁₀) that substantially exceed regional significance thresholds. The exceedances are mostly due to increased motor vehicle travel. ROG and NOx are both by products of internal combustion engine exhaust and from ozone gas when in the presence of sunlight. Particulate matter in urban areas is primarily produced by fuel combustion, motor vehicle travel, and construction activities. A typical mitigation measure to reduce these types of pollution is a transportation system management (TSM) program which reduces employee trips. Low polluting transport vans and busses at CLC would also be encouraged and allowed to count toward meeting the intent of the mitigation measure. Notwithstanding the above, even with the recommended TSM program (or any TSM program), the project will still exceed the thresholds but would have significantly less of an air quality impact than the Existing Specific Plan Alternative, which would have almost doubled the number of vehicle trips and, thus, almost doubled the amount of motor vehicle related pollution.

The proposed project would have the potential to expose future on site residents to substantial Toxic Air Contaminants (TACs) due the project's close proximity to the I-580 freeway. As such, a proposed mitigation measure has been added which requires a health risk assessment for all proposed residential units within 500 feet of the freeway. Recommendations from the health risk assessment could include increasing the distance between residents and the freeway, modification to the location and heights of the air intakes, addition of HEPA air filtration systems, or reducing outdoor use areas, such as patio areas and balconies.

The project would also generate an incremental increase in green house gas emissions associated with traffic increases and space heating would contribute to regional and global increases in green house gas emissions and associated climate change effects. While there are no established thresholds for green house gas emissions, implementation of the State's Title 24 energy regulations, the City's Green Building Ordinance, and the above mentioned flexible TSM measure would help reduce green house gas emissions.

Biological Resources

There are several animals and one plant species known to occur on the site, or which could potentially occur, that are deemed as sensitive or special status species per the California Environmental Quality Act. The animal species are:

- California red legged frog
- California tiger salamander
- Western pond turtle
- California horned lark (bird)
- Loggerhead shrike (bird)
- Northern harrier (bird)
- White tailed kite (bird)

The California tiger salamander, California red legged frog, and western pond turtle could occur in the Arroyo Mocho and its riparian habitat. Recommended mitigation measures include providing construction monitoring, educating construction workers about the possible presence of these animals, limiting construction to dry seasons when the red legged frogs are less likely to be present, and providing fencing during construction. The applicant recently finished a two year survey on the site for the presence of the California tiger salamander. No California tiger salamanders were found; however, the United States Fish and Wildlife Service will need to concur with the negative survey results. Surveys conducted in 2002 resulted in no observance of California red legged frogs. Suitable aquatic habitat for this frog species occurs in the Arroyo Mocho; yet, this area represents low quality habitat for red legged frogs because of the presence of exotic predators such as bullfrogs. Suitable aquatic habitat for the western pond turtle exists in the Arroyo Mocho, yet fencing along the arroyo currently prevents this species from migrating and inhabiting uplands of the Staples Ranch site.

Both the white tailed kite and the northern harrier have been observed on the site. The California horned lark is known to occur north of the I-580. Suitable nesting and foraging habitat for the loggerhead shrike occurs on the site. Recommended mitigation measures specifically related to birds include conducting nesting bird surveys and limiting when grading and construction can occur to minimize nesting impacts.

Recommended mitigation measures also include limiting light spillover into the Arroyo Mocho, and considering wildlife in the design of the proposed parks by providing wildlife habitat including opportunities for cover, food, and water for native and migratory wildlife where appropriate.

Plants

The San Joaquin spearscale occurs on the site and is deemed as sensitive or special status species per the California Environmental Quality Act. San Joaquin spearscale seeds were collected on the site and dispersed in the arroyo as a mitigation measure for the 2003-2004 arroyo realignment project on the Staples Ranch property. While a few smaller populations of spearscale still occur throughout the site, the population count in the arroyo is now over 10,000. A recommended mitigation measure would require fencing around the San Joaquin spearscale in the Arroyo Mocho during construction.

Another recommended mitigation requires a survey of riparian vegetation prior to construction, and replacement, at a 1:1 ratio of any vegetation removed.

Vector Control

There are no special status rodent species on the site. A nearby resident requested implementation of a rodent control mitigation measure during construction. Since this is not an “environmental” issue per CEQA, this concern and similar concerns not covered per CEQA could be addressed during the PUD process. Rodent control could be addressed with a PUD condition of approval requiring the developers to prepare a rodent control plan prior to construction.

