

From: [Gregory McConnell](#)
To: [City Clerk](#); [John Knox White](#); [Malia Vella](#); [Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft](#); [Tony Daysog](#); [Trish Spencer](#)
Cc: [Mimi Rohr](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Memorandum re: 7D/Support County of Alameda Participation in an IFD
Date: Tuesday, October 19, 2021 11:00:24 AM
Attachments: [We sent you safe versions of your files.msg](#)
[Mayor and City Council do not urge county support final.pdf](#)

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Dear Honorable City Council Members,

Attached please find a memorandum from The McConnell Group regarding item 7D/
Recommendation to Support County of Alameda Participation in an Enhanced Infrastructure
Financing District in Support of the Oakland Athletics Stadium at Howard Terminal – on today's
(10/19) City Council agenda.

Best Regards,

Gregory McConnell
President and CEO
The McConnell Group
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Memorandum

To: Mayor Marilyn Ashcraft, Vice Mayor Malia Vella
Councilmembers Tony Daysog, Trish Herrera Spencer, and John Knox White
Cc: Alameda City Clerk, Schnitzer Steel
From: Greg McConnell
Date: 10/19/2021
Subject: Agenda Item 7-D on Alameda Council Agenda Tuesday October 19, 2021
Vote NO on Proposal to Urge County Funding Support for Howard Terminal Ballpark

I represent industrial businesses that pay family sustaining wages. I urge you to vote **NO or abstain** from supporting any motion to urge Alameda County to spend public tax dollars to transform a port and industrial neighborhood that is the home of African American families into a ballpark. This is unnecessary; the project could be built on the existing coliseum grounds and have no negative impacts on anyone.

Alameda should not allow itself to be dragged into a fight that the city has nothing to do with. Moreover, Alameda should not support an effort to have the county divert resources away from critical health and safety programs.

It is irresponsible to pressure Alameda County to commit to funding a project that is a bad deal for Oakland, and for all Alameda County residents, especially before the City of Oakland has even reached a final agreement with the team and the Environmental Impact Report remains incomplete.

Recently, the Board of Supervisors stated that the county could not responsibly move forward until the A's and the City of Oakland completed their own negotiation process and come to a final agreement. That was true then and it remains true today. Nothing has changed!

More important, the terms proposed so far, do nothing to address the considerable impact this project will have on the operations at the Port of Oakland, and industrial and logistics businesses that provide good-paying, working-class jobs to tens of thousands of Alameda County residents and is crucial to the economic success of our entire region.

Our country is in the middle of a national crisis and the President has been compelled to direct ports to operate on a 24/7 basis. This is not the time to restrict or reduce potential port operations. No mitigation measures have been offered for the increase in traffic that will clog the port and I 880, or the serious conflicts between the 24/7 demands of a working industrial port and new residential or commercial tenants.

We have many pressing problems that the county needs to focus its attention on. This includes using all available funds to address homelessness, roads and traffic problems and myriad infrastructure problems. We need to put people back to work and make the Bay Area and Alameda County the great region it can be. The county should not be diverting public funds away from other crucial needs, and the city of Alameda should

not be using time and energy to press the county to do something that is not in the best interest of Alameda residents or residents of the county.

If the city of Alameda wants to weigh in on whether the county should divert public dollars to any project, it should only do that after it has considered all the effects and impacts of such a proposal. Alameda has not had time to do that as this proposal has been rushed to the agenda, bypassing the normal process, and leapfrogging many other proposals that are actual Alameda issues that others want the city to explore.

I urge the city to say no to the proposal because it is not a priority for the city. Alternatively, city should defer action and open its own full evaluation of the propriety of using public funds to approve a luxury project that may hurt industrial businesses, the Port, and workers.

After being burned by “Mt. Davis” and other sports debacles in Oakland, the county made the wise decision to get out of the sports business altogether. Let’s leave it that way.

Please vote **NO** on the proposal to urge the County to spend public funds on the Howard Terminal project.

