



*Central Neighborhood Association*



Re: Item 21 - General Plan Update Study Areas

August 19, 2019

Dear Mayor Papan and Members of the City Council,

The boundaries being recommended tonight have been changed at the very last minute, after all of the public meetings where residents from Central and other neighborhoods have given their considered feedback. This is a blatant bait and switch engineered by special interests to grossly over-expand the scope of the GP zoning study areas at the last second while nobody is ostensibly looking. Adopting it will destroy any trust and goodwill that has been engendered through this allegedly transparent GP outreach process that touts among its strengths integrity. It's egregious, overreaching, and unacceptable.

These are our comments for the boundaries and Update for the General Plan:

1. Vote down the alternative study map presented by the Housing Leadership Council which eliminates the R1 single family neighborhoods and also expands the map boundaries for up-zoning for the Central Neighborhood.
2. Vote down the southern boundaries to 5th Avenue and 7th Avenue (Staff's Recommendation) and the eastern boundaries to 101 in the draft study areas. The southern boundary for the land-use study should end at 3rd Avenue in Study Area 6 and the eastern boundary should end at South Claremont in Study Area 4.
3. There is an imbalance of boundaries in the alternative study map where only 1 residential block area is being looked at west of ECR. The current infrastructure in Central Neighborhood is not designed to handle more cut-through traffic that would result from up-zoning to 4-unit apartments and increased heights and densities beyond R-5 at 55 ft and 50 units/acre.

4. The Central Neighborhood is already over-zoned at R2, R3, and R5. Adopting the suggested study areas would mean that a developer could build a 4-unit apartment next to a single family home or duplex. We do not support this.

5. San Mateo needs a robust mix of housing, including single family homes in various different neighborhoods. Therefore, we need to preserve existing single family homes in Central and North Central Neighborhoods for young families with children. Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) should be encouraged along with our current zoning. Central is already at its maximum zoning capacity with a high number of traffic accidents, overburdened infrastructure, insufficient police and fire resources, and open space.

Any solution that fails to address and seek to limit the expansion of office space in San Mateo, and provide very specific solutions for AFFORDABLE (not market rate) housing will fail, at the expense of our beautiful historic neighborhoods and downtown. It will fail because it will not address the root causes of the problem - the imbalance and affordability.

This is a critical matter and the council must reject these egregious, over-reaching, last-minute changes to the GP study areas.

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