Wetlands and Other Waters

Preliminary designs of the proposed Stoneridge Drive bridge indicates that the pylons to support the bridge would be constructed outside of the ordinary high water mark; however, final designs of the bridge could potentially result in activities in the Arroyo Mocho channel. Appropriate environmental permits related to construction in the arroyo would be required (if applicable), such as stream bed alteration permit from the California Department of Fish and Game.

Two seasonal wetlands occur on the site; however, in December 2007, Regional Water Quality Control Board staff verified that these seasonal wetlands are not “Waters of the State”, because they were the direct result of the 2003-2004 arroyo realignment project on the Staples Ranch property.

Trees

There are hundreds of trees in the Arroyo Mocho which were planted in 2003-2004 as part of the arroyo realignment project. These trees are all small, and do not yet qualify as heritage trees as defined by the Pleasanton Municipal Code. Not including this riparian area, there are about 121 existing trees on site, over 100 of which qualify as heritage trees. Proposed mitigation measures require each developer to prepare a tree report for its project and a tree replacement proposal which would be subject to the review and approval of the City Council as part of the Planned Unit Development review process.

Hazards and Hazardous Materials

There are a few underground utilities on site: 1) a PG&E natural gas pipeline; 2) a Zone 7 water transmission line; and 3) an AT&T cable line. The recommended mitigations measures would require the developers to work with Underground Service Alert (USA) so that the utilities are demarcated prior to construction. Also an emergency response plan would be required to be prepared prior to construction.

The Airport Land Use Commission (ALUC) staff has reviewed the proposed project and has found it to be consistent with the compatibility criteria for the Livermore Airport as defined by the Alameda County Airport Land Use Policy Plan. The project site is not within any of the adopted ALUC Safety Zones. The project site is within Caltrans recommended safety zones;

however, these zones have not been adopted by the ALUC. An assessment of the potential for aircraft accidents at the Staples Ranch site was conducted by Charles Salter and Associates in 1994. The crash hazard was computed from historical aircraft crash data accumulated by the Federal Aviation Administration from general aviation airports around the country. The report determined that there would be a low potential frequency of aircraft crashes on the site (identified as once every 712 years). Consequently, the report concluded that the risk of death or injury on the ground would be considered less than significant. More information about the proximity of the Livermore Municipal Airport, flight paths, turning movements, and Caltrans's recommended safety zones is included in the DEIR.

Hydrology and Water Quality

The proposed project could have potential post construction impacts on water quality in the Arroyo Mocho. While existing regulations and standards are sufficiently protective of water quality and beneficial uses during the construction period, post construction impacts would be potentially significant even if all of the existing regulations were implemented. Pollutants associated with the operational phase of the proposed development include nutrients, oil and grease, metals, organics, pesticides, sediment, and gross pollutants (rubbish). The Arroyo Mocho contains diazinon, a pesticide. In low levels diazinon may cause headache, dizziness, weakness, and blurred vision. The recommended mitigation measures would require each developer to prepare and implement a site specific Water Quality Management Plan with targeted pollutant removal rates and a pesticide management plan. The use of diazinon would be prohibited or severely limited.

As part of the project, a storm water detention basin would be constructed in the neighborhood park which would be designed in accordance with the Alameda Countywide Clean Water Program Hydromodification Management Plan. Water from the detention basins would be released into the existing outfall in the Arroyo Mocho. A recommended mitigation measure would require the City to be responsible for assuring the maintenance of the basin.

The proposed project would result in the construction of residences and structures within a 100 year flood hazard area. The recommended mitigation measures require the Staples Ranch site to be removed from the 100 year flood hazard area and Federal Emergency Management Area (FEMA) flood hazard area updates prior to construction. The Staples Ranch site will be removed from the 100 year flood area when the City of Livermore constructs its flood control improvements approved to be implemented as part of Livermore's El Charro Specific Plan. The measures include the construction of regional storm water retention/detention facilities east of El Charro Road and construction of an overbank channel. Per the 2007 Cost Sharing Agreement between Livermore, Pleasanton, and the ACSPA, if Livermore has not succeeded in removing the Staples Ranch site from the flood zone, the ACSPA must proceed with constructing the planned flood protection improvements in Livermore.

Land Use and Agricultural Resources

The proposed project would not exceed the allowable land use densities identified in the Pleasanton General Plan, but may exceed the average density for commercial uses at the senior continuing care community and at the 11 acre commercial site. The General Plan requires a "amenity" for commercial projects which exceed a floor area ratio (FAR) of 35%.