From: [Cyndy Johnsen](#)
To: [Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft](#); [Malia Vella](#); [Tony Daysog](#); [Trish Spencer](#); [John Knox White](#)
Cc: [City Clerk](#); [Denyse Trepanier](#); [Dave Campbell](#); [Andrew Thomas](#); [Rochelle Wheeler](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] BWA Comments on Item 7-D (Howard Terminal)
Date: Saturday, October 16, 2021 12:13:13 PM
Attachments: [We sent you safe versions of your files.msg](#)
[CC 10 19 21 Ballpark Preserving Bridge Easements.pdf](#)

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Dear Mayor Ashcraft and Members of the City Council,

We hope you will consider our thoughts on Item 7-D, coming before you on Tuesday — our letter is attached.

Respectfully,

Cyndy Johnsen
Bike Walk Alameda Board Member



(510) 516-0497
P.O. BOX 2732
ALAMEDA, CA 94501
www.bikewalkalameda.org

**Board of
Directors**

October 16, 2021

Denyse Trepanier
President

Dear Mayor Ashcraft and Council Members,

Brian Fowler
Treasurer

We are writing in regards to Item 7-D on the agenda for Tuesday ("Support for Howard Terminal A's Stadium"). We ask that as you consider it, you confirm that the commitments our city recommended during the DEIR process are sufficiently satisfied, specifically, the preservation of easements for the proposed bike and pedestrian bridge alignments.

Cameron Holland
Secretary

Pat Potter
Board Member

Cyndy Johnsen
Board Member

Tim Beloney
Board Member

We see this as an opportunity to prioritize this critical step. As you know, the two zones being considered for bridge landings in Oakland are Howard Terminal and Estuary Park, both of which are in planning stages, and neither of which, to our knowledge, have preserved easements yet, or firm commitments for them. It's a precarious situation: without preserved easements, the bike and pedestrian bridge will never be built. The timing is very important and could jeopardize the bridge as other priorities come into play. At some point, ideally before other plans get too far along, preserving easements, or at a minimum getting a very specific commitment that each zone must preserve an easement, needs to happen. We think it's already late, so the time is now.

Lucy Gigli
Founder, non-voting

We know the bridge is technically feasible. It has the green light from both the Coast Guard and the Port of Oakland. It's in many key planning documents at both the local and regional levels. We know we need better connectivity across the estuary here, and that many other alternative solutions have been studied or ruled out, among them a car bridge, a gondola, and a new tube. We also know that the bike and pedestrian bridge will do more than any other feasible, planned infrastructure project to reduce vehicle trips, while improving equity, health, and safety within the community. It's much-needed green infrastructure for an historically under-resourced part of Alameda with the fewest connections to Oakland, and where most of the new housing developments are planned. For all these reasons, it's a winner, and promises to be transformational.

To make it a reality, though, we need preserved landing easements. Alameda has preserved easements, it's now time for Oakland to take this step, whether or not the ballpark moves ahead. We urge you to raise this need as part of the discussion to ensure the future of this very important project.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Bike Walk Alameda Board

From: [Patricia Lamborn](#)
To: [Marilyn Ezzy Ashcraft](#); [Malia Vella](#); [John Knox White](#); [Tony Daysog](#); [Trish Spencer](#)
Cc: [Lara Weisiger](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Public Comment RE: Item 7-D Alameda City Council Oct. 19,2021 Howard Terminal
Date: Friday, October 15, 2021 9:48:18 AM
Attachments: [We sent you safe versions of your files.msg](#)
[Sierra Club Comment Letter on Draft EIR for Oakland Waterfront Ballpark District Project.pdf](#)

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RE: 7-D 2021-1384 Recommendation to Support County of Alameda Participation in an Enhanced Infrastructure Financing District in Support of the Oakland Athletics Stadium at Howard Terminal

Dear Mayor Ashcraft, Vice Mayor Vella, and Council Members Knox-White, Daysog and Spencer,

I have attended the hearings on the Howard Terminal/Ballpark Draft Environmental Impact Report and the hearings on this infrastructure district held by the Alameda County Board of Supervisors. I have also toured Howard Terminal after waiting to gain entry for 20-30 minutes because a very long freight train needed to pass so we could safely reach the site.

