



# Tierrasanta Community Council

c/o Tierrasanta Library  
4985 La Cuenta Drive  
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August 21, 2013

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“Kaiser Permanente San Diego Central Medical Center Project  
No. 274240 / SCH No. 201271092”

To Whom it May Concern:

On August 21, 2013, the Tierrasanta Community Council (TCC), the officially recognized planning group for the Tierrasanta community, considered the development of the Kaiser Permanente San Diego Central Medical Center Project, Project No. 274240 / SCH No. 201271092, Kearny Mesa Community Plan Area, Council District 6, on a 20-acre site at the corner of Clairemont Mesa Blvd. and Ruffin Road. The TCC hereby transmits its comments on the project prior to the September 3, 2013 deadline.

The goal of the project is to provide high-quality health care in new, state of the art inpatient and outpatient facilities for Kaiser Permanente members and central San Diego County by the phased replacement of outmoded existing structures, technology and equipment in a practical and cost-effective manner, and to accommodate the growth of Kaiser Permanente members within the Central County service area.

The TCC voted to **(support) (support with changes) (oppose)** the project as submitted by the Applicant with the following Findings and Recommendations.

## Findings and Recommendations

1. Kaiser is to be commended for designing a project to meet minimum LEED Gold, including extensive landscaping including trees, cool rooftops, covered parking, drought tolerant and drought resistant plants including native plants, comprehensive recycling strategies, pedestrian walkways, the use of landscaping to reduce noise impacts, water features, jogging areas, outdoor cafes and public gathering spaces.
2. The TCC supports the proposed Transportation Demand Management (TDM) plan to be implemented with the Phase I opening. The plan would reduce single occupancy vehicular trips for staff and visitors by coordinating with the Metropolitan Transit System and North County Transit District to offer partially subsidized monthly passes for employees; providing preferentially located carpool/vanpool parking close to the building; installing displays on ridesharing, bike maps/routes, bus schedules, etc.; ride-matching services; staging a minimum of two events annually to promote the use of alternative transportation; providing bike racks, lockers and showers for employees; providing emergency rides home for employees who are transit riders; providing flexible work schedules –

- currently approximately 54% of all staff have rotating shifts and Kaiser will examine all opportunities to rotate shifts outside peak travel times; conducting an employee commute travel survey within six months of occupancy of building and annually thereafter; submitting an annual TDM report to the city that includes name, phone and email for the site's TDM contact plus the number of employees at the work site during normal business hours and the average vehicle ridership and mode share; and demonstrating a good faith effort to implement TDM actions. Kaiser will also participate in the Kearny Mesa Traffic Management Association (TMA)
3. Require that during the construction phase, estimated at 36 months, construction related traffic including deliveries of construction materials will generally happen during off-peak traffic times. This is consistent with statements made by Kaiser representatives to the TCC.
  4. The Tierrasanta/Murphy Canyon community experienced the full traffic impact of General Dynamics when its two Kearny Mesa facilities were in full operation. Traffic on the major arterials (Clairemont Mesa Blvd. and Balboa) were significantly impacted during morning and evening peak travel times. Given that there are no plans for improvements on I-15 between Clairemont Mesa Blvd. and Aero Drive, the TCC recommends that the 8% and 10% fair share funds be shifted to projects that would reduce congestion in the greater project area, including the coordination of the signals operated by the City of San Diego and by Caltrans on I-15 at Clairemont Mesa Blvd. and at Balboa Avenue, where no coordination currently exists; by Kaiser funding the completion of Class II Bike Lanes throughout the project impact area; and by Kaiser funding Bus Shelters including providing a covered Bus Shelter to deal with inclement weather and hot, sunny days, and enough seats to accommodate increased ridership of patients including the elderly. Kaiser should also fund a digitized sign system similar to the ones for the University City Super-Loop Bus that indicates time until the next bus, etc.
  5. This proposed project is one of several new hospitals that Kaiser is proposing to construct in the San Diego region. It is anticipated that the present Kaiser Hospital on Zion in Allied Gardens could remain open until approximately 2030. Kaiser also is proposing to construct a hospital in El Cajon that would open in the 2020s, and Kaiser has a hospital site in San Marcos that has its land entitlements. Please provide information in the final EIR with potential opening dates for other Kaiser Permanente hospitals and medical facilities within the County.
  6. The design of the facility encourages pedestrian access, includes paths and weekly Farmers Markets open to the public, etc. How will the surrounding communities be kept informed about events open to the general public?
  7. There will be a total of five access points to the project: one fully signalized access on Clairemont Mesa Blvd., one right-in/right-out driveway on Ruffin Road for access to the Emergency Department only; and three access driveways on Ruffin Court – one only for deliveries and two for public access.
  8. A 115-linear foot retaining wall would be located directly south of the proposed bus stop on Clairemont Mesa Blvd. with a maximum height of five feet. The TCC is concerned that the retaining wall, as depicted in the Draft EIR, will be a prime location for graffiti. Unlike the two-tier retaining wall system that appears to be covered extensively by plant growth, this wall will not discourage graffiti. Please consider installing some sort of graffiti control system to the site.
  9. A two-tier retaining wall system would be installed along the frontage of the project on the south side of Clairemont Mesa Blvd. starting at the project's eastern boundary, and terminating easterly in the vicinity of Murphy Canyon Road. The two-tier retaining wall system would be situated in an existing slope area located between the southerly Clairemont Mesa Blvd. right-of-way and existing Polinsky Children's Center ballfield. The length of the bottom tier is 810 linear feet and the top tier is 440 linear feet. Each tier would measure up to 23 feet high, with an approximate visible height of 20 feet. Landscaping would be installed at the bottom and top of the two-tier retaining wall simulations.
  10. It has been suggested by at least one member of the public that there could be significant impacts to traffic within the Tierrasanta community by this project should Kaiser members and/or employees decide to take a short cut through Tierrasanta on their way to/from East County for medical care or work. The proposed construction of a Kaiser hospital and medical office building in El Cajon should reduce the likelihood of direct impacts to the community. Plus, the present Kaiser Hospital on Zion Avenue in Allied Gardens is not proposed to close for several years, perhaps as late as 2030. The

