
From: Albert Jeans
Sent: Tuesday, April 9, 2024 1:59 PM
To: Glaser, Heather; City Council
Subject: My Slides for (3.1) CIP Study Session and (6.1) R3 Zoning Study Session
Attachments: CIP Public Comment Albert Jeans.pdf; R3 Zoning Public Comment Albert Jeans.ppt

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I would like to show these slides during my public comments at tonight's meeting. I plan to attend in person.

Best regards,
Albert Jeans

R3 Zoning Study Session

Public Comment

Albert Jeans

April 9, 2024

Financial Impacts of Zoning for Higher Density

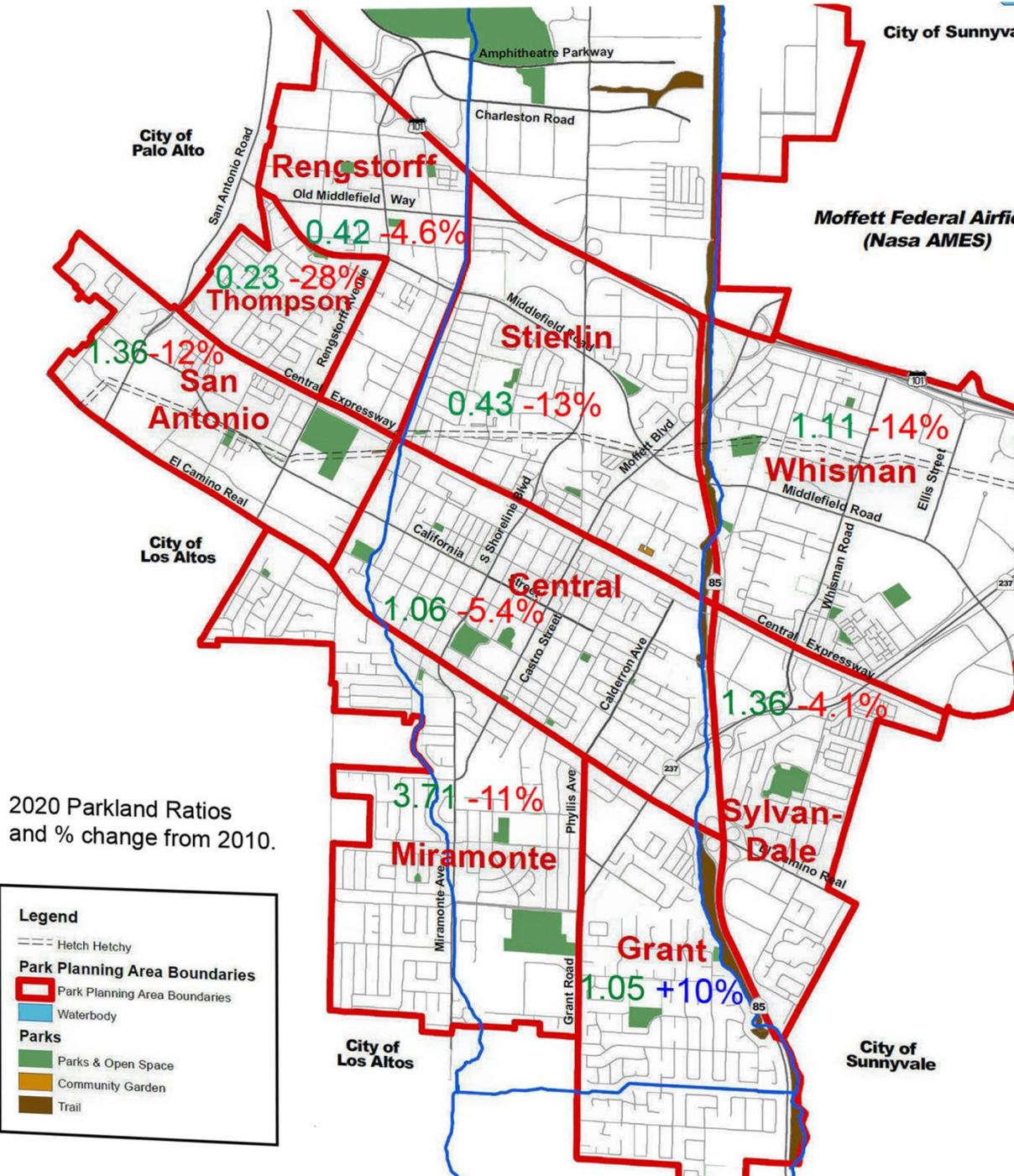
Google-Leased Building In Mountain View Sold For \$170M