As someone who has been involved with environmental issues impacting the waterfront around the San Francisco Bay, I am concerned that the city council sending a letter of support for Oakland's Waterfront Ballpark District at the Howard Terminal through an "Enhanced Infrastructure Finance District" is premature. You would be communicating that Alameda residents support the proposed project without holding a single hearing or town hall on the complex issues and concerns this project poses. Historically, using public monies to support the building of privately owned stadiums has resulted in public debt and that burden falls on taxpayers.

I would ask you these questions:

1. Have you toured the Howard Terminal site and analyzed the complex and multi-billion dollar transportation infrastructure that will be required to create safe access for thousands of fans?
2. Have you read the comments from the April 2021 Oakland Planning Department public hearing on the Draft EIR? Public comment lasted for hours regarding toxics on the site and transportation challenges. The Final Environmental Impact Report has not been issued.
3. Have you read the public comments from the Alameda County Board of Supervisors hearing June 15, 2021? -- Oakland residents and community organizations spoke for hours, in favor of keeping the ball park at its current Oakland Coliseum location, already served by mass transit. What kind of message do Alameda leaders want to send to our neighborhood community in Oakland?

I ask that you wait until you have thoroughly and thoughtfully reviewed this project, in a public hearing, before you convey unconditional support.

I am attaching the Sierra Club Comments, dated April 27, 2021 on the Draft EIR as they, along with many other organizations, thoroughly and substantially lay out key questions and concerns.

Sincerely,
Alameda Resident
Patricia Lamborn
patricia.lamborn@aol.com



SIERRA CLUB
SAN FRANCISCO BAY

NORTHERN ALAMEDA COUNTY GROUP

ALAMEDA ALBANY BERKELEY EMERYVILLE OAKLAND PIEDMONT SAN LEANDRO

April 27, 2021

Peterson Vollmann, Planner IV
City of Oakland Bureau of Planning
250 Frank H. Ogawa Plaza, Suite 2214
Oakland, CA 94612
PVollmann@oaklandca.gov

Submitted electronically at <https://comment-tracker.esassoc.com/oaklandsportseir/index.html>.

Re: Comment Letter on Draft EIR for Oakland Waterfront Ballpark District Project (Case File No. ER18-016; State Clearinghouse No. 2018112070)

Dear Mr. Vollmann:

The Sierra Club is concerned about significant environmental and environmental justice impacts presented by the Oakland A's proposed move from the Coliseum to a new stadium at the Howard Terminal at the Port of Oakland. Almost one year ago, the Sierra Club presented comments to Mayor Schaaf and Members of the Oakland City Council expressing these concerns.¹ Unfortunately, the Draft Environmental Impact Report for the Oakland Waterfront Ballpark District Project (DEIR) fails to adequately disclose to the public or mitigate the proposed Project's significant environmental impacts, including to air quality, greenhouse gas emissions and transportation/circulation, hazardous materials, water quality, and biological resources, among others.

Perhaps the most concerning deficiency is the DEIR's misleading comparison of alternatives, including Alternative 2 – a project at the Coliseum Site that would avoid or lessen almost all environmental impacts and improve environmental justice for Oakland residents. The Coliseum Site is already approved for use as a stadium (and would not create land use conflicts such as that at the Howard Terminal by bringing thousands of residents and visitors to an area surrounded by industrial and heavy railway uses that cannot be moved from the Seaport and transportation corridor location). But where the Howard Terminal is a busy industrial and commercial transportation center, the Coliseum Site is transit-accessible, and development at that location would lift up surrounding East Oakland neighborhoods, rather than displacing maritime businesses and workers. Development at Howard Terminal would create numerous significant environmental impacts that would not occur at the Coliseum location, including the following:

¹ Sierra Club San Francisco Bay letter to Mayor Libby Schaaf and Members of the Oakland City Council re Sale of Coliseum Property to Oakland Athletics (June 29, 2020), incorporated herein by reference.