map showing where current members live indicates that the majority of members live in the southern area of the county and would most likely leave the site and travel south on I-15, SR-163, I-805 and (via I-8) I-5, with a significant number also traveling west on Clairemont Mesa Blvd. and/or Balboa Avenue to travel north on SR-163, I-805 and I-5.

11. When General Dynamics was operational at its two Kearny Mesa sites, employees and visitors would travel into the Tierrasanta community for lunch and/or dinner and to use public facilities at Tierrasanta Community Park including the adult basketball league and adult softball leagues, and jog/walk on the community's extensive trail system. That could happen again, although Kaiser has included in the project design jogging and walking paths, public open space and options for active and passive recreation.
12. Tierrasanta/Murphy Canyon schools are active in the San Diego Unified School District's Partnership in Education program and all schools have active volunteer programs. It is likely that the schools will extend an opportunity for Kaiser employees to join with them in enhancing the education of local students.
13. The TCC requests that Kaiser and the City consider having a dedicated right turn lane into the Kaiser parking lot from the corner of Clairemont Mesa Blvd. and Ruffin Road rather than starting the dedicated right turn lane further east on Clairemont Mesa Blvd.
14. The TCC strongly requests that all parties - the City, Kaiser and CalTrans develop a solution to the congestion on the southbound ramp from Clairemont Mesa Blvd. onto I-15.
15. The TCC voted unanimously to approve the project with the understanding that its construction and operations would not require the extension east of Clairemont Mesa Blvd. through Mission Trails Regional Park, Tierrasanta Blvd. east through Mission Gorge, or Santo Road south to Friars Road, due to the fact that new Kaiser hospitals are proposed for El Cajon east and San Marcos to the north. The Tierrasanta community strongly objects to any effort to extend Tierrasanta Blvd. or Clairemont Mesa Blvd. east or Santo Road south out of the community.
16. Kaiser representatives at the August 21, 2013 meeting of the Tierrasanta Community Council affirmed that regular updates will be provided to the TCC during the construction phase and ongoing information once the hospital becomes operational.
17. All references in this document regarding the traffic analysis refer to the "Traffic Impact Analysis" dated May 17, 2013 prepared by Linscott, Law & Greenspan, engineers.

