

November 21, 2022

Dear San Mateo City Council Commissioners and Planning Commissioners,

I am a resident of San Mateo and President of the Borel Neighborhood Association. We are a newly founded association of residents who have come together to be a unified voice for improvements in our neighborhood. Borel residents are grateful for the new Borel Park, particularly for children under 12 years old. However, with a growing population and a middle school at our center, I am writing to request that the City explore potential opportunities to increase community space in our neighborhood for people of all ages by rezoning properties on Borel Avenue between Borel Place and Alameda de las Pulgas that are currently zoned as Executive Office/ E1-2.

Our neighborhood includes part of census block group 6066 and all of 6067-1, which together account for approximately 3,000 people<sup>1</sup>. In addition, Borel Middle School is physically and figuratively the center of our community. Over 1,000 students, including students from nearby neighborhoods, attend the school. One-third of the students are low income.

The Borel neighborhood includes land along Hwy 92 between El Camino Real and Alameda de las Pulgas that is zoned as commercial or office space. There are expansive parking lots that are severely underutilized, and many office spaces are vacant. While we are fully aware that these are private properties, we would like for the City to rezone the area so that if and when the property changes ownership in the future, a community center could be developed.

We critically need a community center where youth can go after school. Particularly, many of the low-income students have scored far below state standards in math<sup>2</sup>. There could be staff at the center to assist with homework. Given the City's recent reach codes for electrification, there is an opportunity for workshops led by local construction and climate adaptation professionals who can inspire students to become more engaged in math and science. Furthermore, Borel Middle School requires that students complete 10 community service hours each year. If there were a community center nearby, students could assist with events, such as activities for senior citizens in the neighborhood. In addition, a community center could be used as a cooling center during extreme heat events or an evacuation center during other disasters.

In summary, please consider rezoning the office space on Borel Avenue to provide the possibility of using the land for a future community center.

Thank you,

Pam Rittelmeyer, PhD  
President, Borel Neighborhood Association

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<sup>1</sup> According to [City-Data.com](https://www.city-data.com). Accessed November 21, 2022.

<sup>2</sup> The average math score for low-income students is 18%. Non-low-income students average 70%, which is well above the state standard of 59%. Source: [https://www.greatschools.org/california/san-mateo/6960-Borel-Middle-School/#Low-income\\_students\\*Test\\_scores\\*Math](https://www.greatschools.org/california/san-mateo/6960-Borel-Middle-School/#Low-income_students*Test_scores*Math)