

City of Rohnert Park

CENTRAL ROHNERT PARK PRIORITY DEVELOPMENT AREA PLAN

Final Environmental Impact Report Response to Comments

SCH # 2015102081

Prepared for:

City of Rohnert Park
Development Services Department
Planning Division

Prepared by:

AECOM

February 2016





City of Rohnert Park

CENTRAL ROHNERT PARK
PRIORITY DEVELOPMENT AREA PLAN
Final Environmental Impact Report
Response to Comments

SCH # 2015102081

Prepared for:

City of Rohnert Park
Development Services Department
Planning Division

Prepared by:

AECOM

February 2016

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Section	Page
1 INTRODUCTION.....	1-1
1.1 Use of the Final EIR.....	1-2
2 COMMENTS AND REPOSSES TO COMMENTS	2-1
2.1 List of Commenters on the Draft EIR.....	2-1
2.2 Comments and Responses to Comments on the Draft EIR.....	2-1
2.2.1 Comments and Responses to Comments	2-1
3 REVISIONS TO THE DRAFT EIR	3-1

Appendices

A Draft Mitigation Monitoring and Reporting Program

Figures

No table of contents entries found.

Tables

Table 2-1: Written Comments Received on the Draft EIR.....	2-1
--	-----

ACRONYMS AND OTHER ABBREVIATIONS

AFY	Acre-feet per year
Caltrans	California Department of Transportation
CEQA	California Environmental Quality Act
City	City of Rohnert Park
HAWK	high-intensity activated crosswalk beacon
MTC	Metropolitan Transportation Commission
MUP	multi-use path
NOP	Notice of Preparation
PDA	Priority Development Area
PDA Plan	Priority Development Area Plan
Proposed Plan	Central Rohnert Park PDA Plan
RRFB	rectangular rapid flashing beacon
SCTM/10	Sonoma County Travel Model
SMART	Sonoma Marin Area Rail Transit
TDM	transportation demand management
U.S. 101	U.S. Highway 101
UWMP	Urban Water Management Plan
VMT	vehicular miles traveled
WSA	Water Supply Assessment

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The City of Rohnert Park (City) has directed the preparation of an environmental impact report (EIR) to evaluate the potential environmental effects of the proposed Central Rohnert Park Priority Development Area (PDA) Plan (proposed plan) in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) (Public Resources Code Section 21000 et seq.) and the State CEQA Guidelines (California Code of Regulations Section 15000 et seq.).

In accordance with Section 15088 of the State California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines, the City of Rohnert Park, as the lead agency, has reviewed the comments received on the Draft Environmental Impact Report (Draft EIR) for the Central Rohnert Park PDA Plan and has prepared written responses to the comments received.

The City asked for input from federal, State, and local agencies; organizations; and members of the public regarding the issues that should be evaluated in the EIR. Specifically, the City issued a Notice of Preparation (NOP) of the EIR on October 28, 2015 and conducted a scoping meeting on November 18, 2015.

The Draft EIR (State Clearinghouse Number 2015102081) was received on December 18th, 2015 by the State Clearinghouse, and circulated to the public for review and comment. The City conducted a 45-day public review period for the Draft EIR that concluded on February 1, 2016.

The City has now prepared this Final EIR document, which includes:

- The Draft EIR, with minor revisions detailed in Chapter 3 of this Final EIR
- Public comments received on the Draft EIR
- Responses to written comments
- The list of organizations that provided comments on the Draft EIR

Chapter 2 of this Final EIR includes the written comments received on the Draft EIR and responses to environmental topics raised in these comments (as required by the State CEQA Guidelines Section 15132) and to non-environmental topics included in these comments. The responses to comments respond to the comments received on the Draft EIR. To assist the reader, each response to a comment is also precluded by a brief summary of the comment.

In some instances, responses to comments may warrant modification of the text of the Draft EIR. In those cases, the changes compiled in Chapter 3, “Revisions to the Draft EIR,” amend the text of the Draft EIR. The text deletions are shown in ~~strikeout~~ and additions are shown in underline. The minor revisions summarized in Chapter 3 of this EIR do not change the findings presented in the Draft EIR.

The aforementioned responses to comments document and the Draft EIR together constitute the Final EIR that is being considered by the City of Rohnert Park.

1.1 USE OF THE FINAL EIR

The Final EIR includes revisions to the Draft EIR and the Responses to Comments. The Final EIR serves as the environmental document to inform the Planning Commission and City Council's consideration of the proposed plan, either in whole or in part, or one of the alternatives to the project discussed in the Draft EIR.

As required by Section 15090(a)(1)-(3) of the CEQA Guidelines, a Lead Agency, in certifying a Final EIR, must make the following three determinations:

1. The Final EIR has been completed in compliance with CEQA.
2. The Final EIR was presented to the decision-making body of the Lead Agency, and the decision-making body reviewed and considered the information in the Final EIR prior to approving the project.
3. The Final EIR reflects the Lead Agency's independent judgment and analysis.