The recommended mitigation measures require the developers to propose an amenity if their project exceeds this FAR.

The recommended mitigations require deed disclosures about the proximity of the Livermore Municipal Airport, the potential for noise, and other nuisances from aircraft operations. The recommended mitigations also require CLC to be the initial contact for any and all airport noise complaints from residents within its development. As part of the project, each of the project developers would implement the deed disclosures required about the airport. Disclosures about potential nuisances from quarry operations would also be required.

Noise

Future occupants of the Staples Ranch site would be exposed to noise levels in excess of standards established in the General Plan. Excess noise on the site may potentially occur from motor vehicle travel on the I-580 freeway, on El Charro Road, and on Stoneridge Drive by the proposed bridge, from aircraft which may fly over the site, and from car wash stations proposed at the auto mall. Several noise related mitigation measures are recommended which would reduce potential noise impacts to a level consistent with General Plan policies. Recommended measures are summarized below.

Senior Continuing Care Community

- Prior to PUD approval, require a noise study showing how noise impacts from traffic on I-580 can be reduced and require appropriate noise reduction measures as part of the PUD process
- Require exterior to interior noise reduction measures to reduce interior noise levels to 45 dBA Ldn in dwelling units
- Require exterior to interior noise reduction measures to reduce interior single event noise levels from aircraft noise to 50 dBA in all rooms where people sleep and to 55 dBA in all other rooms

Auto Mall and Retail Center

- Require exterior to interior noise reduction techniques to reduce interior noise levels to meet the City's standard of 45 dBA peak hour Leq that would allow the conduct of normal business activities inside these facilities
- Limit exterior noise levels from the auto mall car wash stations, including vacuuming areas, to 60 dBA at any habitable structure on the CLC property

Requiring a 60 dBA maximum at habitable structures would be consistent with the regulations of the Pleasanton Municipal Code. The summary text in Table S-2 of the DEIR does not state from "habitable" structures but states that the measurement will be taken at the property line. However, the mitigation measure listed in the Noise section of the DEIR clarifies that the measurement should be taken from habitable structures.

Community Park

- Limit areas within the 65 CNEL contour to primarily open space (with limited trails) and place active park uses such as sports fields and playgrounds outside of the contour

Only a small portion of the park, immediately adjacent to El Charro Road, would potentially be within the 65 CNEL contour.

Stoneridge Drive (by Proposed Bridge)

- Provide noise attenuating pavement to new portions of Stoneridge Drive (by the proposed bridge)

Open grade asphalt would reduce traffic noise levels on the new portion of Stoneridge Drive by 2 to 3 dBA, such that noise levels from traffic on the new portion of Stoneridge Drive would be consistent with the General Plan which establishes a goal for maximum exterior noise at 60 CNEL for residential areas. Per the General Plan, noise levels exceeding 60 CNEL can be conditionally acceptable so long as needed noise reduction measures are included in the design of the project.

Interior mitigation techniques may include upgraded insulation, sound rated windows and doors, sound rated exterior wall assemblies, and acoustical caulking. At CLC, if non-operable windows are required in habitable rooms, energy efficient HVAC systems are required. At CLC exterior measures may include sound walls or other noise barriers which would be reviewed as part of the PUD process.

Construction Noise and Vibration

Project construction activities, particularly pile driving for the bridge, could generate excessive ground borne vibration and noise that could impact the existing residents near the project site. Recommended mitigations require pile driving vibration to be less than the structural damage threshold. Early public notices about bridge construction dates are required, as well as a posted sign stating the construction date on site. Construction equipment would be required to be located as far away from the existing residents as possible. A noise disturbance coordinator would be appointed who would be responsible for handling complaints about noise during construction. The City's standard noise construction hours 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday (not including State and Federal holidays) would apply. If complaints are received regarding the Saturday construction hours, the Community Development Director may modify or revoke Saturday construction hours.

Population, Employment, and Housing

If the CLC project is deemed to be a "residential" project or partially a "residential" project, a recommended mitigation measure requires CLC to submit a phasing proposal which would be consistent with the City's residential Growth Management ordinance.

