

Cypress Environmental and Land Use Planning

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Summer Newsletter – July 2013



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Cypress Services

The various services of Cypress Environmental and Land Use Planning are discussed on the "Services" page of [my website](#). Please call if you have any questions.

Speaking to Your Group

Did you know that Kim Tschantz will speak to your group or professional meeting regarding current trends in local land use planning processes and ordinances? Please call if you are interested.



Cypress is certified as a sustainable practices business by the Monterey Bay Area Green Business Council.

Cypress Environmental has been a member of the Santa Cruz Construction Guild since 2010.



GreenTRIP

One Way to Move Towards More Sustainable and Healthy Communities



Achieving more sustainable development and healthy communities is being more embraced each year throughout the USA and several other places abroad. [Past newsletters](#) have discussed LEED, Sustainable SITES, Healthy Communities Planning and other methods to provide living environments that have less impacts on our natural resources and better benefits for human health. Now an Oakland, CA based non-profit has emerged with its goal to reduce urban traffic and greenhouse gases throughout the San Francisco Bay area. This type of non-profit could be replicated in any city, county or region across the USA.

[GreenTRIP](#) works with cities and developers to create buildings that generate less traffic and a reduced need for parking. TRIP stands for implementing Traffic Reduction and Innovative Parking strategies. Their goal is achieved by providing incentives for developers of apartments, condos or townhomes, located in areas with good public transit, to reduce car trips and vehicle ownership. Less vehicle use typically translates into reduced parking requirements when the project is approved by a Planning Commission or City Council and reduces developer expenses for paved parking areas or parking decks. By creating projects that generate less use of private vehicles and use less land for parking spaces, more space is available for services, shops and more affordable homes.

GreenTRIP certifies projects with a point scoring system. Among other criteria, a certified project must include:

- Reduced parking (from the standard number of spaces);
- Unbundled parking (rent or cost of parking spaces is separate from rent or cost for dwelling); or
- Discount transit passes for residents; or
- CarShare program with free membership for residents.

The benefits of becoming GreenTRIP certified include facilitating Environmental Review of the project in the areas of traffic and greenhouse gas impacts; supportive GreenTRIP generated press releases and GreenTRIP staff testimony at public hearings in support of the project. In addition, projects with less traffic generally have less neighborhood opposition.



The GreenTRIP-Certified *Crossings Project* in San Leandro includes a 200-unit residential and retail mixed use complex and 100 affordable homes. The project provides each resident with an annual transit pass at 50% cost. Parking is leased separately from the dwelling unit, encouraging one car/dwelling.

Residents of a GreenTRIP-certified Fourth Street Family Apartments in San Jose all receive free bus and light rail passes providing them with substantial fuel and vehicle maintenance costs and reducing their desire for a second car. Many GreenTRIP buildings also include free car-sharing memberships for residents with easy access to vehicles in the building.

GreenTRIP's executive director, Stuart Cohen, is a 2013 recipient of the James Irvine Foundation Leadership Award. You can learn more about this organization at [their website](#).

Cypress Hired to Manage the Proposed Cordoba Center Project South of San Jose



Cypress Environmental has been hired by the non-profit, SVIC, to manage the consultant team and provide planning services for the proposed Cordoba Center - a religious/cultural center on a 16-acre vacant parcel in the rural San Martin area of San Clara County. The project would include a mosque, cultural center building, outdoor activity area and a cemetery to serve the members of the South Valley Islamic Center. A previous project was unanimously approved by both the Santa Clara County Planning Commission and County Board of Supervisors last year. However, SVIC has abandoned that project in favor of a new project that uses a master plan approach to develop the site. A group named the "Gilroy/Morgan Hill Patriots" have opposed the project since its inception. The opponent's name and their testimony at previous meetings on the project suggests strong political motivations more than land use concerns.

Included in the various project management services will be new community outreach duties to explain the project and SVIC to the community. SVIC is the Islamic center for the southern Santa Clara Valley, with members who are longtime residents of the Silicon Valley area. More information about SVIC is at [their website](#). The proposed center is named "Cordoba" after the city Cordoba, Spain which was a flourishing center of cooperation between Christians, Muslims and Jews during the Middle Ages as well as a center of arts and culture. Cypress will also work with SVIC to design a project that minimizes or avoids potential environmental impacts. Planning issues are expected to include traffic operational movements at the proposed entrance, surface drainage control from new impervious surfaces and architecture and site design that meets the standards of a special design review zone for the area.

Future newsletters will report on highlights of the project as it moves through the permitting process. Kim Tschantz and Cypress have managed large projects for other religious centers, including a Specific Plan for the expansion of the [Mt. Hermon Christian Camp and Conference Center](#) in Felton, CA and various feasibility studies for the Central California Seventh Day Adventist Conference Grounds near Soquel, CA.

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Please visit [my website](#) to better understand our various land use planning and environmental planning services.

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Environmental Planning and Analysis, Permitting and Project Management