### **Project Background**

Kaiser Foundation Hospitals (Kaiser) is proposing to construct the Kaiser Permanente San Diego Central Medical Center Project to be built in two phases following the demolition of the existing 337,564 square foot County facility. The first phase would begin in the Spring of 2014 and is estimated to be completed between the Fall of 2017 and Spring 2018. Phase I would consist of a 7-story, 321 bed Kaiser Permanente general acute and tertiary care hospital, a 75,000 square foot Medical Office Building, a surface parking lot with 100 parking spaces adjacent to the Emergency Department, and a parking structure with 1,359 parking spaces. Licensing of and move-in at the hospital is expected to occur between June 2017 and December 31, 2018.

Phase II, potentially opening between 2030 and 2035, would add 129 beds to the hospital, add an additional 105,000 square feet to the Medical Office Building and add 1,134 spaces to the parking structure. At completion, there would be 450 hospital beds, 180,000 square feet of Medical Office Building and 2,593 parking spaces for a total built area of 938,981 square feet. The project includes a 39,981 square foot central plant (Energy Center), with an adjacent 1600 square foot fully enclosed SDG&E yard 18-foot high walls.

The 20-acre site is currently occupied by what is remaining of the County of San Diego Operations Center, which is in the process of completing its transfer to its new home off Overland north of Clairemont Mesa Blvd.

The Traffic Impact Analysis studied 25 intersections, 24 roadway segments, seven freeway segments and five metered freeway on-ramps, using 7 analysis scenarios. The analysis includes traffic conditions in 2035 both with and without the project and the proposed mitigation that would be required as part of the project.

The project is in the Kearny Mesa Community Plan Area, but is immediately adjacent to the Tierrasanta/Murphy Canyon community. The site is zoned Light-Industrial (IL-2-1) that allows for the construction and operation of a hospital with a Conditional Use Permit. A Planned Development Permit is required because the project as proposed would exceed the maximum 0.50 Floor Area Ratio allowed by the Kearny Mesa Community Plan. The existing Polinsky Child Service Center on County property immediately to the east of the site will remain. The project also requires a Site Development Permit because the proposed retaining walls along Clairemont Mesa Blvd. will encroach into environmentally sensitive land.

### **Project Trip Generation (traffic counts were conducted in January 2012)**

Project trip generation in the Draft Environmental Impact Report (EIR) was estimated using the City of San Diego Trip Generation Model (May 2003). In 2017, on opening day for Phase I (321 bed hospital building and 75,000 square foot Medical Office Building), the project is estimated to generate 10,170 daily driveway trips with 803 during the AM peak hour (585 inbound and 218 outbound), and 1017 trips during the PM peak hour (306 inbound and 711 outbound). Cumulative trips in Phase I are estimated to generate a total of 7,920 daily cumulative trips with 668 during the AM peak hour (477 inbound and 191 outbound) and 792 trips during the PM peak hour (238 inbound and 554 outbound).

Driveway Trips include total daily trips using all driveways in/out of the project and the intersections of Clairemont Mesa Blvd. and Ruffin Road and the Ruffin Court/Ruffin Road intersections that are adjacent to the project. The number of trips estimated during the morning peak travel hour and evening peak travel hour are also provided.

When the existing trips (January 2012) generated by the County Annex are subtracted from those estimated to be generated by Phase I, the net new trips are 3,588 daily cumulative trips with 139 during the AM peak hour (25 inbound and 114 outbound) and 339 trips during the PM peak hour (156 inbound and 183 outbound).

Phase II would add 129 hospital beds and 105,000 square feet of Medical Office Building, resulting in 7,830 daily driveway trips with 547 during the AM peak hour (414 inbound and 133 outbound) and 783 trips during the PM peak hour (235 inbound and 548 outbound). Cumulative trips in Phase II are estimated to generate 4,680 daily trips with 358 during the AM peak hour (263 inbound and 95 outbound) and 468 trips during the PM peak hour (140 inbound and 328 outbound).

When the project is complete, with an opening day in 2030, a total of 18,000 driveway trips with 1,350 trips during the AM peak hour (999 inbound and 351 outbound) and 1,800 trips during the PM peak hour (540 inbound and 1,260 outbound). The entire project, beginning in 2030, is estimated to generate a total of 12,600 daily cumulative trips with 1,026 during the AM peak hour (740 inbound and 286 outbound) and 1,260 during the PM peak hour (378 inbound and 882 outbound).

