



Mountain View Coalition for Sustainable Planning
P.O. Box 1952
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November 15, 2010

Mountain View City Council
City Hall, 500 Castro Street
Mountain View, CA 94039-7540

Re: November 16, 2010 City Council Agenda No. 5.1
General Plan Strategy Endorsement

Dear Mayor Bryant, Vice Mayor Siegel, and Members of the Mountain View City Council,

The Mountain View Coalition for Sustainable Planning appreciates the opportunity to comment on the draft General Plan strategy, land use map, and policies (agenda item 5.01). Overall, we are very pleased that the draft plan reflects the community's clear direction to design a network of healthy, sustainable villages that provide City residents and workers more choices for where to live and how to get around. The General Plan takes some important steps toward achieving the 'network of villages' vision, such as focusing higher intensity development near transit centers and along transit corridors, and planning a mix of residential, commercial, service, and entertainment uses for the North Bayshore Area. However, we believe that some additional steps are necessary to ensure that the community's vision comes to fruition. For example:

Increased intensity of development to support self-sustaining villages

The General Plan clearly articulates the goals of creating new retail and services within walking distances for residents and supporting non-auto mobility improvements for transit, walking, or biking. However, in order to support frequent transit service and convenient amenities, the General Plan must encourage and incentivize land uses at high enough intensities to create a sufficient customer base for shops and transit. MVCSP's understanding is that Mountain View's own internal economic studies have shown that under the guidelines of the currently proposed land use map, the City would

fall short of achieving its goal of creating locally serving retail and improved transit. Accompanying this email you will find a table of statistics from reputable sources that we have compiled to illustrate that in order to achieve particular services (such as locally serving retail) a certain number of people are required. Please refer to this table for more detail. More generally, to ensure that the General Plan land use map supports self-sustaining villages, Council should direct staff to

→ increase densities in the major change areas.

See below for some specific recommendations that support increased densities for the General Plan focus areas.

Provide flexibility to support increased intensity at key opportunity locations

The draft plan states that Council has supported increased intensities at key opportunity locations along El Camino Real, and has directed that this increased intensity be more flexible in order to help with the overall improvement and revitalization of this corridor. We strongly support this concept of providing the flexibility to take advantage of more intense development opportunities in the right locations, and we encourage the City to

→ expand this concept of flexibility to the other major change areas.

Provide a range of land use intensities for each new land use area

As described above, a minimum level of intensity of development is necessary to support the mix of uses and frequency of transit service needed to achieve the community's vision of a network of sustainable, healthy villages. For some of the new land use areas, the draft land use map clearly provides a range of acceptable densities (for example, 43 to 70 units/acre along El Camino Real, and 0.50-1.0 FAR in the Office designation). We strongly support this concept of providing a clearer definition of what the community wants to see in each land use area. The City should build on this concept and

→ provide clear *ranges* of land use intensities for all land use areas, and

→ specify ranges for both densities and FARs in each land use area.

Sample recommended land-use designations for major change areas

Combining the ideas above around increased intensities, flexibility, and a range of land uses, the following are some possible land-use designations for key major change areas:

Commercial/Residential Center:

60-90 du/acre; up to 120 du/acre in key opportunity locations

0.75-2.0 FAR; up to 3.5 FAR in key opportunity locations

High Intensity Commercial/Residential

50-80 du/acre; up to 100 du/acre in key opportunity locations

0.50-1.5 FAR; up to 3.0 FAR in key opportunity locations

El Camino Real High Intensity Commercial/Residential

43-120 du/acre; up to 140 du/acre in key opportunity locations

0.50-2.0 FAR; up to 4.5 FAR in key opportunity locations

North Shoreline High Intensity Commercial/Residential

45-70 du/acre; up to 90 du/acre in key opportunity locations

0.75-2.0 FAR; up to 3.0 FAR in key opportunity locations

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment and for all of the excellent work to date on this process. We look forward to continuing to participate in the General Plan update.

Regards,

The Members of the Mountain View Coalition for Sustainable Planning