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Sent: Monday, November 27, 2023 3:51 PM  
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Cc: Clerk <[clerk@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:clerk@cityofsanmateo.org)>  
Subject: Higher height limits and density downtown

I was so disappointed that Council elected not to have higher height and density maximums near downtown Caltrain. I think this is incredibly shortsighted and not conducive to the long term thinking that a 2040 General Plan requires.

It would be easy to write a lengthy screed on the topic, but I'll restrain myself to a couple bullet points.

First, members of the this Council seem to be under the impression that this will preserve the historic downtown, but instead it will stagnate it. To have a vibrant, resilient downtown, we need people to live there, and decisions like this are a surefire way to slowly strangle our urban core. I can't help but think how much better a development like Brickline would be if it were taller. We could have hundreds more San Mateans living and working near Caltrain, who make use of transit, add vibrancy and strengthen our retail.

Secondly, I want to point out we have some tall buildings near downtown, and it's completely fine. The sky hasn't fallen. The apartments near the library, along El Camino, near Central Park and even Kiku Crossing, are thankfully above five stories. The way Council speaks make it sound like they're considered an unsightly blight, or some disease, but people live here. These are their homes, and they help make San Mateo great.

Lastly, we have climate goals, and discouraging people from living near the most walkable city in the peninsula is a barrier to achieving them. Modern environmentalism is urbanism. Fewer homes in walkable areas means more traffic, more carbon, and more traffic violence.

Please reconsider allowing the 8 story exception near downtown Caltrain. Thank you.

Jonathan New  
San Mateo homeowner