



**SAN MATEO
HERITAGE ALLIANCE**

January 30, 2024

Planning Commission
City of San Mateo
330 W. 20th Ave.
San Mateo, CA 94403

Dear Planning Commissioners:

There are a number of issues in the 2040 General Plan and EIR that should be addressed before they are submitted to the City Council.

Effects on the Central Neighborhood

The Central neighborhood will be subjected to extensive traffic from the proposed General Plan. The effects of this traffic on the Yoshiko Yamanouchi House, the potentially historic neighborhood, potential contributor properties, and individually eligible properties have not been adequately identified or mitigated. Over 22 projects have been proposed downtown. The significant traffic increases from these projects and additional projects under the General Plan will add particulates, heavy metals, traffic, and noise to the adjacent properties. The majority of those projects will have adverse construction and operation impacts on the properties on 4th and 5th, as well as on El Dorado, Idaho and Fremont leading to US 101. The City should identify and enforce use of specific routes of travel, through a public process, to reduce effects on the neighborhoods.

Contributors to Historic Districts

We request, again, that contributors to historic districts be added to the General Plan definition of historic resources.

While state and federal laws consider the historic district the historic resource, many cities identify contributors as historic resources. The 2030 General Plan includes contributors to historic districts in the definition of historic resources but the contributors were omitted from the definition in the 2040 General Plan definition of historic resources. This is a change in the new General Plan that should be addressed in the EIR. Greater effects to historic resources will occur if contributors are not treated as historic resources.

Holistic Historic Preservation

The City has not addressed historic resources holistically since the 1989 *Historic Building Survey*. Since that time, many buildings have been demolished without considering whether the properties contribute to a historic district.

The General Plan calls for conducting a context study (please elaborate on what that means so the public can understand it), updating the historic preservation ordinance and process, and conducting surveys. Please provide a timeline for this work since the tasks in the 2030 General Plan have not been completed.

Please add a policy to either:

1. Determine if a property proposed for demolition would be a contributor in a historic district, or
2. Add moratorium for demolition or substantial demolition of homes older than 50 years until the potential historic districts in San Mateo are identified

Cumulative Impact Analysis

CEQA requires that the effects of past, present and future impacts on historic resources be identified. We disagree that the General Plan will not have significant effects on historic resources. The City must identify the previous impacts to cultural and historic resources before the cumulative impact can be identified. We disagree that the project will not have an effect on historic resources (see above). The EIR is inadequate because it does not adequately address cumulative impacts.

Further Comments

The Heritage Alliance will provide comments on the General Plan and EIR to the City Council for their consideration.

Sincerely,



Laurie Hietter
President