



Mountain View Coalition for Sustainable Planning  
817 Montgomery Street  
Mountain View, CA 94041

January 2, 2017

Mountain View City Council  
Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee  
City Hall, 500 Castro Street  
PO Box 7540  
Mountain View, CA 94039-7540

Re: Council Goals 2017

Dear City Council members, B/PAC members, and City Staff:

The Mountain View Coalition for Sustainable Planning (MVCSP) would like to make a few suggestions for consideration as City Council develops new goals at their February 7th meeting. Generally, we support the three existing thematic goals for housing, mobility, and sustainability, and we have specific program recommendations we want to see included in two of the goals.

**For Goal 1: IMPROVE THE QUANTITY, DIVERSITY AND AFFORDABILITY OF HOUSING**

MVCSP recommends the following specific projects:

- ***Increase staffing to facilitate the inclusion of housing in gatekeeper applications, particularly for middle-income and low-income wage earners.***

The City is planning to have a Gatekeeper study session in early 2017. There is an unprecedented amount of new development proposed, including many affordable housing projects mixed into gatekeeper applications. The City could miss critical opportunities to increase affordable housing stock due to lack of experienced planning staff qualified for reviewing these applications. We encourage you to fund the Planning Department fully, so they may achieve the most effective mix of temporary, contracted, and permanent staff. We particularly encourage a focus on attracting senior-level planners, to enable City staff to process significantly more applications than the current staff capacity allows. We are aware that Google has offered to fund planning positions, albeit for short term engagements. We encourage you to negotiate with Google so they agree to endow long-term positions that will attract experienced planning talent.

- ***Finalize North Bayshore Precise Plan and maximize allowable residential uses with innovative mobility plan.***

In 2016, there has significant progress on the North Bayshore Precise Plan. Based on the traffic analysis, it will be determined how much housing is included in the Precise Plan. We strongly encourage you to include the maximum amount of housing that innovative mobility and parking standards allow, in order to address Mountain View’s jobs-housing imbalance. Please think of current and future lifestyles—many people employed in Mountain View gladly choose a car-free lifestyle today, and our city should encourage and enable such choices via our land use policies.

### **For Goal 3: IMPROVE TRANSPORTATION BY ENHANCING MOBILITY AND CONNECTIVITY**

MVCSP recommends the following specific actions:

- ***Adopt a Vision Zero Program in Mountain View.***

MVCSP urges City Council to adopt a Vision Zero program for our city. The City of Mountain View Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee (B/PAC) officially recommended this at their February 2016 meeting, and we support the recommendation. Locally, San Francisco, San Jose, and Sunnyvale have all implemented Vision Zero programs or are actively developing them, so Mountain View is in a good position to help expand this effort regionally.

Vision Zero seeks the elimination of deaths and serious injuries from our roadways. Sweden was the first country to introduce such a policy, when in 1997 its parliament approved a policy to halve deaths and severe injuries by 2020 and bring them to zero by 2050. Since 1997, Sweden and other European countries practicing Vision Zero have been able to reduce their traffic fatalities by almost 50%.

At its core, Vision Zero is the straightforward goal of zero traffic-related deaths and severe injuries. However, achieving Vision Zero requires a fundamental paradigm shift in how our culture views traffic collisions—***we must affirm the fact that every roadway death and life-altering injury is preventable.*** By focusing on preventing severe collisions by examining the main causes and locations in a data driven and systematic manner, communities can achieve real results and save lives. With vehicle collisions remaining among the leading causes of death worldwide, Vision Zero applies to all roadway users, traffic collision injuries, and traffic-related deaths. That said, it is especially important to protect our vulnerable users, including people walking, people with disabilities, people using skateboards, scooters, electric-assist vehicles, people riding bicycles, and those using other mobility devices.

Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition and California Walks have published a Toolkit Guide to help cities formulate their Vision Zero programs (<https://bikesiliconvalley.org/resources/vision-zero-toolkit/>). MVCSP recommends that City Staff and Council members review this document to help establish starting steps, and that a Vision Zero presentation by Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition and California Walks be scheduled for a future Council meeting.

- ***Provide funding, develop work scope and hire a consultant to develop a Long Range Mobility Plan for Mountain View.***

It’s been a number of years since the Circulation Element of the General Plan was developed. Two major trends have emerged since then:

- Community perception of traffic congestion levels has continued to increase
- A tidal wave of new mobility options have emerged (from ride-sharing services to e-bikes & skateboards to a near future with driverless cars)

At this time, the City tends to address just a portion of these topics on a project-by-project basis, without fully considering the big picture of future mobility across all of Mountain View. A Long Range Mobility Plan would enable Mountain View to be in front of the curve in considering real and perceived levels of traffic, and planning for how changing mobility patterns will affect consideration of parking standards, streetscapes and design, and tools for mitigating traffic levels.

- ***Support a grant application for an active transportation demonstration program tentatively named VivaCalleMV, a free recreational program that closes miles of Mountain View streets on a Sunday and transforms them into vibrant and engaging “paved parks”***

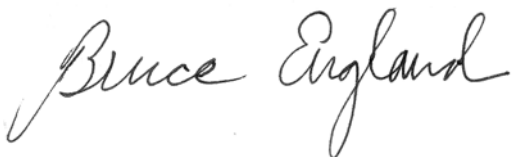
Patterned after successful projects in San Jose (VivaCalleSJ) and Los Angeles (CicLAVia), MVCSP plans to work with a local non-profit agency to pursue grant funding for a similar Mountain View demonstration project. In San Jose, over 60 different nonprofits, businesses, and city/county offices participated in their successful pilot project, with high attendance and great success achieved overall.

There are four elements of impact a VivaCalle event can have:

- **Social integration:** People visit neighborhoods they never usually go to. In San Jose, their initial route connected Little Saigon (Vietnamese cultural center) and East San Jose (the most mono-lingual Spanish-speaking area of the city) via Willow Glen.
- **Public Health:** Of course, physical exercise through walking or biking are part of what these events achieve, but they foster social connections for improved mental health as well.
- **Economic impact:** During a VivaCalle-style event, more people fill a given shopping zone, and cyclists are more likely to stop and shop! Ed Solis from San Jose called VivaCalleSJ an “Economic juggernaut.”
- **Environmental impact:** During San Jose’s events, 260K tons fewer carbon emissions were emitted.

The project is ideal for building community among Mountain View’s diverse neighborhoods and business districts, helping residents and visitors alike learn that we’re more than just Castro Street. Route and event planning could be conducted in coordination with City and Chamber and Commerce staff.

Sincerely,



Bruce England

for the Mountain View Coalition for Sustainable Planning

cc:

Dan Rich, City Manager

Michael Fuller, Public Works Director

Helen Kim, Project Manager

Lorrie Brewer, City Clerk

### **About Mountain View Coalition for Sustainable Planning**

The Mountain View Coalition for Sustainable Planning is a group of local volunteers dedicated to making Mountain View as beautiful, economically healthy, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian accessible, and affordable as possible. MVCSP member interest and expertise covers areas such as housing, transportation, the environment, the economy, and beyond!

For more information, see <http://www.mvcsp.org>.

To contact us, send email to [mvcsp.info@gmail.com](mailto:mvcsp.info@gmail.com).