1. Transportation Impacts. Howard Terminal has insufficient transit access and would require residents and visitors to make at-grade railroad crossings perhaps multiple times per day. This creates a significant safety risk, including to pedestrians and bicyclists who might try to cross the tracks when trains are stopped, as the DEIR acknowledges is a common occurrence. The DEIR makes no study of such public safety risks, including to children who might be drawn to climb on or around the trains. This transportation conflict also could cause motorists to circle or idle for significant periods of time, increasing air emissions that were not adequately studied by the DEIR (see below). The DEIR does not adequately study, present, or adopt feasible mitigation. The aerial gondola variant is far-fetched and not reliable, nor required and does not mitigate transportation and public safety impacts. Additional transportation and circulation comments are attached to this letter.
2. Air Quality and Climate Change. The greenhouse gas emissions from transportation to and from the Project is a major concern for a site that would attract an average of 20,500 people to each of 80+ home games per season and events almost every day of the year, not to mention residents and employees. Because the Howard Terminal is not well-served by public transit (the nearest BART stations – 12th Street and Lake Merritt – are more than a mile away and separated from the site by Interstate 880 and busy railroad tracks as stated above), it is likely that numerous visitors would drive and create areas of localized significant air quality impacts when circling to find parking, extending out into nearby neighborhoods, and idling when stopped at a railroad crossing. With tens of thousands of visitors several times per week, air emissions would negatively impact nearby residents. The DEIR failed to adequately study or mitigate this foreseeable increase in emissions. (To the contrary, both BART and Amtrak have stops right at the Coliseum, where the area has been developed and designed to serve transportation needs for large events.)

In Chapter 4-5 (Energy), the DEIR gives the Project credit for people buying electric vehicles (EVs) because the Project will install EV charging stations (DEIR at 37). However, the DEIR does not provide any evidence of such a cause-and-effect result. There is no study to support the claim that people will be induced to buy an EV because of a charging station at the Project. Moreover, the DEIR does not indicate whether or to what extent EV charging stations would benefit residents. The DEIR does not present information on any estimated number of future occupants that would buy EVs because of charging stations at their parking spaces, or how much of an effect this would have on them. Presumably occupants (who would be interested in purchasing EVs) might already have EVs. This is not taken into account and the DEIR's conclusion that energy impacts would be mitigated to a level that is less than significant is unsupported. See DEIR at 4.5-37, 38, 4.5-42, 43, 4.5-47, 47.

Operational diesel generators according to the DEIR present an excess cancer risk of 4 - 9 per million, which appears excessive in the context of a new ballpark that can be planned to accommodate lighting, food service, and other distributed electricity needs. Diesel generators are utilized in recreational areas that were never planned for electrical hookups, but Howard Terminal is being planned at a time when operational diesel generators are known to emit large quantities of diesel particulate matter, which can cause excess cancer risk and exacerbate asthma for local event participants and the surrounding

community. The DEIR should implement a mitigation measure to integrate distributed electrical outlets to minimize or eliminate use of operational diesel generators.

Mitigation of Construction Emissions - The DEIR identifies mitigated excess lifetime cancer risk, chronic hazard index, and annual average PM_{2.5} concentration of the proposed project at the new MEIR. The EIR outlines a menu of mitigation options, but lacks clarity as to the timeline and process for selecting and verifying the adequacy of mitigation measures.

A deduction is applied for greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions under existing conditions at the Oakland Coliseum as part of its calculation of “no net increase” of GHG emissions. However, the DEIR does not state that in applying such a deduction, that any future use of or activity on the existing site will need to at minimum acquire a compliant GHG offset product for operations or new uses that were credited to the Howard Terminal site. Failure to clarify this issue would raise a compliance issue with AB 734 standards, and the adequacy of this EIR for GHG mitigation measures.

Greenhouse gas emissions associated with construction of the Howard Terminal project are “amortized” over 30 years despite occurring in specific years of construction activity. The DEIR is unclear as to why this amortization is relevant from an environmental perspective. Is the Project seeking to defer mitigation of its upfront construction emissions across thirty years, despite the atmospheric forcing impacts of greenhouse gases starting in the year that the emissions occurred in? The EIR should clarify how construction emissions are mitigated as they are emitted, and to account for any delay to mitigation based on an accepted scientific rationale based on atmospheric forcing equivalency.