As required by Section 15091 of the CEQA Guidelines, no public agency shall approve or carry out a project for which an EIR has been certified that identifies one or more significant environmental effects of the project unless the public agency makes one or more written findings (Findings of Fact) for each of those significant effects, accompanied by a brief explanation of the rationale for each finding supported by substantial evidence in the record. The possible findings are:

1. Changes or alterations have been required in, or incorporated into the project which avoid or substantially lessen the significant environmental effect as identified in the Final EIR.
2. Such changes or alterations are within the responsibility and jurisdiction of another public agency and not the agency making the finding. Such changes have been adopted by such other agency or can and should be adopted by such other agency.
3. Specific economic, legal, social, technological, or other considerations, including provision of employment opportunities for highly trained workers, make infeasible the mitigation measures or project alternatives identified in the Final EIR.

2.0 COMMENTS AND RESPONSES TO COMMENTS

This section of the Final EIR contains comment letters received during the public review period for the Draft EIR, which concluded on February 1, 2016.

The EIR is an informational document intended to disclose to the City and the public the environmental consequences of approving and implementing the Central Rohnert Park Priority Development Area Plan (proposed plan) or one of the alternatives to the plan described in the Draft EIR. In conformance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15088(a), the City has prepared written responses to all comments received during the public comment period that address environmental issues related to the proposed plan. The focus of the responses to comments is on the disposition of significant environmental issues that are raised in the comments, as specified by Section 15088(c) of the CEQA Guidelines.

2.1 LIST OF COMMENTERS ON THE DRAFT EIR

Comments on the Draft EIR were received as written comments submitted to the City of Rohnert Park Development Services Department during and shortly following the public review comment period. Table 2-1, below, indicates the numeric designation for each comment letter received, the author of the comment letter, and the date received.

Table 2-1: Written Comments Received on the Draft EIR

Letter	Commenter	Date
1	County of Sonoma Permit and Resource Management Department	01/26/2016
2	California Department of Transportation (Caltrans)	02/01/2016

2.2 COMMENTS AND RESPONSES TO COMMENTS ON THE DRAFT EIR

The written comments received on the Draft EIR and the responses to those comments are provided in this section. Each comment letter is reproduced in its entirety and is followed by the response(s) to the letter. Where a commenter has provided multiple comments, each comment is indicated by a line bracket and an identifying number in the margin of the comment letter.

2.2.1 Comments and Responses to Comments

COMMENT LETTER 1 – COUNTY OF SONOMA PERMIT AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT



COUNTY OF SONOMA
PERMIT AND RESOURCE MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT

Letter 1

2550 Ventura Avenue, Santa Rosa, CA 95403-2829
(707) 565-1900 FAX (707) 565-1103

January 26, 2016

Jeffrey S. Beiswenger, Planning Manager
City of Rohnert Park
Development Services Department
130 Avram Avenue, Rohnert Park CA 94928
jbeiswenger@rpcity.org

Re: Draft EIR for Central Rohnert Park PDA Area Plan

The County of Sonoma appreciates the opportunity to review and comment on the draft EIR for the Central Rohnert Park PDA Area Plan. The County strongly supports city-centered growth, enhanced pedestrian and bicycle path connectivity, and the transit opportunities featured by the Area Plan. In fact, many of the goals and objectives of the County's General Plan are in line with those of the draft Area Plan.

1-1

With respect to the Draft EIR, the County submits the following comments for the City's consideration:

Transportation and Traffic

The proposed plan provides for the construction of approximately 835 new residential units and 823,000 square feet of additional commercial, office and light industrial uses, yet the Draft EIR finds no significant cumulative impacts to the greater regional transportation system, other than to Highway 101. The traffic impacts resulting from the residential and commercial development envisioned by the plan would not be confined to the City limits. There would be increased demands on the County circulation system as well.

1-2

The interconnectivity of traffic between the City and the adjoining County areas requires interagency coordination and cooperation in order to adequately address the effects of growth on both the local and regional circulation system. Cumulative traffic impacts cannot be mitigated without meaningful consideration of the roadways beyond the City limits.

The costs of improvements to the County circulation network should be equitably distributed among those who cumulatively contribute to the need for such improvements. Accordingly, the County encourages the adoption of policies which would provide for the equitable distribution of costs through fair share funding by future development within the project area.

1-3

A more thorough explanation of the cumulative impact analysis with respect to the regional transportation system is also warranted. The Draft EIR should also describe the threshold of significance used in the analysis and indicate whether the density of the project area is comparable to the density assumed by the Sonoma County Travel Model (SCTM/10).

1-3

Hydrology

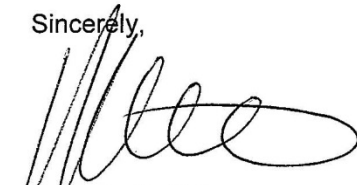
The Draft EIR indicates that groundwater levels around the City's well field appear to be stable, however, the Draft EIR does not specifically analyze the project's impact on groundwater supply or the potential reduction in groundwater discharge to streams as a result of increased pumping. The *Simulation of Groundwater and Surface-water Resources of the Santa Rosa Plain Watershed*, prepared by the U.S. Geological Survey in 2014, indicates that there was a cumulative groundwater-storage reduction between 1976 and 2010 as well as a reduction in groundwater discharge to streams in the Santa Rosa Plain Watershed. A thorough analysis of these water resources are necessary to determine the potential for impacts and the appropriate mitigation if warranted.