March 21, 2018 | Julie Littman, Bisnow Bay Area [✉](#)

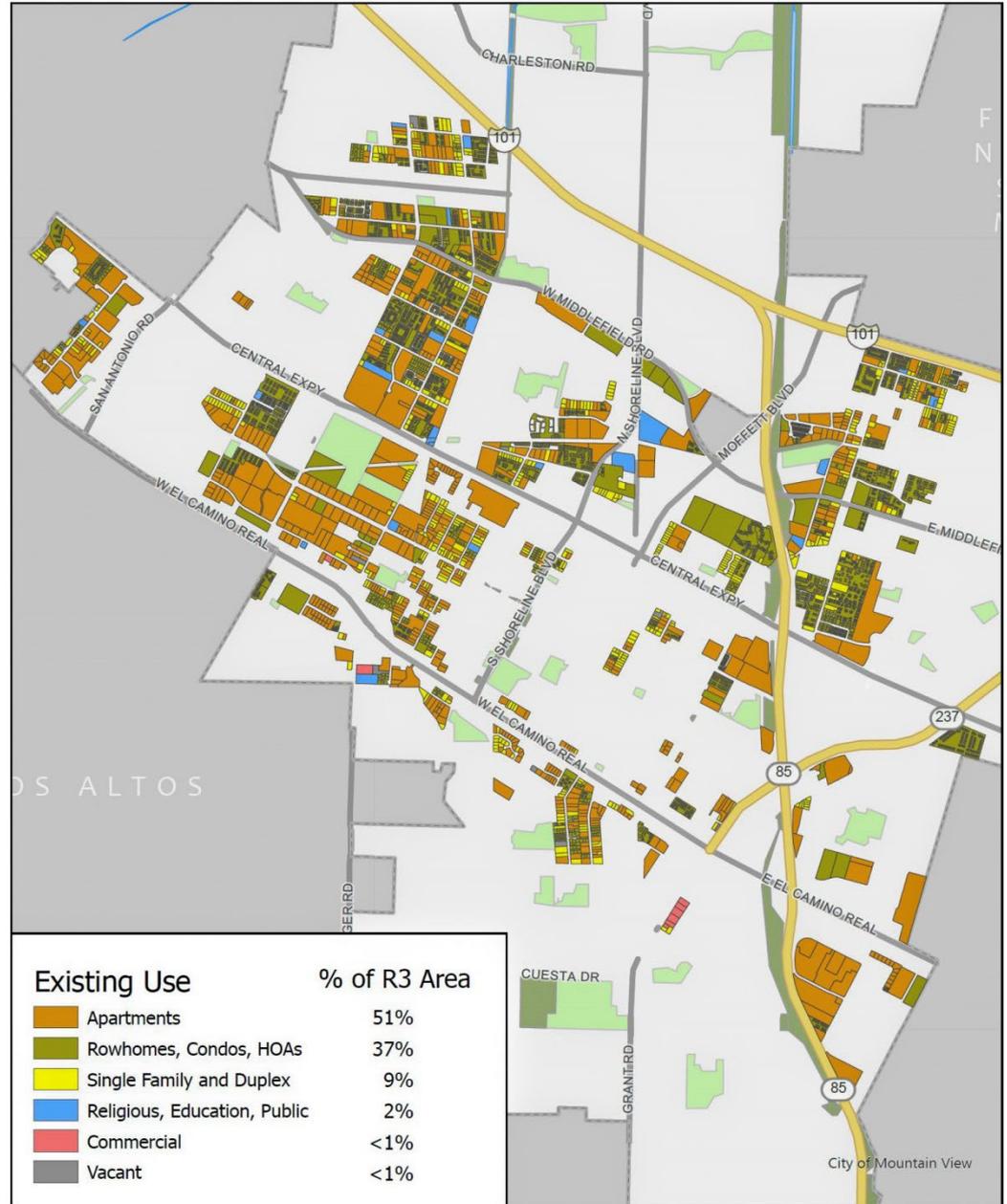


LH Shoreline has bought a building leased to **Google** in Mountain View for about \$170M. Google has leased the 133K SF office at 1001 North Shoreline Blvd. since 2015, **the East Bay Times reports**. The building was previously assessed with a property value of \$60.4M after it was completed by Calvano Development in 2017.

