

**From:** Robert Whitehair [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Monday, October 30, 2023 9:19 AM  
**To:** City Council (San Mateo) <[CityCouncil@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:CityCouncil@cityofsanmateo.org)>; Clerk <[clerk@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:clerk@cityofsanmateo.org)>  
**Subject:** General

Dear Honorable Mayor Lee, Deputy Mayor Nash and Councilmembers Hedges, Loraine & Newsom,

The Draft General Plan accomplishes so much by providing a decent response to the one most famous, or infamous, issue that has bedeviled San Mateo for almost 4 decades: building height and density. Kudos to the City for bold action that provides an acceptable pathway for responding to that problem.

But the Draft General Plan fails as a response to the climate crisis.

As many have pointed out, the Draft General Plan has three key themes: Sustainability, Environmental Justice, and Community Engagement. We have a once in twenty year opportunity to make meaningful progress in these areas and shape a San Mateo where anyone and everyone can thrive and where significant climate issues can be addressed. Meanwhile the climate worsens, bringing some of the hottest months on record in the last 2000 years.

The good news is that there is still a time to respond.

The reality is that in my lifetime the climate crisis will probably not be resolved. However, **IF** we were to immediately adopt an all hands on deck approach, eliminate fossil fuels, and regenerate our planet, there is a decent chance to turn around the climate crisis in the next 7 generations.

**IF.**

The City has already shown statewide leadership by its adoption of reach codes, and by developing a Building Decarbonization strategy.

The best next step is to adopt a focused Climate Action Element of the General Plan, similar to what the County of San Mateo has done <https://www.smcgov.org/media/73461/download?inline=>

Adoption of such an element by the City of San Mateo will provide a bold statement and additional staff resources. Some of us have already called for a Climate Element, but we were summarily dismissed.

If a City as powerful and focused as San Mateo can find closure on the building height and density issue, then we stand a great chance of dealing with the climate crisis.

Please direct staff to adopt a Climate Element to the General Plan

Thank you

Robert Whitehair  
San Mateo home owner for 41 years