3. Sea Level Rise, Water Quality, and Flooding. The depth to groundwater at the Howard Terminal site is already shallow and with rising sea level and high tide or storm events, contaminants in the ground water are at risk to migrate, including vertically or to the Bay. Sea levels are expected to rise dramatically in the coming decades, which could flood parts of West Oakland, including the Howard Terminal. The DEIR does not adequately disclose or mitigate these risks. The DEIR indicates that additional fill (soil) will be placed on the site, but does sufficiently demonstrate that sea level rise will not therefore continue to create risks of contaminated groundwater migration or other risks, including the increased potential for liquefaction-induced damage during earthquakes (see below). The proposed “wall” could also affect groundwater flow and levels in and around the Project site, but these effects are not studied or disclosed, nor are potential impacts to biological resources during in-water or other work. In addition, trucking in the enormous amounts of fill required will cause air emissions and greenhouse gas emissions that could be avoided by use of the Coliseum Site.

Moreover, raising the Project site that is essentially at or near sea level (Bay level) could subject adjacent shorelines to increased wave energy and higher storm surges as sea level rises. Recent studies (see JGR OCEANS, *Assessing the Influence of Shoreline Adaptation on Tidal Hydrodynamics: The Role of Shoreline Typologies*, by Michelle A. Hummel & Mark T. Stacey, December 29, 2020) suggest these impacts can be severe and are not necessarily limited only to adjacent properties. In coastal bays,

interactions between tides and shoreline infrastructure impact water levels. Understanding how shoreline changes affect tidal dynamics is critical to protecting coastal communities from negative impacts, such as flooding and erosion. We find that protecting individual shoreline segments produces relatively small changes in tidal amplitudes for low increments of sea-level rise but can result in amplification of certain tidal constituents by up to 40% under higher sea-level rise scenarios. Protection of shorelines with gradually sloping topography and space for floodwater accommodation generally has the largest influence on tidal response, both locally and regionally.

Recent presentations to the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC) showed that the public spaces along the water were not resilient to 2100 predicted Bay tidal surges and the DEIR has no plans for extending the raising of the existing site to the full impacted area. This design will create an island effect that could threaten neighboring communities or properties. The DEIR does not analyze, disclose, or provide mitigation for these potentially significant impacts.

4. Liquefaction. The DEIR describes unconsolidated sediments below the Howard Terminal site, including bay mud, in varying proportion and thickness, and notes the potential for differential sinking under the load of heavy structures proposed at the site and for liquefaction in a heavy earthquake. The nearby Hayward Fault and others are considered to be at a high risk of rupture within the next 30 years. However, the recommended mitigation is only for a future geotechnical report to be created, including construction “recommendations.” The DEIR does not demonstrate that this future plan will provide adequate or feasible mitigation.
5. Site Contamination. The Sierra Club is also concerned about Howard Terminal’s contamination by toxics and the potential, as a result of a large construction project, for human exposure or pollution of the Bay. Prior industrial uses of the site contaminated it with toxics including polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, volatile organic compounds, petroleum hydrocarbons, heavy metals and cyanide.² Almost the entire Project site contains soil gas that exceeds one or more screening levels. The Department of Toxic Substances Control has a Deed Restriction on this site limiting it to industrial and commercial uses (residential uses are explicitly prohibited) and requiring review and approval for any plan that would disturb the existing cap — as the Project most certainly would. The proposed Project, excavation and construction would disturb that contamination, and potentially spread toxins into the water and air. At the very least, remediation activities would require heavy truck traffic to remove contaminated soil off-site. The air quality, noise, greenhouse gas emissions, and other impacts associated with remediation were not adequately studied in the DEIR. Additionally, the DEIR states that the Coliseum Site also contains contamination; however, those locations are must less voluminous and are generally associated with USTs or other smaller locations.

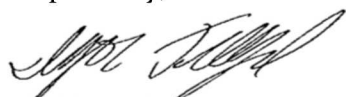
² The Howard Terminal was previously home to oil tanks, a manufactured gas plant, a briquette plant where compressed charcoal blocks were made, a coal tramway, an asphalt paving plant and a blacksmith. These operations created streams of waste: a type of carbon called lampblack, oil tar sludge, spent coke, cyanide paint and other materials. (San Francisco Chronicle “*Underneath the Asphalt*” By Kimberly Veklerov, Feb 15, 2019.)

Using the Coliseum Site Alternative and building a new stadium at that location would avoid the Howard Terminal site risks altogether.

