
From: Keith Weber [REDACTED]
Date: Sunday, December 5, 2021 at 4:24 PM
To: Eric Rodriguez <erodriguez@cityofsanmateo.org>
Subject: San Mateo Resources and the General Plan Update

Mayor Rodriguez,

As you may know, in the current General Plan there are several policies in the Conservation and Open Space element that refer to the identification and protection of the city's cultural and historic resources, both individually and collectively. One policy acknowledges the City's responsibility for maintaining and updating its inventory of these resources. The other policy recognizes the economic value and community benefits that accrue to the City by protecting "concentrations" of buildings that "convey the flavor of local historical periods," and possess notable "architectural interest or integrity." In this regard, the policy anticipates the creation of future historic districts and instructs the City to develop "specific regulations to maintain historic character" in these areas.

Although these policies have been in the General Plan for decades, they have not been implemented. General Plan 2040 anticipates that in the next twenty years San Mateo will increase the number of jobs by almost 40% and double, or even triple the number of housing units within the city. The impacts of this growth will be felt city-wide, impacting every neighborhood in every corner of the city. But without critical data on the number and location of important existing resources, we lose much of our ability to guide our future growth, and instead risk letting the marketplace shape our city. Moreover, how can the General Plan EIR possibly evaluate adverse impacts on historic and cultural resources if those resources are not identified?

As a faithful participant in the General Plan Update, I have noted with disappointment that the process has been focused almost exclusively on the housing and circulation elements, with scant regard for urban design, conservation and open space, and other elements that speak to the quality of our urban environment and the needs of the community. A complete community-serving General Plan should be as much about quality as it is about quantity, and should include community discussions about much more than housing and circulation.

Questions:

Will the City implement its own C/OS General Plan policies during the General Plan Update to identify and protect its cultural and historic resources that will be directly or indirectly impacted by projected growth? If not, how is the City planning to identify and protect important community and neighborhood resources that will be impacted by this growth over the next twenty years?

What is the City doing to broaden General Plan discussions to include urban design, parks, conservation, open space, architecture, historic and cultural resources, and quality of life that are all affected by the projected growth?

Thank you for the opportunity to pose these questions and I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,
Keith Weber
San Mateo