

From: Lorena Melgarejo <lorena@faithinactionba.org>

Sent: Thursday, December 13, 2018 9:58 AM

To: General Plan <generalplan@cityofsanmateo.org>; Julia Klein <jklein@cityofsanmateo.org>; Lily Lim <llim@cityofsanmateo.org>

Cc: Amourence Lee <alee@cityofsanmateo.org>; Clifford Robbins <crobbins@cityofsanmateo.org>; Rick Bonilla <RBonilla@cityofsanmateo.org>; Eric Rodriguez <erodriguez@cityofsanmateo.org>; Adam Loraine <aloraine@cityofsanmateo.org>; Ellen Mallory <emallory@cityofsanmateo.org>; Ramiro Maldonado Jr. <rmaldonado@cityofsanmateo.org>; Diane Papan <dpapan@cityofsanmateo.org>; Maureen Freschet <mfreschet@cityofsanmateo.org>; Joe Goethals <jgoethals@cityofsanmateo.org>

Subject: RE: General Plan

Dear Julia and Lily,

On behalf of Faith in Action Bay Area and its participating congregations, I am writing to express a concern about the General Plan process currently under way in San Mateo. Specifically, my concern is directed at the absence of any discussion of displacement in the Existing Conditions Report.

The spectacular job growth we have witnessed on the Peninsula in the past several years has led to an equally spectacular rise in local housing costs. As a result of this rapid and truly stunning change, low-income families have faced enormous hardship as landlords have evicted them from their homes or subjected them to startlingly large rent increases that force them to move away. Communities of color have been hit especially hard by the change.

How is the City of San Mateo to develop a meaningful plan for the future if it does not acknowledge the reality and gravity of the displacement problem? This is an issue that threatens the health and well-being of individuals and families and also undermines the future prospects of the community as a whole. To the extent that the success of San Mateo depends on a robust and varied workforce, its very core is being hollowed out as child care workers, gardeners, LVNs, nannies, EMTs and teachers are forced to move away. To the extent that the desirability of the community depends on its racial and economic diversity, this too is under assault.

If we are to secure the future of the community and safeguard the well-being of its residents, the displacement problem must be addressed. An important first step is to look the problem squarely in the face, and as part of this, the subject of displacement should be made a part of the Existing Conditions Report. Only when the displacement issue is sufficiently prioritized will the General Plan be built on a firm foundation and the possibility of preserving the quality of life in San Mateo be upheld.

Sincerely,

Lorena Melgarejo
Executive Director, Faith in Action Bay Area

Faith in Action Bay Area is a network of congregations and community leaders working to ensure that the dignity of all people in our community is upheld. We develop leaders, promote civic engagement and lift up our faith values in an effort to realize a world in which all people receive the respect, justice and opportunity they deserve. Our participating congregations extend from San Francisco to Half Moon Bay.

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Lorena Melgarejo
Executive Director, Faith In Action Bay Area
Affiliate of the PICO National Network

cell: (415) 724-4987
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“No one is born fully-formed: it is through self-experience in the world that we become what we are.” – **Paulo Freire**