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CITY PROJECTS: RAVENSWOOD BUSINESS DISTRICT/ FOUR CORNERS

WHAT IS THE RAVENSWOOD BUSINESS DISTRICT (RBD)/FOUR CORNERS?

The Ravenswood Business District Specific Plan (RBD) is a proposal for a new downtown area in East Palo Alto. The proposal includes office buildings, retail spaces, community spaces, and housing. The City adopted the development plan in 2013. At the time, the RBD plan had 1.4 million square feet of commercial office space. In 2021, the City proposed new development scenarios with 4.2 million square feet of office space. This new scenario also reduced the number of housing units. The projected development location will take over the part of East Palo Alto known as “The Village” to long-time residents. The City has many goals for RBD. One goal is to create jobs and housing for residents. A second goal is to create lasting fiscal solvency for the City. A third goal is to foster a thriving community with parks and open spaces.

WHY IS RBD IMPORTANT TO COMMUNITY MEMBERS?

The RBD Specific Plan should reflect current residents' needs and feedback. In particular:

- RBD developments will bring in thousands of tech jobs that need a 4-year college degree. Many current residents may not have the training necessary for those positions.
- Tech jobs attract new residents who will need housing, which is in short supply. Demand will drive up home prices and rent.
- New developments attract more commuters, increasing traffic and pollution. There is only one entrance and exit (Bay Road).

WHAT IS THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT?

Some of RBD's proposed building sites are on the border of East Palo Alto's protected Baylands. This area is also prone to severe sea level rise. One of RBD's proposed sites is on the previous site of the Romic Hazardous Waste Treatment facility. Romic contaminated the local soil and groundwater. Another proposed site is behind homes on Illinois Street.

A Supplemental Environmental Impact Report is currently underway and expected in the Fall. This report will identify environmental concerns. The report may also identify solutions. Click [here](#) for more information on the specific process. [<https://on.doi.gov/3RjbZaD>]

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SCAN FOR CITY
COUNCIL STUDY
SESSION
MEETING ON
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HOW CAN YOU STAY INFORMED AND HELP SHAPE THE FUTURE OF RBD?

- Sign-up for direct updates on the RBD plan by emailing RBD@cityofepa.org. Send them any questions, comments, or concerns.
- Keep checking the [city's information site](#) for the final Environmental Impact Report. This report will inform residents about the direct impacts of this project. [QR code below]
- Attend the next City Council study session on RBD! Click here for more information! [QR code below].
- Review the City's official information site for updates on RBD. [QR code below]
- Attend the July 26, 2022 City Council at 6:30pm, focused on community benefits and provisions. [Scan QR code below to register]

ATTEND CITY MEETINGS AND ASK QUESTIONS

The planning process is open to the public. You may attend city council and planning meetings related to RBD. You also have the right to ask questions. Here are some sample questions to consider:

1. East Palo Alto needs more AFFORDABLE housing. What percent of RBD will include affordable housing? How are they defining affordable housing? Does it meet the needs of families and individuals with low incomes (50 to 80% of area median income (AMI))?
2. Just over one-third (35%) of East Palo Alto residents who are 25 years old and over have less than a high school education. Yet most of the businesses RBD will attract will most likely require a 4-year college degree. Can the plan include more ground activation spaces that would offer jobs to residents who do not hold a 4-year degree? For example, a child care center?

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