Existing trips generated by the San Diego County site currently (January 2012) generates 4,322 daily trips with 529 AM peak hour trips (452 inbound and 77 outbound) and 453 PM peak hour trips (82 inbound and 371 outbound).

Therefore, at buildout in 2030, the entire project is estimated to add 8,268 daily trips with 497 during the AM peak hour (288 inbound and 209 outbound) and 807 trips (296 inbound and 511 outbound) during the PM peak hour. [Please see Table 6-2 Trip Generation Summary and Figure 6-2 Project Trip Distribution by Linscott, Law & Greenspan]

The traffic analysis had the benefit of having the Zip code information for Kaiser members and Kaiser employees. According to the analysis, “Based on the membership Zip code distribution and the assumed employee distribution, a regional trip distribution was developed. It was determined, in general, that 12% of the project traffic is oriented to the north, 70% to the south, 11% to the west and 5% to the east, in general. The remaining 2% is estimated to be local traffic.” [See the attached map “Membership by Zip Code” for the number of Kaiser members per Zip Code by Linscott, Law & Greenspan]

### **Cumulative impact of projects near the proposed Kaiser Hospital**

Under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), the Draft EIR must include an analysis of the impact of other projects proposed for construction near the Kaiser Hospital site. These include the following projects.

1. Spectrum Center (Lightwave Ave., immediately adjacent to SR-163) Residential, Commercial & Industrial – already 72% constructed – 91,720 total trips. Estimated traffic impact from occupation of the remaining 28% is 25,700 average daily trips and is already included in the traffic analysis for the proposed Kaiser Hospital, however discussions with Sunroad indicate that the remaining project will only generate approximately 10,000 average daily trips, so the estimate is a conservative one. Still to be built are 756 apartments (generating 4,536 daily trips), 475,000 sq ft of office space (generating 5,843 daily trips) and another 200,000 square feet of office space (generating 2,851 daily trips).
2. Medical Examiner (north of Clairemont Mesa Blvd. between Complex Dr. & Overland Ave.) This project has already been approved and will generate 108 daily trips
3. Kyocera (south of Balboa Ave. west of SR-163) This project is under review by the City. A 104,000 square foot office building is proposed, generating an estimated 1,499 daily trips
4. County Operations Center (north of Clairemont Mesa Blvd. on Overland Ave.) Approximately 55% was built and occupied at the time the January 2012 traffic count was conducted; a conservative 50% of the project trip generation is included in the cumulative traffic analysis.
5. Stone Creek (located 5 miles from the proposed Kaiser Hospital, north of SR-52, west of I-15) A light industrial park proposed to be built in 2017. This project is currently under review by the City of San Diego, and is proposed to include a 135,000 square foot business park (2,009 daily trips), a 300,000 sq foot high tech park (4,560 daily trips), 4,445 square foot of residential (24,140 daily trips), retail (6,681 daily trips), 200,000 square foot of commercial office space (2,682 daily trips), a 175-room hotel (1,400 daily trips) and a 26.2 acre neighborhood park (131 daily trips).

The City of San Diego has “significance criteria” for projects submitted for City environmental review. Based on City standards, for Existing + Project Phase I Impacts, Existing + Entire Project (Project Phase II Impacts), Near-Term + Project Phase I Impacts, the traffic analysis indicates that there are no direct significant impacts to intersections, road segments, freeway segments or ramp meters.

However, direct significant impacts were determined in the Near-Term + Entire Project scenario for the Clairemont Mesa Blvd/Ruffin Road and Balboa Ave./Ruffin Road intersections. No direct significant impacts were indicated for road segments, freeway segments or ramp meters.

Under Year 2035 + Entire Project, based on the City's significance criteria, long-term cumulative impacts in 2035 when the entire project is completed were identified at the following locations: the intersections at Clairemont Mesa Blvd./Ruffin Road, Clairemont Mesa Blvd./Murphy Canyon Road, Balboa Ave./Ruffin Road and Balboa Ave./View Ridge Ave.; on I-15 between Clairemont Mesa Blvd. and Balboa Ave and between Balboa Ave/Tierrasanta Blvd. to Aero Drive; and on the freeway ramp at Clairemont Mesa Blvd. to southbound I-15.

