

From: San Mateans for Responsive Government SMRG <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Friday, March 3, 2023 3:37 PM
To: City Council (San Mateo) <CityCouncil@cityofsanmateo.org>
Cc: Patrice Olds <polds@cityofsanmateo.org>
Subject: SMRG Comments for 3/6/23 Study Session/Measure Y

Dear San Mateo City Council,

Measure Y, the resident's initiative for height and density limits, was passed by voters in 2020 and is now part of the City's General Plan; it is not a separate document. The Draft General Plan must continue to weave the language of Measure Y in individual land use designations so that the public can easily compare any proposed changes.

For the third time in 30 years, the voters of San Mateo made it clear what kind of community they want to live in and what shape its future should take. Over and over again, San Mateo voters have "determined that high-rise developments threatened the viability of the valued suburban character of the community, do not have the support of San Mateo residents, would irrevocably change the character of San Mateo for the worse," and "cause serious adverse impacts to its citizens and reduced quality of life."

Voters also recognized that future growth will occur. But they don't believe it is necessary - nor are they willing - to sacrifice their homes, neighborhoods, quality of life, or character of their historic downtown in the process. As our elected representatives, democracy demands that the voter's Measure Y initiative be at the core of the General Plan update.

Yet, somehow the views and desires of the people of San Mateo have been distorted. They have been painted, not as an affirmation of a positive community vision, but as an obstacle that needed to be extinguished. The Draft General Plan proposed land uses push extreme densification and maximum building heights in every study area beyond Measure Y limits. Even so, the listed heights and densities do not identify the added heights and densities allowed by the State override of local land use control. This is misleading; the true maximum heights and densities must be identified in the Draft General Plan land use designations.

There has been no compromise in this Draft General Plan 2040 beyond acknowledging that Measure Y limits are the law until 2030. There is no acknowledgment of the community's vision, only the advancement of a special interest build-more agenda. The notion that a win-win solution exists and that San Mateo residents would be receptive to moderate changes to Measure Y is being ignored. That is certainly no way to approach the vote required to change height and density limits prior to 2030.

Beyond 2030 there is no way to rely on current assumptions of future state housing requirements (RHNA) given the rise in remote work and the massive over-building of office space. After Measure Y expires in 2030, the City can revisit and amend the land use regulations given the then current economic and environmental realities.

San Mateans for Responsive Government (SMRG), the proponents of Measure Y, urge the Council to set up a workshop, similar to those being organized by Reimagine Hillsdale, where residents can see large-scale color maps of the proposed land uses and conflicts with Measure Y, with staff available to answer questions. This Study Session is not the way to responsibly get direction from your constituents given the short amount of time that the agenda packet has been available and the difficulty of reading the complicated maps on-line. Too much time and effort has been expended on the General Plan update to rush approvals without more public understanding of the proposals, when there is no deadline for change required until 2030.

Specifically, we request

- 1) continue to weave the language of Measure Y in individual land use designations so that the public can easily compare any proposed changes.
- 2) add the true maximum heights and densities with state bonuses to the Draft General Plan land use designations.
- 3) continue the Study Session until staff conducts a workshop where residents can see large-scale color maps of the proposed land uses and conflicts with Measure Y, and staff is available to answer questions.

Sincerely,

Michael Weinbauer

San Mateans for Responsive Government