1-4

Thank you for the opportunity to express our concerns. We appreciate the hard work and dedication required to create the Area Plan and commend your service to the community of Rohnert Park.

I may be reached by phone at (707) 565-7387 or by email at yolanda.solano@sonoma-county.org should you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Yolanda G. Solano
Planner III

RESPONSE TO COMMENT 1-1

The commenter thanks the City for the opportunity to comment on the Draft EIR and expresses the County's support for many of the goals and policies of the proposed plan, highlighting the plan area's focus on city-centered growth, enhanced pedestrian and bicycle path connectivity, and transit opportunities. The goals and objectives of the County's General Plan are in line with those of the proposed plan.

The City acknowledges the comment.

RESPONSE TO COMMENT 1-2

The commenter summarizes the project and comments that the resulting development would not be confined to the City's limits, but would also create increased demands on the County circulation system. The commenter questions why there are no other significant cumulative impacts to the regional transportation system, other than Highway 101.

The Draft EIR transportation chapter (Chapter 3.9) addresses impacts to regional roadways, given that it represents a programmatic EIR analysis for a master plan (the Central Rohnert Park PDA Plan or proposed plan). As such, the evaluation of potential impacts focuses on those areas most likely to be impacted, which are largely comprised of existing developed areas in the City of Rohnert Park within and near the plan area. Areas outside of the City limits are generally less developed and, therefore, less likely to attract traffic generated by development within the plan area. While development within the plan area can be expected to contribute some share of additional traffic to roadways serving these areas, the majority of traffic generated by development within the PDA would be expected to use U.S. 101 for regional access and a combination of major arterials (e.g., Rohnert Park Expressway and Golf Course Drive) and connecting streets for local access.

In particular, the existing development pattern within Sonoma and Marin Counties is characterized by a mix of developed (urban and suburban) and undeveloped (rural) areas, with developed areas largely concentrated along the north-south U.S. 101 corridor. U.S. 101 also serves as the primary regional link between Sonoma County and the rest of the Bay Area, providing access to State Route 37, Interstate 580, and other major highways and thoroughfares. Thus, given the proposed plan's location adjacent to U.S. 101, it is reasonable to expect that the majority of the regional traffic generated by development within the plan area would utilize U.S. 101, either to access developed areas of Sonoma County along U.S. 101 (e.g., Santa Rosa or Petaluma) or to reach other parts of the Bay Area. By analyzing potential impacts to U.S. 101 (Draft EIR Section 3.9.3, pp. 3.9-19 and 3.9-20), the Draft EIR analyzed the regional roadway facilities expected to be most impacted by development within the plan area.

Recognizing that development within the plan area would add some traffic to these other roadway facilities, the City is committed to working in cooperation with the County to address the proposed plan's contribution to traffic growth and impacts to both local and regional roadways, including those outside of the City of Rohnert Park. This would also be consistent with Policy TR-21 of the *City of Rohnert Park General Plan* that calls for establishment of a regional mitigation plan for transportation improvements, thereby creating a mechanism for development projects within the City of Rohnert Park to contribute impact fees toward roadway improvements in Sonoma County. The City has recently agreed to take the lead in preparing this study to establish a regional mitigation plan, with preparation of this study anticipated to commence in the spring of 2016. Once the regional impact fee is

adopted, future development within the plan area will be subject to payment, thereby contributing a fair share towards the funding of regional roadway improvements. Specific County roadways where future development under the proposed plan may add traffic, and where the Sonoma County General Plan 2020 (SCGP) has identified future improvements that payment of the regional impact fee could contribute funding toward implementation, include the following.

- Petaluma Hill Road – consider improvements, such as intersection improvements, turn lanes, and signals to reduce congestion (SCGP Policy CT-6aaa, Figure CT-1g)
- Community of Penngrove – identify and implement a combination of local and regional roadway improvements to reduce congestion in Penngrove (SCGP Policies CT-6v, CT-6w, CT-6x, and CT-6y)
- Stony Point Road – consider additional turn lanes at RPX intersection to reduce congestion (SCGP Policy CT-6bbb); widen corridor to four lanes (SCGP Figure CT-1g)

RESPONSE TO COMMENT 1-3

The commenter suggests a more thorough explanation of cumulative impact analysis to the regional transportation system and that the Draft EIR describes the threshold of significance used in the analysis and indicate whether the density of the project area is comparable to the density assumed by the Sonoma County Travel Model (SCTM/10).

As discussed in Response to Comment 1-2, potential impacts to the regional transportation system are discussed in Draft EIR Section 3.9.3, pp. 3.9-19 and 3.9-20, in the context of impacts to U.S. 101.