Transportation

The proposed project does not include an extension of Stoneridge Drive to El Charro Road. However, since the City's General Plan does show an extension of Stoneridge Drive to El Charro Road in the future, the cumulative analysis for the project includes the extension. The estimated completion date for the Stoneridge Drive extension has yet to be determined; however, it is assumed that if it were to occur it would be after full buildout of the proposed project. If in the future Stoneridge Drive is proposed to be extended, an additional analysis by the City would need to occur to address the possible need for additional safety and traffic control measures such as traffic signals on Stoneridge Drive at Newton Way and Trevor Parkway. Because the extension is not proposed at this time, this EIR does not provide this safety analysis. For informational purposes, Dowling and Associates' traffic report for the project dated "Revised March 20, 2008" includes an analysis of the project in the cumulative scenario without the extension of Stoneridge Drive to El Charro Road.

No mitigations are proposed for impacts to intersections in Downtown Pleasanton because the General Plan exempts these intersections from the City's level of service standard.

In the existing plus approved plus project scenario and in the cumulative scenario, the proposed project would increase traffic and contribute to unacceptable levels of service at the following Pleasanton Model Area intersections:

Existing Plus Approved Plus Project Scenario

- #9—Hopyard/I-580 EB off ramp
- #10—Hopyard/Owens
- #11—Hopyard/Stoneridge
- #34—Santa Rita/Valley
- #51—El Charro/I-580 EB off ramp

Cumulative (Buildout) Scenario

- #10—Hopyard/Owens
- #11—Hopyard/Stoneridge
- #26—Santa Rita/I-580 EB off ramp
- #30—West Las Positas/Stoneridge
- #34—Santa Rita/Valley
- #51—El Charro/I-580 EB off ramp
- #53—El Charro/Stoneridge

Improvements to intersections #9, #10, #11, #26, #30, #34 would be covered either by the City's existing Traffic Development Fee or by the fee update which is anticipated to be completed prior to the payment of fees by this project. The project developers would pay the City's traffic fees to address the needed improvements. The improvements (e.g., new turn lanes, through lanes, changing cycle length, narrowing lanes to reduce pedestrian crossing times) would reduce the project's impacts to less than significant levels.

To reduce the impacts at intersection #11, the signal would need to be retimed in the existing plus approved plus project scenario. The City of Pleasanton would be responsible for this. The project developers would pay the City's Traffic Development fee to address needed improvements at this intersection in the cumulative scenario.

Per the 2007 Cost Sharing Agreement between the cities of Pleasanton and Livermore and the ACSPA, the City of Livermore is obligated to address impacts at intersection #51. The agreement also provides that if this intersection is not improved by Livermore then the City of Pleasanton will make the improvements prior to occupancy of any development on Staples Ranch.

The funding of the improvements required for intersection #53 will be included in the overall funding plan for the extension of Stoneridge Drive which would be developed by the City of Pleasanton at a future date. If that funding has not occurred when building permits are issued, the City will be responsible for making these improvements.

Two intersections outside of the Pleasanton Model area, one in Dublin (Dublin/Fallon) and one in Livermore (Murrieta/East Jack London) would be impacted by the proposed project in the existing plus approved plus project scenario. In the cumulative scenario, three intersections in Dublin would be impacted (Dublin/Fallon, Tassajara/Central Parkway, and Dublin/Dougherty). The recommended mitigation measures state that the City will try to seek an interagency cooperative agreement with the other cities and Alameda County to address impacts from projects in other jurisdictions to create a fair and equitable sub-regional approach to traffic mitigation. In the event that a mutually agreed upon strategy is not reached, then mitigation of the project's contribution to the impacted intersection would be infeasible and the impact would be considered significant and unavoidable. For more detailed information about this, see the Transportation section of the DEIR.

Widening of I-580 (Caltrans)

It is anticipated that Caltrans will be widening I-580 to accommodate a BART extension and other highway corridor improvements. Based on preliminary plans, the closest travel lane to the project may shift south up to 32 feet. A recommended mitigation measure would require buildings to be constructed outside this area.

Emergency Vehicle, Pedestrian, and Bicycle Access

Recommended mitigation measures would require each development to provide acceptable emergency vehicle, pedestrian, and bicycle access. At least two emergency vehicle access points would be required on each development site. Proposed pedestrian and bicycle access would be reviewed as part of the PUD process. Appropriate access would include, but not be limited to, access to sidewalks, bike lanes on Stoneridge Drive and Auto Mall Place, and access to the future regional trail connection.

