



SAN JOSE DIRIDON STATION AREA COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

SAAG Solution Group: LAND USE + DESIGN

The following is a summary of the SAAG Land Use Solution Group meetings that occurred on May 15, 2018 and June 7, 2018. The feedback from the members of the Solution Group is organized by topic and includes both recommended direction for the Diridon Station Area and requests for additional information.

At present, land use and design in the Diridon Station Area is guided by the Diridon Station Area Plan (DSAP). The Solution Group recognized that a lot of great work went into preparing the DSAP. The Solution Group conversation highlighted areas of overlap with the plan and also areas where aspects of the plan could be revisited based on new information (e.g., no ballpark and a master developer in Google.)

1. Overall Vision

- a. The area should be a vibrant, walkable neighborhood with a coherent development pattern.
- b. Preserve the unique characteristics, character and identity of the Diridon area
- c. The Diridon area should be an extension of the Downtown core, rather than a separate district.
- d. Human scale design in the area.

2. Land Use

- a. **Mix of Uses:** Develop a range of commercial, office, and residential uses to allow people to live, work, shop, and play within the Diridon area.
 - i. The current DSAP has a separation of uses that does not create vibrant, mixed use areas.
 - ii. Rather, encourage more of a mix of uses (office, retail, and residential) within each of the three zones identified in the Diridon Station Area.
 - iii. Mixing office and residential uses at the block level would help generate 24/7 activity – supporting a more vibrant, walkable neighborhood. There should be waves of people passing through the station area at all times of the day.

- iv. From the Delmas Park perspective, there is concern about mixing office into the Southern Zone, specifically within or adjacent to the SNI area. A main concern is the impact on parking/permit programs. Residents would prefer the focus to be on residential to ensure compatibility with existing uses. This concern only applies to office, as there is still desire for ground-floor retail space along San Carlos Street and other strategic locations.
 - v. Consider incorporating more residential uses in the Central Zone, closer to the station, while recognizing that this area should have a concentration of jobs to take advantage of the proximity to transit.
 - vi. Require that there is a critical mass of commercial uses (eg, retail and services) in the area to make a vibrant commercial district.
- b. **Open/Permeable Campus:** Prohibit the creation of insular tech campuses where employees do not leave the buildings. [This was very important to most of the group]
 - i. Examples ranging from bad to better are Apple → Facebook → Adobe → Samsung.
 - ii. Make community spaces available to nonprofits, considering both interior and exterior spaces.
 - iii. Make buildings linked by sidewalks, not bridges.
 - iv. Mixing uses and an open design creates challenges with respect to security and parking. Development layout and design should balance internal flow and security needs with the desire for a campus to be open and permeable. What are Google's non-negotiables with respect to these needs?
- c. **Integrate Retail with Office:** Buildings should be mixed use with ground floor retail (where appropriate) to support local businesses.
 - i. Balance internal amenities with publically accessible restaurant, shops, entertainment, and cultural facilities integrated into office development.
 - ii. This design will support small, locally-owned businesses by encouraging employees to leave the campus for food, entertainment, etc. To further this objective, consider subsidizing outside restaurants/businesses and/or offering incentives for employees of Google to use them – in addition to or instead of offering free food/services to employees through internal facilities.
 - iii. When planning for retail, consider employees, visitors, and commuters passing through the station area.
- d. **Do not over-require retail within the Station Area:**
 - i. Viability is critical. Avoid creating spaces that are left empty for a longtime.
 - ii. Do not allow developers to leave retail spaces unfinished, which transfers costs from developer to business owner.
 - iii. There is also some concern about adding to the cost of affordable housing development.
 - iv. Recognize downtown retail struggles, which are largely due to the lack of density.