Because the traffic analysis identified no direct impacts in Existing + Project Phase I, in Existing + Entire Project and in Near-Term + Project Phase 1, no mitigation measures are required prior to the development and operation of Phase I. However, several improvements are recommended for impacted locations for the Near-Term + Entire Project scenario, which are proposed to be implemented prior to the development and operation of the entire project in 2035. These include adding an eastbound right-turn lane on Clairemont Mesa Blvd. at Ruffin Road, with the median relocated 3 feet to the north and a bike lane and eastbound right-turn lane added to reconfigured eastbound lanes. Approximately 10 feet by 190 feet of property would have to be acquired from the existing retail center at the southwest corner of the intersection. This would result in the existing 28-foot setback being reduced to 18-feet. There is some concern that this mitigation may be difficult to implement in a timely manner.

A second recommended improvement would modify the signal at Balboa Ave. and Ruffin Road, thereby providing southbound to westbound right-turn overlap phasing at the intersection. The cumulative impacts identified for the project at buildout in 2035 include completing both recommended mitigation measures identified for Existing + Project Phase I above. The third eastbound lane on Clairemont Mesa Blvd. between Ruffin Rd. and Murphy Canyon Rd. that the project will include prior to opening day of the facility in 2017 will become a shared through and right-turn lane at Murphy Canyon Road, which would add capacity in the intersection.

The Applicant would also be required to restripe the southbound approach to the Balboa Ave./Viewridge Ave. intersection to create a second southbound left turn lane, plus include suitable modifications to the signal to serve the second southbound left turn lane. This will eliminate parking for 160 feet along the east curb of Viewridge Ave. north of Balboa and the loss of about 7 parking spaces. Existing parking at the local businesses should be adequate, according to the traffic analysis.

The Draft EIR recommends that Kaiser provide an 8% fair share contribution of funds for future improvements to the freeway between Clairemont Mesa Blvd. and Tierrasanta Blvd/Balboa Ave, and a 10% fair share contribution for improvements between Tierrasanta Blvd/Balboa Ave. and Aero Drive. Unfortunately, no project is proposed to improve those segments of the freeway. Therefore, the impact would not be considered to be fully mitigated.

As for the impact to the ramp meter to I-15 southbound at Clairemont Mesa Blvd., the site is built out to its ultimate configuration. Therefore, according to the traffic impact analysis there is no feasible mitigation for impacts on the ramp and the funds would just sit there, unused and not improving traffic conditions.

As part of Phase I, the project will provide the following improvements to the frontage for the project along Clairemont Mesa Blvd. and to circulation in the immediate vicinity of the project. An eastbound third lane between Ruffin Road and Murphy Canyon Road will be added, and appropriate right-of-way will be dedicated along the entire frontage for the project on Clairemont Mesa Blvd. A signal will also be installed on Clairemont Mesa Blvd. at the new driveway into the project. This driveway would be located east of the existing driveway into the site off Clairemont Mesa Blvd. Drivers will be able to exit the site and travel either

east or west on Clairemont Mesa Blvd. That section of Clairemont Mesa Blvd. will include two 300-foot long left turn lanes and three through lanes going westbound; two right-turn lanes and one left-turn lane northbound; and one 150-foot long right turn lane, three through lanes and a Class II bike lane going eastbound.

A 280-foot long raised median will be installed on Ruffin Road just north of Ruffin Court. Southbound traffic will not be stopped at the first internal intersection of the roadway from the Clairemont Mesa Blvd. signalized access point.

The project will relocate the existing Bus Stop for eastbound bus routes #25 and #928 on Clairemont Mesa Blvd. The current Bus Stop, located just west of Ruffin Road on the south side of Clairemont Mesa Blvd., will be relocated to the east side of Ruffin Road as part of the frontage area for the project.

According to the traffic analysis (page 140, 14.6 Conclusion), “With implementation of the above recommended mitigation measures, the significant direct and cumulative impacts are considered fully mitigated, except for the significant cumulative impacts on two I-15 Freeway segments and the metered On-Ramp at Clairemont Mesa Boulevard/I-15 SB On-Ramp.” The project will include improvements to Clairemont Mesa Blvd., Ruffin Road, on-site circulation and the Bus Stop as detailed above.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this project.

Sincerely,



Tim Splinter  
President