
1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DEIR AND FEIR

In conformance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines (2002), section 15132 (Contents of Environmental Impact Reports), the Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) for the proposed Sunnyvale Downtown Improvement Program Update consists of two volumes: (1) the March 2003 Draft EIR, which was distributed for public review and comment on April 1, 2003; and (2) this May 2003 Final EIR document, which incorporates the Draft EIR by this reference, and includes responses to comments received by the Lead Agency (the City of Sunnyvale) during the public review period on the Draft EIR, plus a set of revisions made to the Draft EIR in response to comments received during the public review period. None of these revisions includes an increase in the severity of any impacts or a significant new impact, mitigation, or alternative not already considered in preparing the Draft EIR.

1.2 PROPOSED PROJECT SUMMARY

Over the past decade, the City of Sunnyvale has been undertaking a Downtown Improvement Program to re-establish and revitalize the City's original central area. The program has consisted of a number of City-adopted, interrelated planning and redevelopment activities, primarily including the Sunnyvale Downtown Specific Plan (adopted in 1993), associated Zoning Code provisions, the Murphy Avenue Design Guidelines (1994), and the Sunnyvale Downtown Redevelopment Plan (originally adopted in 1975; last amended in 1993).

The City is now proposing to update its Downtown Improvement Program in response to the changing marketplace and the City's experience in implementing the 1993 Downtown Specific Plan over the past approximately ten years.¹ To provide a "blueprint" for the proposed update, the Sunnyvale City Council in April 2002 approved in concept a new *City of Sunnyvale Downtown Design Plan* which addresses an approximately 125-acre area of the downtown and calls for retaining the basic downtown revitalization concepts of the 1993 Downtown Specific Plan, but with various land use and development standard revisions, new downtown design guidelines, new circulation and parking recommendations, and revised streetscape design

¹ELS Architecture and Urban Design, *The City of Sunnyvale Downtown Design Plan*, April 2002, Letter of Transmittal from Joseph Antuzzi, Chairman, Downtown Stakeholders Advisory Committee; March 26, 2002.

standards, all formulated to create and maintain "an enhanced, traditional downtown serving the community with a variety of destinations in a pedestrian-friendly environment."¹

The April 2002 *Downtown Design Plan* states an intent to build upon the unique character and commercial success of the 100 block of Murphy Avenue by restoring as much of the historic downtown street grid as possible and reconnecting areas that were isolated when the Town Center Mall was originally constructed in 1978. Murphy Avenue would be extended along its existing right-of-way one block to the south from Washington Avenue into the Town Center Mall, with the extended eastern side lined with shops and restaurants. Similarly, McKinley Avenue would be extended one block east from Mathilda Avenue into the mall, and lined on both sides with new shops. The extensions of Murphy and McKinley would be connected by a major pedestrian way through the mall. A 20-screen movie theater complex (approved in 1999) would be added to the upper level of the mall. A new parking structure and an approximately 1.5-acre public plaza would also be integrated into the mall.

In addition, the *Downtown Design Plan* calls for treatment of Washington Avenue as a major retail street lined with stores and restaurants between Mathilda Avenue and Sunnyvale Avenue. The existing Town and Country Village commercial area would be reconstructed as a mixed use multi-family residential and commercial development with ground-floor retail uses and an approximately 1.6-acre public plaza.

The *Downtown Design Plan* also proposes transformation of Mathilda Avenue from El Camino Real to Evelyn Avenue into a landscaped boulevard with wide sidewalks, major office buildings on the east side (adjacent to the commercial core), and multi-family residential development on the west side (adjacent to existing residential neighborhoods). The eastern-side office development is proposed to be of similar height to the three recently completed Mozart office buildings (up to six stories). The western-side residential development is proposed to be four stories facing Mathilda, stepping down to two stories on Charles Street, opposite the existing single-family neighborhood.

In addition to the approximately 125-acre *Downtown Design Plan* area, the total project area includes three adjacent areas: an approximately 5-acre area north of Evelyn Avenue (between Evelyn Avenue and the CalTrain tracks), an approximately 3-acre area east of Bayview Avenue ("eastern adjacent sites"), and an approximately 15-acre area south of Olive Avenue. The only land use change proposed for the adjacent areas is a reduction in allowable residential densities in the eastern adjacent sites. The total Downtown Improvement Program Update area, including the *Downtown Design Plan* boundary and three adjacent areas, amounts to approximately 150 acres, bounded generally by the CalTrain tracks/Evelyn Avenue, Bayview Avenue, Carroll Avenue, El Camino Real, and Charles Street.

This brief summary should not be relied upon for a thorough understanding of the proposed project. Please refer to chapter 3 (Project Description) of the March 2003 Draft Environmental

¹ELS Architecture and Urban Design.

Impact Report for the Sunnyvale Downtown Improvement Program Update for a more complete description of the proposed project.