- v. Consider where and how much retail will be successful, thinking about micro-siting and visibility.
 - vi. Consider which types of businesses will come in, such as franchises or Mom and Pop.
 - vii. Provide incentives and support for small businesses.
- e. **Value capture:** Capture any added value resulting from zoning changes that increase the development potential. Other Solution Groups and the entire SAAG should discuss this topic further.
- f. **Housing Needs:** Attempt to match new housing with the needs of new workers anticipated in the Diridon area, with respect to affordability, size, amenities, etc.
- g. **DSAP:** Update the DSAP to reflect the vision and ideas developed by the SAAG and the plans for the area that develop from this process.
3. Urban Design
- a. Require that new development results in a visually coherent district with varied architecture.
 - b. Make the area walkable by developing walkable blocks in the area.
 - c. Design the transportation network to maximize east-west connectivity and pedestrian accessibility.
 - d. Orient development towards Los Gatos Creek and Guadalupe River Park through open spaces, site planning, and architecture.
 - e. Incorporate usable public spaces into the design of the area. These public spaces should be usable by the general public and not just employees of the businesses.
 - f. Connect trails to bike lanes and sidewalks to ensure greater connectivity between the Diridon Station area and adjacent areas.
 - g. Consider other individualized wheeled transport options such as Wheelchairs and scooters.
 - h. Maximize circulation capacity for people. Design the area with smaller, walkable block sizes to enhance pedestrian connectivity.
 - i. Use transparent design principles to create an interesting and attractive pedestrian experience.
 - j. Consider more flexible design standards to encourage creative and innovative features with respect to signage, art, sidewalk amenities, and architecture.
 - k. Integrate art early on into the building and development design process.
4. Building Heights

[Note: Time was spent during the meeting receiving an update on the City's process for changing building heights in the area to accommodate more development in the Diridon area. The challenge is that building heights are determined by the FAA and the One Engine Inoperable (OEI) routes. What is the status of the City's OEI study? The City is currently conducting a study to determine whether heights could be increased.]

- a. **Concern:** There is concern that height limits will lead to buildings with the same height and flat roofs.
- b. **Balance:** Find a balance between maximizing development potential and creating a varied roofline.
- c. **Variation in design:** Require a varied and articulated roofline in the design of new development in the Diridon area.

[Bad Example: South Lake Union in Seattle]

5. Parking

- a. **Amount:** There is concern that too much of the land will be used solely for parking. This will make the area visually unattractive and undermines the vision for a vibrant, walkable area.
 - i. Ensure that parking is not a visually prominent aspect of the built environment.
 - ii. Minimize the amount of land dedicated to single-use parking.
- b. **Design of structures:**
 - i. To the greatest extent feasible, parking should be located below ground; if not feasible and development uses aboveground structures instead.
 - ii. Design parking structures to look interesting
 - iii. Incorporate innovative and efficient design of parking structures.
 - iv. Design parking for stormwater capture and retention.
- c. **Adaptive Re-use:** Require that parking structures be designed to have the potential for being repurposed to other uses in the future.
 - i. Recognize the slow death of the parking garage.
- d. **Shared Parking:** Create a parking district and/or shared use agreements to promote efficient use of parking spaces. For example, SAP event parking could be shared with office parking.
 - i. Right now the city can't require shared parking. We need regulatory solutions on shared parking in advance and development proposals.
- e. **Standards:** Relax/reduce parking standards to promote transit-oriented development.
 - i. Ratios can be adjusted to the specific user.
- f. **DSAP:** Recognize the existing parking strategies in the DSAP, which are the result of a long process and stakeholder engagement.

6. Historic Preservation

- a. **Character:** Preserve significant historic resources and the unique characteristics of the area.

- i. Address both “cultural” resources and those that are formally considered historic under CEQA.
- b. **Inventory:** Conduct a historic resources inventory to help determine which features of the built environment should be preserved, revitalized, re-purposed, and/or commemorated.
 - i. Use inventory to be proactive and plan for preservation.
 - ii. Staff is seeking public input on which buildings they want to stay regardless of sequence significance.

7. Impacts of Development

- a. **Equity:** Require that Google or the City conduct an equity analysis to understand the impacts of development on different populations and geographies within the City.
- b. **Noise:** Mitigate the impacts of airport noise on uses in the Diridon station area.
- c. **Construction:** Consider construction impacts on Neighbors.

8. Miscellaneous

- a. Utilize graphics, photos, maps, and other tools to help SAAG visualize what the area could look like in the future.
- b. Find examples of office developments around transit stations and tech campuses that are integrated with the urban pattern.
- c. Analyze demographics of existing and future residents and businesses during this process.
- d. Determine needs for school access and childcare
- e. Estimate how many Google employees would live in the Diridon area v. other parts of San Jose v. commute from other cities
- f. Continue to monitor the High Speed Rail project and alignment through neighborhoods with goal of minimizing displacement and isolation.