



Mountain View Coalition for Sustainable Planning
c/o Aaron Grossman
817 Montgomery Street
Mountain View, CA 94041

February 13, 2024

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

Re: Legislative Program Priorities for 2024

Dear Mayor Showalter and City Council members:

The Mountain View Coalition for Sustainable Planning (MVCSP) appreciates the opportunity to comment on this agenda item you will be discussing at your meeting on February 13. We have reviewed the agenda item materials, and we have the following comments we would like to share with you.

Firstly, we would like to thank City Staff for the careful attention to detail and thoroughness of the proposed legislative program priority issues; overall we feel the list reflects the right priorities for Mountain View's advocacy at the state level. We particularly appreciate the strong emphasis in the Housing and Community Development section on affordability at multiple income levels and anti-displacement legislation, as we feel maintaining Mountain View's economic diversity is a critical aspect of our community's vibrancy.

One thing we would like to see Mountain View advocate for at the state level is innovation in construction techniques and materials. Mountain View should represent the "classic Silicon Valley" mindset in our state legislative agenda — for example by encouraging the State to create funding or bond opportunities that incentivize developers and construction companies to use state-of-the-art methods that are much less carbon-intensive (e.g., modular construction, carbon sequestration in concrete, 3D printing for construction materials). The State can help create market opportunities and attract those pioneering companies to work in California, and both State-led policy and funding mechanisms can make it easier for developers to select these options as viable business choices anywhere in our state. This could be similar to the DARPA Challenge* model, or a public-private partnership akin to the XPrize, but for innovation in construction technology. It is Mountain View's duty to leverage our

future-thinking mindset to help the State shift its preferred and/or encouraged construction practices to more sustainable ones.

Furthermore, in the “Sustainability & Climate Resiliency” section, we would like to see a specific emphasis on electrical infrastructure (broadly), and on simplifying electrification for homeowners. Specifically, we’d like the City to advocate for legislation that helps create microgrid infrastructure and the creation of financial incentives that encourage developers to create robust microgrids with each new development. Similarly, we would like to see simpler, cleaner electrical code for home renovations that encourage homeowners to upgrade overall efficiency; currently renovation requirements demand increased service to residential properties even if the homeowner is planning to reduce overall demand through efficiency upgrades. Ultimately, that discourages renovation and those efficiency upgrades because of unnecessary cost and complexity. Additionally, current state law demands that all residential rooftop solar panels have a three-foot clearance pathway from every ridge of a roof for walking access, even if the roof is made of *walkable* solar shingles. Unnecessary complexities like these are making it harder for individuals to aid the state in reaching its renewable energy generation goals.

In the Climate resiliency topic, tied to the Water section as well, we would like to see Mountain View encourage the State to think more innovatively about incentivizing minimal water use and maximizing reuse. We support the State Water Control Board’s action in December that clears the way for direct potable reuse, and we encourage advocacy at the state level to support local water districts’ efforts to try innovative/underutilized technology at scale (e.g., rainwater tanks at home, mist collection, modernized efficient desalination). Clearing the way for more consumer-facing water management technologies will help Mountain View slowly reduce its dependence on the Hetch Hetchy system.

In that same Climate Resiliency section, and linked to the Transportation topics, we also encourage the City to advocate for **green** complete streets, a more inclusive concept that takes the tree canopy, water-wise and water-managing landscaping, and heat island effects into account when designing a truly complete street. Caltrans’ Highway Design Manual was recently updated with a bulletin called “Complete Streets: Contextual Design Guidance” — and while this is a very important step, we would like more specifics at the state level that provide real, practical, and executable guidance for street design projects everywhere in the state (e.g. via SB-960).

In the “Community for All and Livability & Quality of Life” section, we would like Mountain View to encourage legislation that promotes or provides funding for public-facing amenities such as water fountains, water bottle refilling stations, and restrooms; not just to build facilities but also to maintain them to a high standard of cleanliness and functionality. These types of amenities address longstanding inequities in public infrastructure, and also help support active transportation use (and parents of young children) throughout the year.

Also, we would like to see follow-up communication to the public that explains how Staff and Council will evaluate the success of the legislative program process. To that end, updates from RPPG and Staff should include specifics about the state bills Mountain View supports, and especially any bills that were modified based on City input. Ideally, this should include the exact text of the proposed amendments, and with markups indicating whether the proposed changes were included in the final bill.

Finally, as someone who gets around our lovely city almost entirely by biking and walking, I beg you to please advocate for a bicycle “stop as yield” law (most recently submitted as AB 1713 in 2022 but vetoed by the Governor). The National Highway and Traffic Safety Administration published a summary of research showing that

there are many fewer crashes with bicycle riders after laws like this are passed. For example, Delaware adopted a stop-as-yield law in 2017, and saw a 23% decrease in crashes involving bicycles at stop sign intersections.**

We assume these legislative advocacy priorities have been shared with our city's robust collection of citizen committees and commissions, such as EPC, HRC, Parks & Rec, and BPAC. We hope these bodies have had the opportunity to review the list and provide input, as their work can help amplify citizen voices throughout Mountain View's population.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,
Deb Henigson
for the Mountain View Coalition for Sustainable Planning

*There is also a concept for efficient government funding modeled after NASA's Commercial Orbital Transportation Services (COTS) program; this model could be widely applicable to many other areas of potential innovation, such as construction, materials reuse, or water conservation. Refer to:
<https://www.thecgo.org/benchmark/a-2006-nasa-program-shows-how-government-can-move-at-the-speed-of-startups/>

**Sources:

<https://cal.streetsblog.org/2022/05/06/nhtsa-releases-the-facts-on-bicycle-stop-as-yield-laws-they-increase-safety>
<https://www.nhtsa.gov/document/bicyclist-stop-yield-laws-and-safety-fact-sheet>

cc:

Arn Andrews, Assistant City Manager
Christina Gilmore, Intergovernmental Relations Manager
Kimbra McCarthy, City Manager
Heather Glaser, City Clerk

About Mountain View Coalition for Sustainable Planning

The Mountain View Coalition for Sustainable Planning is a local volunteer-based organization 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.