The Sonoma County Travel Demand Model (SCTM\10) was utilized in the assessment of cumulative traffic impacts. The model's future year scenario of 2040 reflects buildout of current general plans throughout Sonoma County, including build-out within the County and incorporated municipalities in the County (the cities of Rohnert Park, Cotati, Healdsburg, Santa Rosa, Petaluma, Cloverdale, Sebastopol, and Sonoma and the Town of Windsor). For the model's traffic analysis zones (TAZ) encompassing the plan area, the added development potential for buildout under the current Rohnert Park General Plan (i.e., without adoption of the proposed plan) includes 269 residential units and 628,897 square feet of non-residential uses. In comparison, as shown in Draft EIR Table 2-3 (pp. 2-15 and 2-16), the proposed plan estimates an added development potential of 835 residential units and 822,324 square feet of non-residential uses. The proposed plan, therefore, would allow for a higher density of development than the City's General Plan and the assumptions used in the County's traffic model. The traffic volumes and traffic operations calculations presented in the "Future plus Project" scenario of the proposed plan's traffic impact study (contained in Draft EIR Appendix E) reflect the effects of this additional increment of cumulative growth beyond what is assumed in the SCTM\10 model.

While the proposed plan would allow for more units and more non-residential square footage than assumed in the current SCTM\10 model, it is critical to discern the differences in automobile traffic generation and travel patterns that would result from implementation of the proposed plan versus the more suburban type of development pattern currently evident in the vicinity. On a per-unit or per-square foot basis, the PDA is anticipated to generate fewer automobile trips than conventional development. A greater share of trips is projected to be made by walking, bicycling, and transit. Development in the plan area (both existing and future) would be increasingly transit-focused, both in its proximity to existing local and regional bus routes as well as its proximity to the

SMART commuter rail line. Implementation of the proposed plan would also result in a more balanced jobs-housing ratio within Central Rohnert Park, meaning that the potential for existing and future residents to live closer to their workplace also increases (thereby, resulting in a potential shift away from auto trips as well as towards shorter driving distances). Finally, the types of non-residential uses envisioned by the proposed plan are oriented to local users. The proposed plan places a focus on local-serving and downtown retail versus big-box or auto-oriented retail. This type of land use not only tends to draw fewer auto trips than big-box shopping center type uses, but associated auto trips also tend to be shorter in length and oriented to/from more proximate areas. The combined effects of this type of development pattern lead to fewer trips extending beyond the City and onto the County/regional roadway network, substantially limiting the potential traffic impacts that implementation of the proposed plan may create on these roadways.

As indicated in the Draft EIR transportation chapter and traffic impact study and considered in the Draft EIR alternatives chapter (Chapter 6), the proposed plan would increase automobile traffic levels, but the amount to which the proposed plan would affect regional facilities under future cumulative conditions is expected to be similar or only slightly greater than would otherwise occur assuming build-out of the plan area under existing zoning utilizing more suburban and automobile-oriented development patterns. As discussed in Section 6.3 of the DEIR, although the proposed plan would add traffic to several local intersections, it also includes traffic signal and lane geometry improvements that would improve these intersection operations to acceptable conditions and mitigate the effects of the additional traffic. Without the proposed plan, these improvements would not be in place and development in the plan area under existing zoning would be expected to cause four intersections to degrade to unacceptable conditions, as addressed in Section 6.3.4 of the DEIR. Existing zoning and development patterns also would not feature the land use and transportation improvements under the proposed plan that would support reductions in automobile parking and promote alternative modes, such as transit, biking, and walking, both of which are critical to reducing vehicle-miles travelled (VMT) and its associated effects on both the local and regional roadway network.

Furthermore, as noted in Response to Comment 1-2 above, the City will be preparing a study to establish a regional mitigation plan for transportation improvements that, once adopted, will require future development in the plan area to contribute fair-share funding of regional roadway improvements.

Regarding thresholds of significance, the Draft EIR describes the thresholds of significance applied for intersection and freeway operations in the beginning of Section 3.9.3 (pp. 3.9-16).

RESPONSE TO COMMENT 1-4

The commenter suggests the Draft EIR does not specifically analyze the project's impact on groundwater supply or the potential groundwater discharge to streams as a result of increased pumping and that a thorough analysis of these water resources are necessary to determine the potential for impacts and the appropriate mitigation, if warranted.

Implementing the Central Rohnert Park Priority Development Area Plan does not require, nor is the City proposing, an increase in groundwater pumping. Therefore, there is no anticipated impact to groundwater supply, groundwater levels, or a reduction in groundwater discharge to streams in the Santa Rosa Plain Watershed as a result of the proposed plan. As described in Draft EIR Section 5.8.2, pp. 5-15, the City manages its groundwater supply in accordance with its 2004 Water Policy Resolution, which limits groundwater pumping to 2,577 AFY.