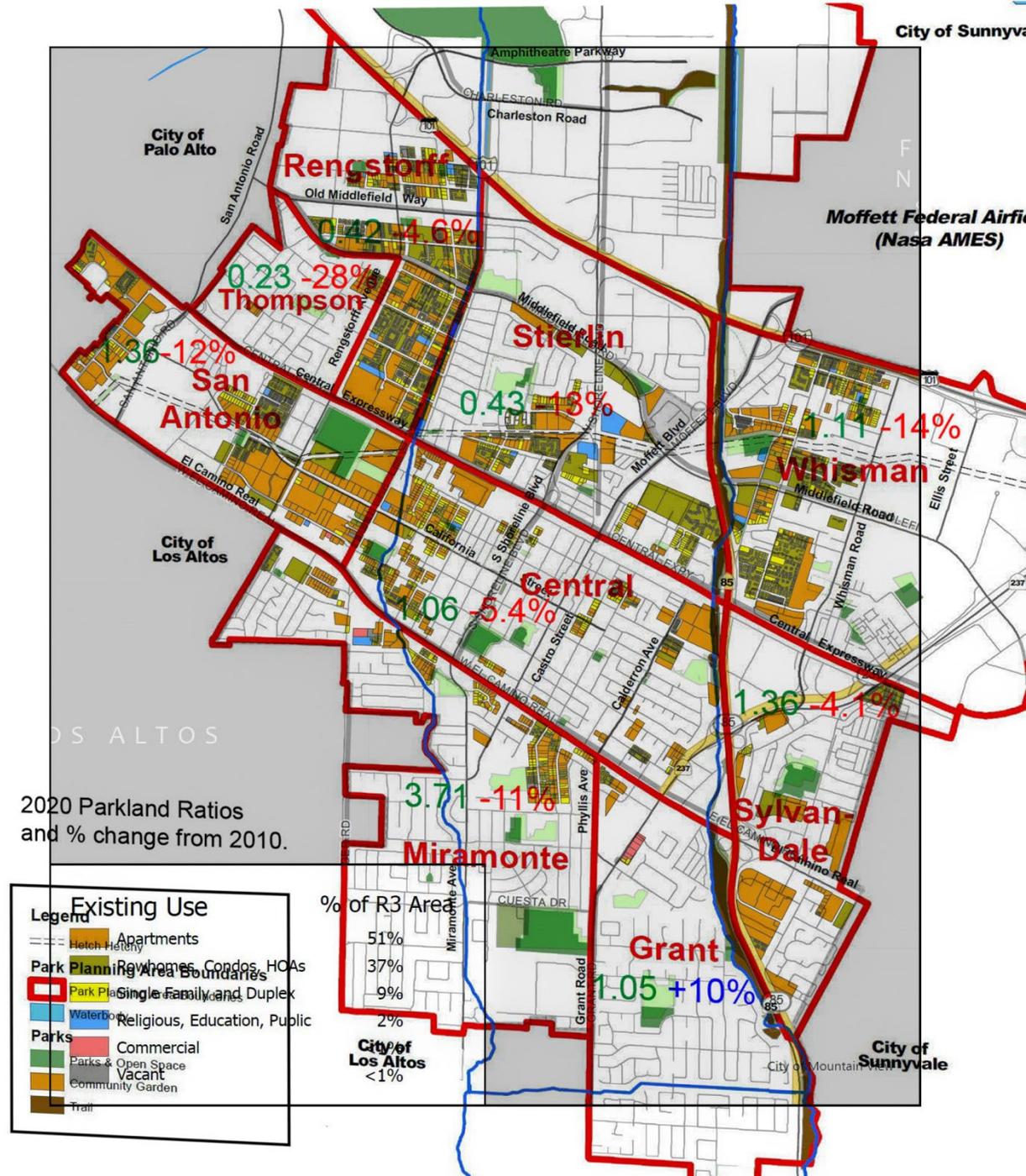
Park Land Ratios



R3 Zoning Map



R3 Zones and Park Land



From: William Lambert
Sent: Tuesday, April 9, 2024 2:07 PM
To: , City Clerk
Cc: City Council
Subject: Comments on City Council Agenda Item 6.1 for Apr-9-2024
Attachments: Comments - City Council Agenda Item 6.1, Apr-9-2024.pdf

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City Clerk,
Please see my attached comments for Agenda Item 6.1.

