

RECEIVED

Agenda Items: File ID20-001118 (10:10 AM)

Date: 9/17/2020

2020 SEP 17 A 8:39
CITY OF FRESNO
CITY CLERK'S OFFICE

FRESNO CITY COUNCIL



Additional Information

Agenda Related Item(s) – File ID20-001118 (10:10 A.M.)

Item(s)

(CONTINUED TO OCTOBER 15, 2020 AT 10:05 A.M.)

CONTINUED HEARING to consider the adoption of Plan Amendment Application No. P19-04226 and related Final Program Environmental Impact Report (FPEIR), State Clearinghouse (SCH) # 2019050005. The following applications have been filed by the Planning and Development Department Director and pertain to the Planning Area of the City of Fresno:

Contents: Letter from Neighbors for a Healthy Fresno

Supplemental Information:

Any agenda related public documents received and distributed to a majority of the City Council after the Agenda Packet is printed are included in Supplemental Packets. Supplemental Packets are produced as needed. The Supplemental Packet is available for public inspection in the City Clerk's Office, 2600 Fresno Street, during normal business hours (main location pursuant to the Brown Act, G.C. 54957.5(2)). In addition, Supplemental Packets are available for public review at the City Council meeting in the City Council Chambers, 2600 Fresno Street. Supplemental Packets are also available on-line on the City Clerk's website.

Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA):

The meeting room is accessible to the physically disabled, and the services of a translator can be made available. Requests for additional accommodations for the disabled, sign language interpreters, assistive listening devices, or translators should be made one week prior to the meeting. Please call City Clerk's Office at 621-7650. Please keep the doorways, aisles and wheelchair seating areas open and accessible. If you need assistance with seating because of a disability, please see Security.

September 17, 2020

Fresno City Council
City of Fresno
2600 Fresno Street,
Fresno, CA 93721

RECEIVED

2020 SEP 17 A 8:14

CITY OF FRESNO
CITY CLERK'S OFFICE

RE: Fresno General Plan Final Program Environmental Impact Report

Dear Council President Arias and Councilmembers,

South Fresno community leaders including Neighbors for a Healthy Fresno submit these comments on agenda item ID 20-001118 to consider a plan amendment change and adoption of a Final Program Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) in partnership with Leadership Counsel for Justice and Accountability. While we understand that the decision regarding the PEIR has been continued until next month, we respectfully request prior to its adoption that the Council direct Staff to adequately address the concerns we raise here as well as concerns raised in previous letters submitted by and on behalf of the Central Valley Air Quality Coalition and Leadership Counsel for Justice and Accountability.

Neighbors for a Healthy Fresno (NHF) is a group of residents residing in south Fresno who have experienced and continue to experience environmental burdens significantly impacting the way of life and health of our families, neighbors, and friends. For the decades and generations, we have lived in our respective neighborhoods, we have mostly seen and experienced the worsening of our streets, sidewalks, parks, air quality, and neighborhoods. This has resulted from various inequitable systems that include ongoing racist planning patterns resulting in increased heavy-duty and light-duty traffic, industrial development, and missing investment and attention to low-income communities of color just like ours.

First, we would like to point out that obtaining and reviewing the Final PEIR was not easily accessible, especially for those of us who are monolingual Spanish speakers. Given the importance of this document, we expected the City of Fresno to do a better job of informing Fresno residents about this process and engaging the public in a more meaningful and accessible way. If it were not for local non-profit organizations, we would have been none-the-wiser and have missed the opportunity to engage in this process entirely.

Second, the Final PEIR severely lacks an adequate analysis of the impacts the General Plan will have on communities throughout Fresno, but in particular those in south Fresno. As it is written, the General Plan concentrates a supermajority of all the existing and planned industrial-type zoning in south Fresno. According to California's CalEnviroScreen tool, the entire area consists of census tracts identified in the top 10% with 11 out of the top 20 ranking census tracts found in south Fresno. What's more, the California Air Resources Board selected

this community to participate in AB 617: Community Air Protection Program with the intention to monitor and reduce current emissions. These two goals are counterproductive to what the General Plan and the accompanying Final PEIR are proposing.

Lastly and similarly, the Final PEIR does not consider all reasonable mitigation measures to reduce the impacts of what the General Plan is proposing, including but not limited to all of the proposed concentrated industrial development. The mitigation measures do not consider actions that are low hanging fruit that include but are not limited to land use changes, especially in already overburdened communities; significant buffer or transition zones of thousands of feet; or alternative truck routes away from homes, schools, and parks. Again, this proposed environmental assessment is counterintuitive to what AB 617 aims to accomplish and further exacerbates pollution in environmental justice communities.

In our current global climate, where environmental justice communities are at the front lines of climate change impacts and systemic racism has killed countless of black and brown lives, we cannot continue to sit idly by and allow systemic racism further entrench ourselves, our friends, and our neighbors into structural poverty. This current version of the Final PEIR disproportionately affects low-income communities of color and upholds the status quo development patterns and policies that have created our current tale of two cities. As such, we respectfully ask you, City Councilmembers, to direct Staff to review the current version of the Final PEIR and address the issues outlined in our letter. We appreciate and value your time and consideration of our comments.

Sincerely,

Neighbors for a Healthy Fresno
Leadership Counsel for Justice and Accountability