The City will maintain this maximum pumping limit and groundwater pumping will not increase as a result of the PDA Plan. The 2004 City-wide Water Supply Assessment, which is a reference for the EIR, provides the technical support for this maximum pumping rate. The City continues to monitor and document its groundwater use through its required Urban Water Management Plans and through cooperative participation in the regional groundwater management work occurring in the Santa Rosa Plain basin.

Draft EIR Section 5.8.2, “Water Supply,” pp. 5-15 provides a discussion of potential impacts of the proposed plan on water supply. This includes a discussion of potential impacts to groundwater levels from operation of the plan. Draft EIR Section 5.8.2, “Water Supply,” pp. 5-15 also provides a summary of the water supply assessment (WSA) that was prepared by the City for the proposed plan as required by State law. The WSA is included as Draft EIR Appendix F. The WSA describes the water demand associated with build-out of the plan area as well as the three water sources used by the City, which includes groundwater pumping from the Santa Rosa Plain Subbasin of the Santa Rosa Valley Groundwater Basin.

The City is aware of the results of the *Simulation of Groundwater and Surface-water Resources of the Santa Rosa Plain Watershed*, having participated as a cooperative funder of this study. The study documents the rising groundwater levels in the southeast portion of the Santa Rosa Plain groundwater basin as a result of the groundwater management policy included in the City’s 2004 Water Policy Resolution. In addition to providing data and funding for the *Simulation of Groundwater and Surface-water Resources of the Santa Rosa Plain Watershed*, the City provided data and funding for Groundwater Management Plan for the Santa Rosa Plain basin and is contributing to the implementation of this plan as well as the development of the Groundwater Sustainability Plan, required by the Groundwater Sustainability Act of 2014. This extensive body of technical and policy work documents that sustainable groundwater use is achieved through cooperative efforts throughout the basin and are not isolated studies associated with individual project(s) or plans. In addition to implementing its Water Policy Resolution, the City will continue to participate in the implementation of regional groundwater management activities to support sustainable use of groundwater in the basin.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

DISTRICT 4
P.O. BOX 23660
OAKLAND, CA 94623-0660
PHONE (510) 286-5528
FAX (510) 286-5559
TTY 711
www.dot.ca.gov



Serious Drought.
Help save water!

February 1, 2016

SON1011921
SON-101-VAR
SCH # 2015102081

Mr. Jeffrey Beiswenger
City of Rohnert Park
Planning Department
130 Avram Avenue
Rohnert Park, CA 94928

Central Rohnert Park Priority Development Area Plan – Draft Environmental Impact Report

Dear Mr. Beiswenger:

Thank you for including the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) in the environmental review process for the Central Rohnert Park Priority Development Area (PDA) Plan. Caltrans’ new mission, vision, and goals signal a modernization of our approach to California’s transportation system, in which we seek to reduce statewide vehicle-miles-traveled (VMT) and increase non-auto modes of active transportation. Our comments seek to promote the State’s smart mobility goals and are based on the Draft Environmental Impact Report. Additional comments may be forthcoming pending final review.

2-1

Project Understanding

The proposed project is a programmatic land use master plan that is intended to support transit-oriented and infill development nearby the Rohnert Park City Center and planned Sonoma Marin Area Rail Transit (SMART) commuter rail station. The proposed developments would cover a 330-acre area centered on the Rohnert Park Expressway/State Farm Drive intersection, which would allow the construction of 835 multi-family residential units and 823,000 square feet (sf) of retail/commercial, office, light industrial, and public/institutional use. Additionally, the project would construct new roadway, bicycle, pedestrian, and transit improvements in order to provide non-vehicular community access to the planned SMART station. The proposed project would add 27,777 new daily trips of which 1,352 trips would occur during the AM peak hour and 1,973 trips during the PM peak hour. The western edge of the PDA is bound by U.S. 101, which would provide regional access to the PDA.

2-2

Lead Agency

As the lead agency, the City of Rohnert Park is responsible for all project mitigation, including

2-3

“Provide a safe, sustainable, integrated and efficient transportation system to enhance California’s economy and livability”

any needed improvements to State highways. The project's fair share contribution, financing, scheduling, implementation responsibilities and lead agency monitoring should be fully discussed for all proposed mitigation measures. Additionally, please provide Caltrans with all future project-specific documents and analysis that may derive from the proposed land use master plan.

↑
cont.
2-3

Regional Impact Fees

U.S. 101 is critical to regional and interregional traffic in the San Francisco Bay region. It is vital to commuting, freight, and recreational traffic and is one of the most congested regional freeway facilities. Given the scale of the proposed project, the traffic generated will have significant regional impact to the already congested U.S. 101. The Department encourages the City to develop a regional transportation fee program to mitigate and plan for the impact of future growth on the regional transportation system. The fees would be used to help fund regional transportation programs that add capacity increasing improvements to the transportation system to lessen future traffic congestion.

