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San Mateo City Council  
330 West 20th Avenue  
San Mateo, California 94403

August 13, 2019

Re: General Plan Analysis of Borel Square / Hayward Park Station Area

Dear Mayor Papan and Honorable Members of the City Council:

As the owner of the Borel Square Shopping Center, I have been following the General Plan Update process with great interest. Borel Square, located at Bovet Road and S. El Camino Real, is an ideal site for redevelopment. The eight-acre site was built out in the 1960's and largely reflects the design and planning preferences of a bygone era. From the street, visitors must drive through a sea of parking to access retail, restaurants and services clustered in single-story strips located a significant distance from public streets and sidewalks. In connection with the General Plan Update, I have started to evaluate long-term options for revitalizing Borel Square, retained expert consultants to assist with analyzing potential redevelopment scenarios focused on housing and other uses, and I also plan to contact nearby property owners to explore potential collaboration opportunities.

I understand that you will be deciding which areas of the City should be studied as "change areas" at the August 19<sup>th</sup> City Council meeting, and that Borel Square is included in "Study Area 3." After reviewing the draft map with our team and looking forward to the alternatives process to come, I would like to offer the following thoughts for your consideration.

First, I am excited that the City is taking a fresh look at its existing land use goals and policies. Times have changed significantly. Over the past thirty years, the City's population has grown, leadership at all levels of government has changed, and new best practices have emerged for development and urban planning. In order to cultivate a diverse and thriving economy and responsibly manage for the impacts of growth, we must consider how these and other important trends have impacted the way current and future generations will live, learn, work, play and thrive in San Mateo. I look forward to a more robust conversation around these topics as the City moves forward to the alternatives process.

Second, I look forward to collaborating with your team and providing input on the future land use alternatives to be evaluated for Borel Square and the Hayward Park Station area. I believe there are positive opportunities available to strengthen the connection between Hayward Park and Borel Square, improve the streetscape along Bovet Road and 17<sup>th</sup> Avenue, and encourage greater walkability, bikeability, and use of public transit. I applaud the City's goal of encouraging greater

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use of alternative modes of transportation and also hope that you consider updating parking requirements to reflect the desired reduction in vehicle use.

Finally, I have some concerns about the size of Study Area 3, and respectfully request that you consider evaluating smaller study areas within Study Area 3, which I believe may lead to better planning outcomes. Study Area 3 is considerably larger than the other study areas and includes two Caltrain stations. As you know, the Hayward Park Station and Hillsdale Station are very different. While the area surrounding Hillsdale includes a regional shopping center, recently renovated retail, and new residential projects (such as Bay Meadows II), the area around Hayward Park largely consists of parking lots, office, retail, and industrial uses and has experienced challenges in redevelopment due to restrictive zoning requirements.

Because these different constraints and opportunities suggest the potential for different future policy and planning frameworks, and in order to make the upcoming conversations more efficient and streamlined, I would respectfully request that the City evaluate a smaller study area that is just inclusive of the Borel Square/Hayward Park area north of State Route 92. State Route 92 provides a natural border between the distinct communities surrounding Hayward Park and Hillsdale Station. Enclosed is a map illustrating the proposed study area prepared by Taecker Planning & Design, which hopefully illustrates some of the potential opportunities for this area of San Mateo for consideration as part of the upcoming alternatives process. In addition to creating a separate study area for the properties north of State Route 92, the enclosed map proposes that Study Area 3 be extended slightly north to include large underutilized parking lots between Bovet Road and Borel Avenue that may be ripe for development.

Thank you for making the General Plan Update a priority and for thoughtfully considering the input you are receiving from the community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stephen Finn". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "S" and "F".

Stephen Finn

This aerial map illustrates the Borel Square development in Hayward, CA. The site is outlined in blue and contains several key areas:

- SAFEWAY:** A large commercial building located in the upper left portion of the development.
- OFFICE:** Two office buildings are situated in the center-left area.
- OFFICE BUILDINGS:** A cluster of office buildings is located in the bottom left corner.
- BOREL SQUARE FOCAL POINT:** A central green space with a fountain, circled in yellow.
- GATE:** A central entrance area, also circled in yellow.
- STABLE RESIDENTIAL:** Two large residential areas are located in the upper right and center-right portions of the development.
- CALTRAIN FOCAL POINT:** A green space near the Caltrain station, circled in yellow.
- HAYWARD PARK CALTRAIN STATION:** The station is located on the right side of the map, adjacent to the Caltrain Focal Point.

Distance markers are provided for context:

- 1/4 MILE FROM CALTRAIN:** A red dashed line indicates the distance from the Caltrain station to the development.
- 1/2 MILE:** A red dashed line indicates the distance from the development to the surrounding urban area.

This aerial map illustrates the Borel Square development in Hayward, CA, with various building types and focal points highlighted. The map includes the following labels:

- 1/4 MILE FROM CALTRAIN**: A red dashed line indicating the proximity to the Caltrain station.
- STABLE RESIDENTIAL**: Two areas of brown-colored residential buildings.
- SAFEWAY**: A large, dark-colored commercial building.
- CALTRAIN FOCAL POINT**: A yellow circle highlighting a green area near the Caltrain station.
- HAYWARD PARK CALTRAIN STATION**: The Caltrain station located on the right side of the map.
- GATE**: A yellow circle highlighting a central green area.
- OFFICE**: Two yellow circles highlighting office buildings.
- BOREL SQUARE FOCAL POINT**: A yellow circle highlighting a green area near the office buildings.
- OFFICE BUILDINGS**: A large, dark-colored commercial building in the bottom left.
- 1/2 MILE**: A red dashed line indicating the distance from the development to the city center.

This aerial map illustrates the Borel Square development in Hayward, CA, with various building types and focal points highlighted. The map includes the following labels and features:

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SAFEGWAY

STABLE RESIDENTIAL

CALTRAIN FOCAL POINT

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GATE

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