

From: [REDACTED] <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Sunday, March 5, 2023 2:23 PM
To: City Council (San Mateo) <CityCouncil@cityofsanmateo.org>
Cc: Patrice Olds <polds@cityofsanmateo.org>
Subject: The 3/6/2023 Council meeting, item #11 - Measure Y, General Plan update

To the Council,

As you address the issue of how to deal with Measure Y in the General Plan update, there are several things to consider and remember. The bottom line is that Measure Y was put in place by a majority vote of the people not that long ago. People still feel very strongly about it and rightly resent any suggestion that the Council will not listen to the adopted will of the people. I know you have already heard from many of them. As you all know, based on my long involvement with Measures H, P and Y, I am one of those many people who urge you to support the results of the democratic process. If you believe your election is right and true, then you have no other position to take with Measure Y .

First, Measure Y, the resident's initiative for height and density limits, was passed by voters in 2020, making its wording and provisions *part of* the City's General Plan. It is *not* a separate document, as if a person would read the General Plan and then also check what Measure Y says. Yet the entire approach of the staff report treats it that way. That approach is especially inaccurate and misleading when it suggests that the new Draft General Plan, which is to be presented to the public after this meeting, should omit wording that comes from Measure Y. It suggests, "...Measure Y text would no longer be woven into individual land use designations." The Draft General Plan must continue to 'weave' the language of Measure Y into individual land use designations, clearly identifying it, so that the public can easily compare any proposed changes. Especially since the staff report then goes on to make it clear that the Measure Y provisions would continue to control General Plan implementation until/unless Measure Y is changed by the voters or sunsets.

Second, It is getting harder and harder to engage the general public in these decisions, although most people will care deeply about the results. For one, the materials - available online - are impossible to follow and understand. Maps, which should make things clearer, are tiny on anyone's computer screen - with close color variations that are impossible to follow. People just give up trying to understand what is being proposed. Also, people who did try to stay engaged through all the disappointing and mostly useless workshops the city held, and the online surveys, got a slap in the face in last summer's Council decisions about the study areas. Although more people weighed in to support the lowest development alternative (C), the council, area by area, chose the alternatives with the most impact and highest level of development. More and more people now say, why bother. The Council has already made up their mind and nothing we say matters. I won't share some of the very

pointed reason they believe that the majority of the 2022 Council acted that way.

This March 6th discussion and direction about Measure Y, and where things stand with the draft General Plan right now, deserves another attempt to re-engage the public. No, not another "tick off the boxes workshop". Sitting around tables trading often incorrect information and hoping that individual input will be properly recorded is a waste of time. I suggest another approach. Having just attended my third Reimagine Hillsdale open house, I point you to the process they are using. Content notwithstanding, having large full color displays of the information they want to convey, allowing people to review and digest and react to that information at their own pace, and staffing each area with knowledgeable planners always offering to clarify or answer questions and engage with attendees, is very effective. And with each person given plenty of opportunity to respond in their own words to each segment, with plenty of opportunity for open ended input, each participant feels included. This is a model you should adopt before any further direction is given to staff.

I strongly urge the Council to honor and uphold Measure Y. I strongly urge the Council to adjourn this study session and hold meaningful open houses on the important issues before you tonight.

Karen Herrel
San Mateo resident for 60 years