Bill

William Lambert | Partner

SheppardMullin

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April 9, 2024

Mountain View City Council
City Hall, 500 Castro Street
PO Box 7540
Mountain View, CA 94039-7540

Agenda Item 6.1 – R3 Zoning District Update – Goals, Phasing, Subdistricts, and Location Criteria

Honorable Mayor Showalter and Council Members,

I attended several of the community outreach meetings, City Council Study Sessions and the Environmental Planning Commission Meeting on March 13, 2024, where this topic was discussed.

During this agenda item the City Staff has requested the City Council’s direction on four questions concerning the R3 Zoning District Update.

1. Does Council support or have feedback on the goals for the R3 project, and if Goal 5 is supported, does Council want to study high/moderate-growth alternatives or focus on low-growth alternatives?

What I heard from these meetings is that it is not a simple choice between high density/moderate growth and modest density/low growth alternatives. The issue is really how do we best accommodate the residential growth. This requires a well thought out strategy not only about housing but also about the infrastructure to support that housing. During the public input sessions I was impressed by the willingness of the community to suggest creative solutions to provide for address housing needs and at the same time try to provide a workable and livable infrastructure for the residents. We need to understand how we will accommodate the increased traffic, provide safe, walkable, and bikeable streets, parking, parks and open space, opportunities for small retail and business, access to schools, and others. Our current infrastructure is challenged and developer fees do not come close to providing the funds to address the infrastructure needs created by additional housing. At least based on the memorandum, the goals for the R3 project seem independent of other city goals.

Also, as pointed out in the memorandum, considering that R3 zoning covers 15% of the city area and 50% of the city’s existing dwelling units, shouldn’t R3 zoning be a topic for the general plan update which I expect will start being discussed in the near future. That way, the impact of the future of R3 zoning can be considered holistically with other city goals and projects.

2. If Council includes Goal 5 to increase densities, should the City phase the project to address the Housing Element and state law requirements and other related tasks first, or should the City continue with the full scope of the project?

If the Council does decide now to increase the R3 zoning density, I recommend phasing the project. This will allow more time for deliberation.

3. Does Council support or want changes made to the subdistricts framework shown in Table 4 to be used in developing alternatives that staff will bring back for EPC and Council consideration at a later date?

I have no comment on this question.

4. Does Council wish to add or eliminate any criteria for where to locate higher densities or commercial uses?

In Tables 6 and 7 of the memorandum the city has provided a list of criteria for increased densities and a list of criteria for neighborhood commercial uses and has asked the Council to add or eliminate criteria to the list. As an alternative or perhaps simultaneous approach I would recommend taking a look at Mountain View overall and understand how the city is used by the residents and visitors and what long term residential and commercial growth can be expected. I would hope that some type of neighborhood framework is still a viable option, and if it is, then support a neighborhood concept. For example, focusing retail/commercial along congested transit corridors such as El Camino, Grant Road, and Rengstorff seems more like an urban strip mall-type development. I also encourage the city to take into consideration projected high density growth in city's adjacent to Mountain View such as the plans Palo Alto has for residential growth along the south side of San Antonio Road. As part of this process the city may want to consider developing accessibility indexes to reflect that major automobile and Caltrain transit corridors present significant access barriers.

Thank you for your consideration.

Bill Lambert

Monta Loma Neighborhood Resident

From: Aaron Eckhouse
Sent: Tuesday, April 9, 2024 11:09 AM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Comments on R3 zoning update (Agenda 6.1)
Attachments: California YIMBY comment letter on Mountain View R3.docx

CAUTION: EXTERNAL EMAIL - Ensure you trust this email before clicking on any links or attachments.

Attached please find comments from California YIMBY on the R3 zoning update. I am happy to answer any questions.

thank you,

Aaron Eckhouse
Local and Regional Policy Program Director
California YIMBY

he/him/his

California YIMBY is a statewide organization of 80,000 members who welcome more neighbors. We believe an equitable California begins with abundant, secure, affordable housing. We focus on housing and land use policy at the state and local level to ensure grassroots organizers and city leaders have the tools they need to accelerate home building, fight displacement, and build a California for everyone. We were proud to co-sponsor SB 684 (Caballero) in 2023 to expand access to affordable infill homeownership opportunities, as well as SB 478 (Wiener) in 2021 to help ensure that local multifamily zoning standards are adequate to accommodate missing middle housing.