↑
2-4

Reducing delays on State facilities will not only benefit the region, but also reduce any queuing on local roadways caused by highway congestion. The purpose of regional impact fee program would improve mobility by reducing time delays and maintaining reliability on major roadways throughout the San Francisco Bay Area.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements

- We recommend that the City consider the use of on-street parking to create a parking-protected Class IV separated bikeway. Guidance on these facilities may be gained via Caltrans *Class IV Bikeway Guidance (Separated Bikeways/Cycle Tracks)*, which can be found at the following link: <http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/oppd/dib/dib89.pdf>. Where protected bike lanes are referenced, please also include the Class IV designation;
- Please clarify the meaning of 'enhanced bike lanes' when referenced in the Bike and Pedestrian Improvements section (p. 2-22) of the environmental document (e.g. Class II buffered bike lanes with green pavement markings at conflict zones);
- Where midblock pedestrian crossings are proposed, also consider rectangular rapid flashing beacons (RRFB) in addition to standard signals or High-Intensity Activated Crosswalk beacons (HAWK), which Caltrans refers to as pedestrian hybrid beacons (PHB); and
- On page 2-22, please correct all references to Professional Drive to Professional Center Drive and Lynne Conde Drive to Lynne Conde Way.

↑
2-5
↑
2-6
↑
2-7
↑
2-8

Vehicle Trip Reduction

The project should adopt a Transportation Demand Management (TDM) program in order to encourage walking, bicycling, and transit use while reducing traffic impacts on State highways. The region should be supported by a framework of transportation alternatives by increasing transit, pedestrian, and bicycle systems in order to maximize access and mobility throughout the region while reducing dependence upon the automobile. In an effort to accomplish such, the project

↑
2-9
↓

"Provide a safe, sustainable, integrated and efficient transportation system to enhance California's economy and livability"

should consider the various TDM measures listed below. The TDM program should document vehicle trip reduction, including annual monitoring reports to demonstrate the ongoing reduction of vehicle trips while continuing to survey the travel patterns of residents and employees within the project area.

- Project design to encourage walking, bicycling, and convenient transit access;
- Parking cash out/parking pricing;
- Formation of a Transportation Management Association (TMA) in partnership with other developments in the area;
- Adoption of an aggressive trip reduction target with Lead Agency monitoring and enforcement; and
- Transit fare incentives such as such as subsidized transit passes on a continuing basis.

cont.
2-9

Implementing various TDM measures will help the project become more consistent with the Metropolitan Transportation Commission's (MTC) Regional Transportation Plan/Sustainable Community Strategy goals. Please also refer to "Reforming Parking Policies to Support Smart Growth," a MTC study funded by Caltrans, for sample parking ratios and strategies that support compact growth. Reducing parking supply can encourage alternate forms of transportation, reduce regional vehicle miles traveled, and lessen future impacts.

2-10

Encroachment Permit

Please be advised that any work or traffic control that encroaches onto the State ROW requires an encroachment permit that is issued by Caltrans. To apply, a completed encroachment permit application, environmental documentation, and five (5) sets of plans clearly indicating State ROW must be submitted to the following address: David Salladay, District Office Chief, Office of Permits, California Department of Transportation, District 4, P.O. Box 23660, Oakland, CA 94623-0660. Traffic-related mitigation measures should be incorporated into the construction plans prior to the encroachment permit process. See the website linked below for more information:

2-11

<http://www.dot.ca.gov/hq/traffops/developserv/permits>.

"Provide a safe, sustainable, integrated and efficient transportation system to enhance California's economy and livability"

Mr. Jeffrey Beiswenger, City of Rohnert Park
February 1, 2016
Page 4

Should you have any questions regarding this letter or require additional information, please contact Cole Iwamasa at (510) 286-5534 or cole.iwamasa@dot.ca.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Patricia" with a stylized flourish at the end.

PATRICIA MAURICE
District Branch Chief
Local Development - Intergovernmental Review

Cc: State Clearinghouse

"Provide a safe, sustainable, integrated and efficient transportation system to enhance California's economy and livability"

RESPONSE TO COMMENT 2-1

The commenter thanks the City for being included in the environmental review process for the PDA Plan and expresses that the comments in the letter seek to promote the State's new mission, vision, and smart mobility goals.

The City acknowledges Caltrans' mission to reduce statewide vehicle miles traveled and increase non-vehicular modes of active transportation and has similar goals and policies in its planning documents.

RESPONSE TO COMMENT 2-2

The commenter summarizes the proposed plan including associated trip generation characteristics.

The Draft EIR provides a comprehensive description of the proposed plan in Chapter 2 of the DEIR.

RESPONSE TO COMMENT 2-3

The commenter states that the project's fair share contribution, financing, scheduling, implementation responsibilities should be discussed in all proposed mitigation measures and that all future project specific documents and analysis, derived from the proposed plan, should be provided to Caltrans for review.

As shown in Draft EIR Section 3.9.3, pp. 3.9-16 through 3.9-22, the Draft EIR concludes that the proposed plan would result in less-than-significant transportation and traffic impacts, with the exception of significant impacts to three segments of U.S. 101. However, the Draft EIR does not identify any feasible mitigation measures for these three segments, as widening the freeway to accommodate additional lanes would result in substantial environmental, social, and financial impacts.

