

**From:** Evan Powell [REDACTED]  
**Sent:** Saturday, November 11, 2023 10:38 AM  
**To:** City Council (San Mateo) <[CityCouncil@cityofsanmateo.org](mailto:CityCouncil@cityofsanmateo.org)>  
**Subject:** new data undercuts the premise of general plan discussions

Dear Council Members

Thank you for your service.

I'm writing to point out that our extensive - and expensive - general plan process was conducted with false premises that undercut its credibility. I strongly suggest we revisit some of the discussions with the benefit of more accurate information.

1. Population growth:

- Since the planning process has kicked off, the state of California and local universities and others have revised their growth projections. We are on the precipice of changing the character of our community to accommodate a wave of population growth - that no longer looks likely. Covid really did happen, causing an increase in remote work. Demand for local office space has dropped, with San Francisco vacancies leading major metro areas.
- Eventually the state will have to face this reality and loosen the requirements for mega building; given this uncertainty, we should delay ratifying any decisions with a multi-decade impact.

2. Central neighborhood streets classified as arterials:

- As you know, in the last few weeks our public works department has let us know that the current plan is for two of the primary streets in our neighborhood to be classified as arterials, making them unable to have traffic calming. The basic promise we have been given is that with increased density and hence potential traffic the city will act to protect pedestrians. In practice every bit of traffic calming in our neighborhood has taken countless discussions, begging, our neighborhood performing traffic studies and suggesting grants via routes to school, and so on. And now we hear that our traffic will likely get worse thanks to this reclassification of 5th and [9th.to](#) arterials. This is a massive change at the last minute - at least our awareness of it is without doubt new - and this would have changed the input from at least the central neighborhood.

3. Measure Y and city council elections

- Last but not least, it's extremely clear from elections and from more informal polls at recent open house meetings concerning the general plan that there is NO mandate for building very tall buildings in San Mateo. Ultimately this must matter; the direction you are going is not popular.

Thank you again for your work on behalf of us, the residents of San Mateo. Please consider a pause during which time the process can incorporate new data and information. A pause would give us the best chance to make a credible decision about the general plan, a decision that will impact our area and the lives of all of our residents for decades to come.

Evan

Evan Powell

South Central neighborhood