Bus and Paratransit Service

The recommended mitigation measures encourage LAVTA to provide bus service to the project area, the project applicant to provide bus turnouts, and CLC to provide a paratransit service that minimizes any potential impacts on the City's paratransit service.

Construction Traffic

The recommended mitigation measures require each developer to provide a construction access plan which minimizes the use of Stoneridge Drive, to the extent feasible, as a construction route. Measures such as notification procedures for adjacent property owners regarding when major deliveries and lane closures would occur would also be required.

Water Supply

A Water Supply Assessment for the project was adopted by the City Council in December 2007. The assessment shows an adequate supply of water to support the project. In accordance with the State Government Code, water supply availability would be verified again prior to Tentative Map approval. If the project is constructed relatively soon, the existing Water Supply Assessment would likely be the document demonstrating an adequate water supply for the project.

Cumulative Impacts

Cumulative transportation impacts are described in the transportation section (above). In the cumulative scenario, air quality impacts and the change in the character of the area from rural to urban would still be significant and unavoidable. In the DEIR, cumulative impacts are addressed in the Other CEQA section.

Other CEQA

The Other CEQA section addresses impacts and mitigation measures covered by the 1989 EIR for the Stoneridge Drive Specific Plan which were incorporated (at times with amendments) into the DEIR for the proposed project.

Archaeological Resources

An archaeological resource measure is incorporated, which requires an archaeological monitor to be on site during native soils disturbing activities and establishes procedures which must be followed if archaeological resources are discovered, such as stopping construction and preparing an Archaeological Resources Report if appropriate.

Geotechnical Study and Setback

As a mitigation measure, a geotechnical study for the site would be required prior to Tentative Map approval, and all buildings would be required to be set back at least 20 feet from the top of the Arroyo Mocho bank, in case there is a seismically induced bank failure.

Irrigation, Mulch, Organic Soil

This section also requires all irrigation plans to incorporate low flow irrigation head and/or drip irrigation with electric controllers, and proper soil preparation for landscaped areas that includes a minimum of two inches of mulch and two inches of organic soil amendment, as recommended by a qualified landscape architect.

Alternative Scenarios

The DEIR provides analysis for four different alternatives to the proposed project: 1) No Project (no build) Alternative; 2) Existing Specific Plan Alternative; 3) Ice Center Alternative; and 4) Open Space Alternative. The No Project Alternative assumes that Staples Ranch will remain vacant land. The Existing Specific Plan Alternative assumes Staples Ranch would be built as approved per the 1989 Stoneridge Drive Specific Plan. The Ice Center Alternative assumes a four rink ice center will be built on eight acres of the proposed 17 acre community park. The Open Space Alternative assumes the proposed 17 acre community park would be primarily open space and would not include lighted sports fields, tennis courts, and similar features. The Open Space Alternative would result in slightly fewer impacts than the proposed project, and would therefore be considered environmentally superior to the proposed project and to the other alternatives. Table S-3 in the DEIR compares the alternatives.

The Existing Specific Plan Alternative would generate almost double the number of vehicle trips as the proposed project which is why this alternative would create a substantial permanent increase in ambient noise levels in the vicinity. Air Quality impacts under the Existing Specific Plan Alternative would be significant unavoidable, as with the project. The Existing Specific Plan Alternative would not include residents the I-580, so air quality and noise impacts to residents would be less.

The ice center would generate approximately 3,328 daily trips, whereas the proposed community park, without the ice center, would generate approximately 300 daily trips. There would be a slight increase in water use in the Ice Center Alternative when compared to the project, but the increase is not significant.

The Open Space Alternative would generate approximately 270 fewer daily trips than the proposed project. This Alternative would have less of an impact on the existing visual character of the area, as more of the site would appear rural and less urbanized. This alternative would not include sports field lighting, thus reducing possible lighting impacts.

NEXT STEPS

The schedule for processing the Staples Ranch development anticipates the Planning Commission holding a hearing for the Stoneridge Drive Specific Plan Amendment and each of the three major projects, Hendrick, CLC, and Fremont Land in late spring/early summer. In addition to these items and the DEIR the Planning Commission will also review rezoning of the property and a draft development agreement all of which are contemplated in the Staples Ranch MOU. The actual date for the PUD hearings is dependent on the developers' completion of their PUD plans, which are still in progress.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Commission take the following actions:

1. Receive comments from the public with regard to the completeness and adequacy of the DEIR; and
2. Provide Planning Commission comments with regard to the completeness and adequacy of the DEIR.

Staff Contacts

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