As discussed in Response to Comment 1-2, the City of Rohnert Park recognizes that development within the plan area may contribute to these impacts to the regional transportation system, and the City has agreed to take the lead on preparing a study to establish a regional mitigation plan and impact fee structure that will require all future development in Sonoma County, including future development within the plan area, to make a fair-share contribution toward funding regional roadway improvements.

The City will provide notification of future actions related to the proposed plan to Caltrans and will circulate these responses to comments to each organization and individual that commented on the Draft EIR.

RESPONSE TO COMMENT 2-4

The commenter encourages the City to develop a transportation fee program to mitigate and plan for the impact of future growth on the regional transportation system.

As described in Response to Comment 1-2, the City has agreed to take the lead, in 2016, on preparing a study to establish a regional mitigation plan for transportation improvements that, once adopted, will require future development in the plan area to contribute towards funding regional roadway improvements.

RESPONSE TO COMMENT 2-5

The commenter recommends the City consider use of on-street parking to create a parking protected Class IV separated parkway.

Parking-protected bike lanes are encouraged within the proposed plan and are suggested specifically along portions of various local roadways such as State Farm Drive, as reflected in the street section concepts provided in Chapter 5 of the proposed plan. Additional street segments, with on-street bike lanes, could also be considered as a “parking-protected” solution at a later time, once proposed roadway improvements enter the detailed design phase.

RESPONSE TO COMMENT 2-6

The commenter asks for clarification on the meaning of “enhanced bike lanes” referenced in the project description.

References to enhanced bike lanes on Draft EIR pp. 2-22 of the project description are intended to support a variety of bike lane treatments, including green-striping or high-contrast bike lanes, separated bike lanes (through various methods), or other bike lane improvements that enhance driver awareness and increase the safety of bicycling. Since this is a programmatic-level EIR, more specific details regarding the type of enhancement or improvements will be determined as future projects within the plan area are designed and implemented. A definition for enhanced bike lanes, as described above, has been added as a footnote to Chapter 3, Revisions to Draft EIR, to update Section 2.3.4, “Bike and Pedestrian Improvements.”

RESPONSE TO COMMENT 2-7

The commenter suggests that where midblock pedestrian crossings are proposed, rectangular rapid flashing beacons (RRFB) be considered, in addition to standard signal or High-Intensity Activated Crosswalk (HAWK) beacons.

The City acknowledges this comment. Where references are made to HAWK signals in the Project Description of the Draft EIR, rectangular rapid flashing beacons will also be provided as a potential alternative solution to ensure the safety of midblock pedestrian crossings.

The description of mid-block pedestrian crossings along Rohnert Park Expressway in the Draft EIR, pp. 2-22, bullet point b7 in Section 2.3, “Bike and Pedestrian Improvements,” has been updated by Chapter 3 of the Final EIR to not only include pedestrian refuges and the option for high-intensity activated crosswalk beacons, but also rectangular rapid flashing beacons or other potential signalized crossing solutions.

RESPONSE TO COMMENT 2-8

The commenter identifies that references to Professional Drive be updated to Professional Center Drive and Lynne Conde Drive to Lynne Conde Way.

References to Professional Center Drive and Lynne Conde Way have been updated throughout the EIR and proposed plan.

RESPONSE TO COMMENT 2-9

The commenter encourages the Plan to adopt a Transportation Demand Management (TDM) program that supports transportation alternatives that increase transit, pedestrian, and bicycle systems to maximize mobility and access in the region while reducing the dependence upon the automobile.

City General Plan Goals TR-I, TR-K, TR-L, and TR-R and Policies TR-24-TR-34, TR-41, and TR-42 support reducing traffic congestion by encouraging transportation demand management (TDM) programs for businesses and workplaces and parking standards that help reduce automobile trips, and promote alternative transportation modes. These goals and policies are also identified as one of the objectives of the proposed plan.

As a priority development area located adjacent to the future SMART commuter rail line and multi-use path, the proposed plan incorporates measures to reduce VMT and support transportation alternatives, including transit, bicycle, and pedestrian systems that maximize mobility within the plan area and connections to local and planned regional bike and transit systems. City General Plan goals and policies as well as proposed plan circulation goals and policies (provided in Chapter 5.2 of the proposed plan) support the goals and strategies of, and function fundamentally similar to, the TDM program suggested by the comment. Rohnert Park General Plan Policy TR-22 encourages the adoption of a non-mandatory employer-based TDM program for Rohnert Park businesses. The City also has a trip reduction ordinance requirement, Code Section 10.80.040, that applies to employers with more than 100 employees. Development within the plan area would be subject to these various goals, policies, and requirements, as well as the goals and policies explicitly identified in the proposed plan.

RESPONSE TO COMMENT 2-10

The commenter provides additional examples of TDM measures to help the project be consistent with MTC's Regional Transportation Plan / Sustainable Community Strategy goals and makes reference to the "Reforming Parking Policies to Support Smart Growth," study, prepared by MTC, for parking ratios and strategies that support compact growth.

