

## **El Camino Real: CAG**

**May 5, 2014**

### **El Camino Real Character**

- Along El Camino Real, the newer buildings are better looking
- Some buildings are too close to the street
- Taller buildings are okay if they are farther back
- Look for opportunities for pedestrians to cut through plazas
- Taller buildings are okay if they have interesting facades, such as arcades
- Width of sidewalks is a key factor
- Minimum & Maximum setbacks and building articulation engage pedestrian activity
- Maintain a landscape buffer between the road and sidewalk
- Establish a relationship between sidewalk (width) & setback to enhance pedestrian experience
- Ensure business signs are visible from street
- Landscape variations at different nodes, village centers etc.
- N. Side of Corridor may need more shade due to the sun's angle
- The portions of the corridor between Village Centers should not be car-oriented – they are the edges of neighborhoods and should prioritize walking comfort

### **Principles**

- Bicycles on El Camino Real continue to be an issue of discussion, specifically, what types of improvements are appropriate?
- Ensure bicycle parking is provided at grade
- Affordable housing is a major issue and should be incorporated as a principle
- Trip reduction goals / strategies are missing
- Provide pedestrian-friendly streetscape design, especially at intersections. Consider shade trees for people waiting to cross

### **Residential Open Area**

- Open space should be useable, not just setbacks

- Public open space is better for the community than private open space
- Urban living entails shared space
- Utilize in-lieu fees to support quality street improvements

### **Active Ground Floor Spaces**

- Grandeur of building façade is important for vibrant activity
- Do we need to make El Camino Real more vibrant? It doesn't need to be like Castro Street.
- Slower traffic will improve comfort of environment
- The floor area requirement for active spaces should be presented differently, eg, "most of ground floor"
- New buildings mean national chains; would we rather have local businesses in old buildings?
- Identify wider sidewalk dimensions in the Plan
- Provide parking behind buildings
- Fewer driveways for pedestrian safety
- Explore strategies for shared parking opportunities
- Shared parking as a long term goal with flexibility for current retail

### **Residential on Smaller Lots**

- Greater first floor heights and setbacks to balance residential privacy with pedestrian friendly design
- Entrances on ECR encouraged
- Streetscape improvements are critical for this

### **Office Floor Area Ratio**

- Look for ways to reduce trips and parking demand through mixed-use
- Underground parking is an opportunity to reduce building mass
- There was concern about high office occupancy rates – there is not enough housing nearby and people will have to drive to work

## **Intensities**

- Look into other locations to have no maximum FAR; that is, only limiting setbacks and transitions
- Concern about shadows in Castro North
- Greater open space requirements may lead to taller buildings
- Make sure you assess the character of tall buildings on side streets
- Look into properties on High School Way as part of the Precise Plan
- Up to 6 stories in Village Centers is okay, but there must be a process to ensure that place-making happens well

## **Bicycling**

- Crossing El Camino Real is very important to children getting to school
- There are destinations on El Camino Real that need to be accessed
- Improve crosswalks for bicycles
- Improve bus stop design