We urge the City to conduct sufficient environmental review to protect public health, the San Francisco Bay ecosystem, and the integrity of our system of public oversight. The A's have pursued several shortcuts, including avoidance of the standard evaluation process for the Project at the State Lands Commission and the Bay Conservation and Development Commission (*see* letter co-signed by Sierra Club California and the Sierra Club San Francisco Bay Chapter on this legislation) — before the DEIR was even prepared.

With all these concerns, we would urge the City to take another look at the Coliseum site as the preferred and environmentally superior alternative. Community leaders in East Oakland have been clear that they want the A's to stay and make good on promises to provide economic development and affordable housing. East Oakland residents have been good neighbors to the A's for decades. It's time for the A's to be good neighbors in return and develop a project that will truly benefit Oakland.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Igor Tregub', written in a cursive style.

Igor Tregub, Chair

Sierra Club Northern Alameda County Group

Supplemental comments about Transportation and Circulation Chapter (4-15) of the Howard Terminal Oakland A's Ballpark Draft Environmental Impact Report

The study area for transportation and circulation is inadequate. As a regional draw, anticipating over 33,000 auto trips per event, the study area should include freeway access from the Bay Bridge and I-580, and the likelihood of traffic impacts on city streets from vehicles exiting the freeway upon arrival in this part of Oakland (approximately to W MacArthur and MacArthur Blvds). Significant traffic impacts are likely to impact intersections from Grand and MacArthur and Telegraph and West MacArthur through downtown, with attendant impacts on bus, bicycle, and pedestrian circulation as well as noise and pollution impacts for the residents in neighborhoods as far away as three to four miles from the project area.

The City of Oakland is planning to remove the I-980 highway, and its absence should be studied in the EIR. While plans have not been finalized, plans are underway and federal funding has been proposed to fund the freeway removal, with Senator Alex Padilla publicly advocating for the project. The DEIR should evaluate traffic impacts in the absence of I-980 and identify mitigations needed as I-980 removal moves forward. Given the public advocacy for the removal of I-980, it is likely that the freeway will not be available for the lifetime of the ballpark. Impacts to traffic without the existence of I-980 are foreseeable and therefore need to be studied and mitigations identified. This is another reason why traffic impacts should be studied from I-580, because without I-980 ballpark users will have exit I-580 at MacArthur or W MacArthur Blvds in order to access the ballpark.

Transit capacity and service must be increased in order to accommodate increased demand from the ballpark. The DEIR assumes that existing BART, Capitol Corridor and AC Transit capacity is adequate to accommodate the increased trips generated by the ballpark. This is untrue, especially given that the new trips generated by the project will be very limited in time, with the vast majority of trips aiming to arrive at the ballpark at the same time. Before the pandemic, AC Transit and BART vehicles in the area, pre-pandemic, were often at capacity during peak hours. Additionally, several City of Oakland plans and development projects also assume adequate capacity, so the cumulative impact of these projects means there is no extra capacity overall, and certainly not during crush load times generated by ballpark games and events. Similarly, the DEIR assumes ample excess WETA capacity and that WETA will provide additional “event service” at their own expense. The DEIR needs to analyze the schedules of the ballpark, determine the need for increased transit service during the peak period, and provide that service in the form of capital stock and operating expenses as a mitigation to the trips the ballpark will generate. The traffic mitigations in the plan also increase delay for bus riders, which further impacts transportation and circulation. AC Transit and the Capitol Corridor Authority have also publicly expressed the lack of extra capacity to serve the ballpark. Additional capacity for AC Transit and BART is a foreseeable and needed mitigation.

