

Opinion

Ikea in EPA—the debate continues

The city council of East Palo Alto has been going back and forth over whether to bring Ikea, a Swedish furniture store, to Ravenswood 101. Ikea, if built, is expected to bring about 500 jobs to the city and \$1.8 million in tax revenue every year. It is also estimated that 9,000 people could come to the store on an average weekend day. Two groups of Eastside freshmen have decided to take on a stance on the Ikea issue.

Store should be welcomed; city needs revenue

By Dallas Teo and Jeremy Hudson

Over many months the City of East Palo Alto has been in a redevelopment phase. The city has already finished most of Phase I, the building of the Ravenswood 101 complex, which includes Home Depot and Best Buy on the site where Ravenswood High School once stood.

The city is now working on an office-hotel complex in the former Whisky Gulch area. This construction has been a huge benefit to East Palo Alto's economy and the city council should move forward with plans to build an Ikea store. If built, the Swedish furniture store will take up 230,000 square feet of retail space at Ravenswood 101.

PRO
All of these new developments have given East Palo Alto a chance to rise up from the doldrums. The money that's being generated from Ravenswood 101 is strengthening the city's police force and city workers by giving them raises. The money is also being used for much-needed street repairs.

If this Ikea store is built, the city will benefit even more. Ikea is expected to provide up to 500 jobs for East Palo Alto and \$1.8 million in sales tax revenue annually. This money would be a big help in fixing city parks, which could cost an estimated \$5 million.

There are some people who are complaining about how the store would bring even more traffic to the city. Even if the store isn't built, the city will still suffer from a traffic problem. The money generated from Ikea could be used to solve the city's traffic problems that arise from the store.

The store will also bring many new faces to East Palo Alto, making the city well known to others who have never been to the city. The Ikea store would show that East Palo Alto is not afraid of change and sacrifices.

The facts are that the city will get more money, more jobs, better parks and streets, and more exposure. Ikea will be a great completion to the change in East Palo Alto's economy. The Ikea store would enable the city to finally have the financial stability it has lacked for many years.

City in need of food, rather than furniture

By Mayra Contreras, Judith Curiel, and Joanna León

Debates have been going on in the past few months about whether or not to build an Ikea store in East Palo Alto. The addition of Ikea, a Swedish furniture store, would not be useful to the East Palo Alto citizens.

The space at Ravenswood 101 should be occupied by a store that the community would make a greater use of. It is ridiculous to build a furniture store in East Palo Alto before a grocery store.

East Palo Alto citizens have been forced for many years to travel as far away as Redwood City, Mountain View and sometimes even San Jose and San Francisco to get their necessities.

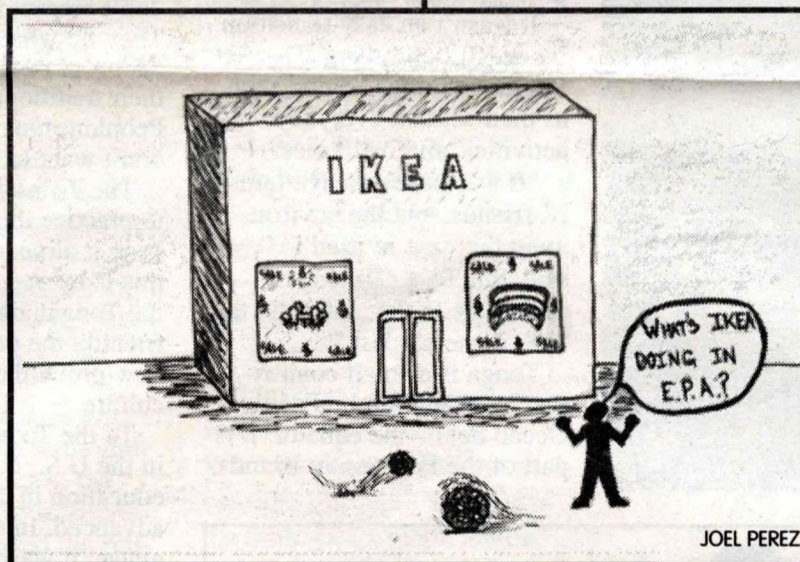
In East Palo Alto there are many small liquor stores, but they don't have all the items that people need. The stores are only there if people need to buy something small.

Not only would there be a store the community doesn't need, but building an Ikea store in East Palo Alto would also bring more traffic. It is estimated that Ikea could draw as many as 9,000 people on an average weekend day into the city.

East Palo Alto already has enough traffic with the Dumbarton Bridge and superstores like Home Depot and Best Buy at Ravenswood 101. The traffic that Ikea would bring would only further damage the streets, and cause the city to spend more money on repairs.

Proponents say that the Ikea store will bring citizens of East Palo Alto jobs, but a grocery store would too. If an Ikea store is built, yes, people will get jobs, but the store will not get as many customers from the city as a grocery store would. Instead, these people will come from outside. The city won't be doing things for its own citizens, instead it will be serving neighboring cities.

City officials should vote against the Ikea store. Instead there should be work done to bring a grocery store to the city, so the citizens of East Palo Alto will have the comfort of shopping in their own community.



C
O
N

the eastside
PANTHER

Eastside College Preparatory School
2101 Pulgas Ave., East Palo Alto, CA 94303
650-688-0850 ext. 209

Advisers: Angela Buenning & Nancy Andersen

Editors
Editor in Chief & News
Sarah Khan

Opinion & Middle School
Angelique Burton

Photo & Sports
Elizabeth Elias

Features & Entertainment
Marissa McGee

Student Expressions
Dallas Teo

Staff Reporters
Mayra Contreras, Jeremy Hudson,
Judith Curiel, Joanna León and
Dallas Teo

The Eastside Panther is published five to six times a year by the journalism class at Eastside College Preparatory School.

Letters to the Editor are always welcome. The staff reserves the right to edit letters for style and length. The Panther staff will print as many letters as space allows. The letters should be turned in two weeks before publication to Angela's Buenning box, or you can e-mail us.

EMAIL:
eastside_panther@hotmail.com