We are pleased to see Mountain View accounting for these laws in updating standards for the R3 zone. However, we believe implementation could be improved by bringing general standards in R3 up to at least the minimum thresholds established by SB 684 and SB 478. Rather than providing separate paths to greater density or floor area for a subset of developments, this would bring all of the R3 zone into consistency with standards intended to ensure the viability of missing middle and naturally affordable housing. It would also provide greater clarity and simplicity in the development process for applicants and staff, as well as the public, avoiding a situation in which different developments are subject to different standards for density and FAR within the same zone. Specifically, this would mean:

1. **Raising allowed densities** up to at least 30 du/acre throughout the R3 zone, as the city cannot enforce a lower density standard on any SB 684 development. We would also recommend the city consider densities greater than 30 du/acre, which would better facilitate a greater diversity of housing options in the zone.
2. **Raising allowed FAR** throughout the zone up to at least 1.25, as required by SB 478 for developments of 8-10 units. Generally raising allowed FAR would, among other benefits, avoid a perverse dynamic where a development would get more floor area for a project with 10 homes than for one with 12. We would also recommend the city consider allowing FAR above 1.25, particularly in areas allowing more than 30 du/acre.
3. **Reducing required setbacks** to ensure that developments are able to achieve the allowed FAR. Current setback requirements make achieving even the currently allowed FAR of 1.05 impossible on smaller lots that are common in the R3 district. These setbacks place Mountain View's local zoning in conflict with SB 478 and should be reformed to ensure that FAR levels which must be allowed under state law are attainable.

4. **Revising other standards** that may pose fewer conflicts with state law, but still restrict housing and pose challenges for developments to achieve allowed densities. These include maximum lot coverage requirements, minimum open space requirements, and minimum personal storage requirements (which are a particular challenge for developments with lower parking levels). Revision of those standards would better facilitate more housing in the R3 zone.

These changes will help bring more housing to Mountain View, limit conflicts with state law, and provide greater clarity for project applicants, Mountain View staff, and the public during development review. We encourage Mountain View to treat standards established by state law as a floor to build up from, rather than a special bypass for only some housing developments.

Aaron Eckhouse
Local and Regional Policy Program Director
California YIMBY

From: Ali Sapirman
Sent: Tuesday, April 9, 2024 11:02 AM
To: William Cranston; Jose Gutierrez; Hank Dempsey; Alex Núñez; Joyce Yin; Chris Clark; Hagan, Lindsay; , City Manager; City Council; , City Clerk; Kamei, Ellen; Matichak, Lisa; Showalter, Pat; Hicks, Alison; Ramos, Emily Ann; Ramirez, Lucas; Abe-Koga, Margaret
Cc: City Clerk; Housing Elements@HCD; Woodman, Leslie@HCD; Reid.Miller@hcd.ca.gov; Corey Smith; epc@mountainview.gov; Coy, Melinda@HCD; Aaron Eckhouse
Subject: HAC comment letter on R3 Study Session
Attachments: HAC comment letter on Mountain View R3 Policy.pdf

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Dear Council and Staff,

Please find the attached comment letter on the R3 Policy Study Session.

Feel free to reach out with any questions or concerns.

In solidarity,

--

Ali Sapirman | Pronouns: They/Them

South Bay & Peninsula Organizer | Housing Action Coalition

555 Montgomery St, San Francisco, CA 94111

Email: ali@housingactioncoalition.org



To opt out of all HAC emails, respond to this email with "unsubscribe all".



April 9th, 2024

Re: R3 Zoning District Update-Goals, Phasing, Subdistricts, and Location Criteria
Dear Mayor Showalter, Vice Mayor Matichak, and Councilmembers,

At The Housing Action Coalition, our mission is to advocate for housing at all levels of affordability to address California's housing shortage and displacement crisis. To this end, we work closely with members of the building industry to ensure that state and local policies are implemented to address the housing shortage driving our shared displacement and affordability crisis.

We recognize the City of Mountain View has taken steps toward updating the standards for the R3 zone, reflecting the requirements of state laws such as SB 478 and SB 684. This is commendable, and a step in the right direction toward addressing our housing needs. However, we have serious concerns about the City's implementation of Housing Element Program 1.3. Specifically,