Pedestrian safety measures, particularly around the UPRR/Embarcadero railroad tracks, are inadequate to mitigate the impacts to pedestrian safety from trips generated by the project. If a significant number of trips will be by BART, there will be large numbers of people - many of whom do not regularly visit downtown Oakland - walking from the 12th St and Lake Merritt BART stations to the ballpark within a short time frame. Pedestrian injuries and deaths in Oakland are increasing (<https://www.sfchronicle.com/local/article/Oakland-traffic-deaths-jumped-by-22-in-2020-16047513.php>), with most of those deaths occurring in corridors similar to those that lie between the BART stations and Howard Terminal: high-speed arterials, one-way streets, streets with freeway access, signalized intersections, and multi-lane streets. Pedestrian safety and life-safety impacts of the project are not adequately analyzed or mitigated, and the capacity of Washington Street is overstated in the document - additional improvements are needed on Washington to provide safe passage from 12th St BART. The life-safety impact of locating an attraction adjacent to a working railroad is not adequately mitigated; fencing the railroad is a highly unadvisable idea, because it will interfere with bus operations, harm local business access, and reduce existing pedestrian trips. Providing three at-grade crossings of the railroad will also defeat the purpose of reducing these life-safety issues, since event attendees can use those to cross the tracks in an unsafe manner. Furthermore, many of the trains on Embarcadero are very long, and the grade crossings could be blocked for long stretches of time when events begin or end; this is not adequately analyzed. Burying or elevating the railroad so there are no at-grade crossings in the Jack London District is the appropriate mitigation.

The VMT-based analysis doesn't adequately study and mitigate impacts on transit service in downtown Oakland. The increased VMT generated by the Project would be heightened during peak hours, causing vehicle delays on several arterial streets that are one or two-lane roads. This congestion would have a particularly significant impact upon bus transit services, which would be delayed with increased automobile congestion. Without adequate mitigation, delayed bus transit operations that affect several routes and would be a significant environmental impact of the Project. While VMT per capita thresholds are met through a regional threshold, there is still a significant impact on transportation due to impacts on local circulation due to total VMT. The resulting circulation impacts are significant notwithstanding the limited scope of thresholds that only look at VMT per capita. While VMT per capita is a measure of the effectiveness of TDM programs, it fails to incorporate unique circulation conditions affecting the surrounding community, particularly in the cumulative effects on the service population that would rely on bus transit operations. The DEIR is inadequate because it fails to analyze with adequate detail circulation delays that affect bus transit operations, and to consider all feasible mitigation measures that would reduce these impacts to less than significant levels. Some feasible mitigation measures may require upgrades to infrastructure, such as timed signals, dedicated bus lanes, queue jumper roadway design, and improved bus stop and bus station infrastructure. Some feasible measures involve commitments to minimum shuttle or transit operations, but the DEIR fails to articulate the implementation and share of costs that the Project will contribute to these mitigation measures.

Analysis of project interaction with existing plans is inadequate. The Oakland General Plan and its Lane Use and Transportation Element does not contemplate non-Port-related uses at Howard Terminal, and explicitly bars high-rise buildings outside of downtown and the Oakland Airport area. Regional, Alameda County, and city transportation plans are based on this document and do not take into account the enormous trip generation in the Howard Terminal area contemplated by the project. Therefore, the plans cannot be used as mitigations for the project, and the EIR must analyze these plans and existing traffic conditions in more depth to develop mitigations for the trip generating aspects of the project. As stated above, initial planning for the removal of I-980 is underway and that is not taken into account in the DEIR analysis or mitigations.

Truck parking that is currently provided at Howard Terminal will be displaced by the project. Those trucks will still need to park near the Port of Oakland and will likely park in the residential areas of West Oakland absent an alternative plan that takes into account current and projected truck traffic. The environmental document assumes that adequate space can be found elsewhere on the seaport but does not prove that with documentation. The parking of trucks in West Oakland will present significant environmental impacts to the West Oakland community, including exhaust pollution, increased likelihood of fatal truck-pedestrian and truck-bicycle interactions, and aesthetic and parking impacts. There also may be VMT or travel impacts as the trucks use a different parking area. This is a direct impact of the project but is not mitigated. Alternative truck parking must be identified and created as a mitigation to these reasonably foreseeable impacts.

The (optimistic) projection of over 60% of trips being by vehicle even with travel demand management is very disappointing for a project that seeks to move from a richly transit-oriented location to an area near transit-oriented downtown Oakland, in a city that is committed to addressing the climate change crisis. The greenhouse gas and VMT impacts of this project location make it less environmentally preferred than the Coliseum project location alternative. Given that the project is near downtown Oakland and its transit hubs, there is clearly substantial room for improvement in trip generation with more mitigations, such as burying the railroad tracks, improving pedestrian circulation from BART, and increasing transit operations during events.