The proposed plan incorporates input from a shared parking analysis study, prepared for the plan area in the Parking Policy and Management Strategy Memo (available upon request), focused on the Station Center and City Center subareas, where the potential for shared parking lots and future parking structures are envisioned, in close proximity to the SMART rail station. The results of the shared parking analysis are described in the Central Rohnert Park PDA Plan Section 5.7.2, "Parking Analysis." In addition to other parking reductions permitted by Chapter 17.16.040 of the City's Zoning Code, input from findings in this analysis have been accounted for in the parking ratios for the proposed plan, which propose parking reductions for multifamily residential development and retail, office, and public uses in the Station Center and City Center subareas. The proposed plan allows these parking reductions, encourages projects in the plan area to adopt a "park once" strategy (PDA Plan Policy C-5.5), where applicable, and builds in flexibility for development to meet City parking demands through various parking strategies, including shared parking, development of parking districts (in the Downtown); off-site parking; and

unbundled and paid parking, as future long-term strategies when parking demand warrants. Car share and bike share programs in the plan area are also encouraged.

To provide additional clarification within the Project Description , Draft EIR Section 2.3.5, “Parking” has been revised as part of the Final EIR (see Final EIR Chapter 3) to provide additional information and reference to the assumptions behind the parking standards, including parking reductions considered and currently permitted by the City’s Zoning Code that are also applicable to the plan area. This clarification does not change impact analyses or conclusions.

RESPONSE TO COMMENT 2-11

The commenter advises any work or traffic control that encroaches into the State right-of-way requires an encroachment permit, issued by Caltrans, and provides instructions for submitting an encroachment permit application.

The City acknowledges this comment and will coordinate with Caltrans on any requests for encroachment permits into any State right-of-way.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

---For document production use only---

Section	Page
2.0 COMMENTS AND RESPONSES TO COMMENTS	2-1
2.1 List of Commenters on the Draft EIR.....	2-1
2.2 Comments and Responses to Comments on the Draft EIR.....	2-1
2.2.1 Comments and Responses to Comments.....	2-1

Exhibits/Figures

No table of contents entries found.

Tables

Table 2-1: Written Comments Received on the Draft EIR.....	2-1
--	-----

3.0 REVISIONS TO THE DRAFT EIR

This chapter presents minor text additions and revisions to the Draft EIR that do not constitute significant new information or changes to significance findings. Thus, in accordance with CEQA Guidelines Section 15088.5, there is no need to recirculate portions or all of the Draft EIR. The changes are presented in the order in which they appear in the Draft EIR and are identified by page number. Text deletions are shown in ~~strikeout~~ and additions are shown in underline.

Global Changes

References to “Professional Drive” have been changed to “Professional Center Drive” and references to “Lynne Conde Drive” have been changed to “Lynne Conde Way” throughout the EIR and proposed plan.

Chapter 2.0, “Project Description”

Page 2-22, Section 2.3.4, Bike and Pedestrian Improvement

Bullet Point b7). The description of midblock pedestrian crossings along Rohnert Park Expressway has been updated, as provided below, so that it not only includes pedestrian refuges and the option for high-intensity activated crosswalk beacons, but also rectangular rapid flashing beacons.

- **b7)** Upgrading RPX to incorporate high-contrast bike lanes; widening the existing meandering sidewalks on both sides of the street, to support development of a Class I MUP; and supporting intersection and mid-block pedestrian crossings, with pedestrian refuges and high-intensity activated crosswalk signals, rectangular rapid flashing beacons, or other potential signalized crossing solutions at Lynne Conde ~~Drive~~ Way and along the SMART MUP.

Footnote 1. Footnote 1 has been added, as provided below to clarify the definition of an enhanced bike lane, as used in the Central Rohnert Park PDA Plan and DEIR.

Enhanced bike lanes, as referenced in the proposed plan and this Final EIR, encompass a variety of bike lane treatments, including green striping or high-contrast bike lanes, separated or protected bike lanes (e.g., parking-protected bike lanes), or other bike lane improvements that enhance driver awareness and increase the safety and comfort of bicycling.

Page 2-23, Section 2.3.5, Parking. Additional clarification provided on assumptions to and proposed parking standards.

The proposed plan identifies the appropriate number of off-street parking spaces for new residential, mixed-use, light industrial, retail/service, and office uses, as shown by the parking ratios in Table 2-4. These standards reflect parking analysis findings conducted for the proposed plan, including a shared parking analysis and parking reductions in the City Center and Station Center subareas, as described in Section 5.7.2 of the PDA Plan. For nonresidential uses, on-street parking spaces would be permitted to meet the requirement for off-street parking spaces. Chapter 17.16.040 of the City Zoning Code also allows parking reductions, including: 1) up to 25 percent for shared parking, where a combination of uses can demonstrate and make the finding that the uses share a common parking area and demand for parking

occurs over different time periods, making the full parking requirement unnecessary; 2) up to 10 percent for providing a rideshare, transit incentive, or other transportation system management program; and 3) permits meeting parking demand off-site for off-site uses within 300 feet of the use(s) they are intended to serve.