- Program 1.3.a: *"Conduct a development prototype study, update definitions as necessary for consistency between plans and districts, and revise multi-family development standards in major districts (including R3) and Precise Plans to ensure projects can, at minimum, meet their allowed density and are **economically feasible** where possible through reductions of physical development standards. **Economic feasibility and the cumulative effects of standards will be inputs in the reduction of standards.** Where appropriate, calibrate standards to lot size. **Focus on standards with the greatest feasibility impacts on underutilized sites, such as open area, parking, and building coverage.**"*
- Program 1.3.c: *"Ensure that the Zoning Code is updated to reflect densities and other standards as required by state law (e.g., SB 478)."*
- Program 1.3.e: *"Study live-work as an allowed residential use near retail areas, major corridors, and other viable locations."*
- Program 1.3.h: *"Conduct a review of R2-zoned properties. For all properties, upzone to either allow density greater than typical R1 properties under SB 9 (at least four units per typical parcel, plus ADUs) or integrate the sites into the R3 Zone. Sites selected to integrate into the R3 Zone should be based on affirmatively furthering fair housing, access to transit, schools, and services and other policy goals."*

In order to satisfy this program, the City of Mountain View must go beyond simply implementing state law, the City must also consider the financial feasibility of small multi-family housing.

Echoing the analysis and recommendations provided by California YIMBY, we believe there are opportunities to further enhance the implementation of these updates. Specifically, to ensure the viability of "missing middle" and naturally affordable housing, general standards in the R3 zone should meet or exceed the minimum thresholds established by SB 684 and SB 478. This



approach would streamline the development process, providing clarity and consistency for applicants, staff, and the public, while avoiding disparate standards within the same zoning area.

We strongly advocate for the following modifications to the R3 zoning standards:

1) Increase Density Limits: Adjust the allowed densities to at least 30 dwelling units per acre throughout the R3 zone, aligning with SB 684's stipulations. This adjustment would not only comply with state mandates but could also encourage a greater diversity of housing options. Considering densities greater than 30 units per acre would create even more opportunities for affordable and middle-income housing.

2) Adjust FAR Requirements: Elevate the Floor Area Ratio (FAR) across the R3 zone to at least 1.25, as necessitated by SB 478 for developments housing 8-10 units. Such a change would circumvent counterproductive limitations on floor area, enabling more efficient use of space and encouraging the construction of a broader range of housing types. Furthermore, allowing an FAR above 1.25, especially where densities exceed 30 units per acre, would, among other benefits, avoid a perverse dynamic where a development would get more floor area for a project with 10 homes than for one with 12.

3) Revise Setback Requirements: Current setback standards often preclude housing from meeting even the present FAR of 1.05 on smaller lots. Modifying these requirements is essential to ensure developments can attain the FAR levels mandated by state law, particularly SB 478. Such a revision would align local zoning with state directives, facilitating the construction of denser housing developments.

4) Reevaluate Additional Standards: Consider revising other development standards that, while not directly conflicting with state law, currently limit the potential for higher-density housing. This includes reexamining maximum lot coverage, minimum open space, and personal storage requirements, especially in developments with lower parking provisions. Adjusting these standards can significantly contribute to increasing housing availability within the R3 zone.

5) Economic Feasibility: In the staff report, there were multiple mentions of interest regarding further developing form-based zoning. If the City is serious about form-based zoning, it is crucial that staff considers relaxing standards rather than creating more restrictions. Our members were clear that many of the restrictions Mountain View uniquely imposes create barriers to ensuring the City isn't only building townhomes, but also this type of infill multi-family housing. If the City wants to encourage small multifamily development, they need to provide incentives for developers. Looking at the economic situation, townhome development is far more financially feasible than single family home development. If the City wants developers to build multifamily housing, it's imperative that higher densities are allowed, with flexibility on parking that's not below grade but on the ground floor. We recommend that staff study the economics of small multifamily development.

6) Community and Stakeholder feedback: We encourage the City to continue engaging with residents, developers, and housing advocates throughout this process. Collecting a broad range of feedback can help ensure that the updated R3 zoning



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regulations not only satisfy state requirements, but also reflect the needs of our community.

After receiving feedback from developers, implementing these recommendations will not only enhance housing availability in Mountain View but also ensure the City is compliant with state laws, reduces development standards, and clarifies the development process for all stakeholders.

Thank you for your commitment to addressing Mountain View's housing challenges. I urge you to consider these recommendations seriously as you continue to refine and implement the R3 zoning standards. Together, we can make Mountain View a model of thoughtful, inclusive urban planning that meets the needs of all its residents.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Corey Smith", is set against a light gray rectangular background.

Corey Smith, Executive Director
Housing Action Coalition (HAC)

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ali Sapirman", is written in a cursive style.

Ali Sapirman, South Bay & Peninsula Organizer