

**From:** [Daniel Shane](#)  
**To:** [City Council](#)  
**Cc:** [Pancholi, Diana](#); [Planning Division](#)  
**Subject:** Daniel Shane Comments on the Revised 2023-2031 Draft Housing Element in Study Session Agenda Item 6.1  
**Date:** Tuesday, December 13, 2022 12:18:57 PM  
**Attachments:** [REDACTED]

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RESPECTFULLY, PLEASE FIND MY COMMENTS ATTACHED THAT ARE BEING SUBMITTED PRIOR TO THE DEADLINE SET AT 4:30 PM AND PRIOR TO THE CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION ON DECEMBER 13, 2022.

DANIEL SHANE

HOMEOWNER AND SPOKESPERSON FOR THE CYPRESS POINT COMMUNITY PRESERVATION GROUP, WILLOWGATE COMMUNITY

[REDACTED]

Revised December 13, 2022 (drafted on May 17, 2022 @1631)

To: City of Mountain View Environmental Planning Commission

From: Daniel M Shane, resident at [REDACTED] (26 years)

Cc: epc@mountainview.gov

city.council@mountainview.gov

Re: Agenda Item #6.1 – Study Session – Revised Draft Housing Element Update – Draft 2023-2031

Daniel Shane Comments on the Revised Draft 2023-2031 Housing Element

Dear Environmental Planning Commissioners and City Council,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the draft Housing Element for discussion during the Study Session scheduled for Wednesday March 18, 2022, at 7:00 pm.

I know the Commissioners really care about Mountain View and making improvements in the development review process. I have given this subject a great amount of thought and I have concluded that besides tweaking some processes there needs to be a revamping of the overarching policies, goals, objectives, and priorities to enable the city to grow and maintain a high quality of livability and quality of life. I have partially read the Executive Summary for the Development Review Assessment dated November 24, 2021 and prepared by Matrix Consulting Group. Matrix made 51 recommendations for improvements to the development review process.

Three major elements of urban land use planning process are the General Plan, Zoning, and Permitting. The General Plan has seven (7) elements. They are land use, circulation, housing, conservation, open space, noise, and safety. Of the seven elements, the Housing Element is the only element subject to a mandatory review by a State agency, the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD).

A major part of the Housing Element process is to:

- 1) Identify sites to meet the RHNA or Regional Housing Needs Allocation which is the number of units that can be built during the 8-year cycle of the Housing Element
- 2) Outline action items in the form of programs to ensure that the housing needs of the city, including those identified by State law, are addressed in the next 8-years from 2023-2031.

Apparently, significant policy and process changes can be made through the Housing Element review process. I have recommended several new changes and offered several ideas on how we might improve the development review process through overarching policy goals and objectives. Three key ideas were:

(1) Engage the public early-on in the planning stages of a housing development. The policy would require the developer to engage the residents near the project site during the early planning stages (e.g., conceptual phase) and obtain feedback on the development and its impacts to the neighborhood that could be incorporated into the project design. I believe the city, the developer, and the residents could save a tremendous amount of time, money, resources, and anxiety if there was early collaboration, cooperation, coordination, and communication between the corporate developer and the neighborhood residents. It is during this time that the residents can tour the site with the developer and

point out their issues and concerns. With this type of information, the developer can go back and try to address these issues and concerns early in the project design phase. This may be the single most important policy change and common-sense approach that will likely result in turning an adversarial urban land use planning process into a cooperative process between the developer, the community, and the city. This is not just a Mountain View problem. This problem exists in many cities across our nation. The City of Mountain can set a valuable precedent by institutionalizing the early engagement of the community in the housing development project design phase. I believe the City's role should be to moderate the differences between the stakeholders and help find solutions to problems. Above all, the city has a primary responsibility to protect the public health, welfare, and the environment. The city must address the resident's concerns about public health and safety as their number one priority in any development. There is no other governmental entity to do this, except maybe the County Department of Public Health which rarely takes responsibility for local housing development matters. I recommend the city initially evaluate the health and safety concerns of the project and all other project planning can originate and flow from that assessment. This may be a new perception which can be translated to a major policy change for the public agencies involved in the development review process.

(2) Integrate the existing natural ecosystem (i.e., natural resources such as trees, waterways, flora, and fauna) with the development (i.e., buildings, garages, roads). Artificial landscaping cannot replace a viable natural ecosystem. This also may be a new perception that gets translated into policy. Trees are not just niceties, they are necessary. They are necessary for our survival and mental health wellbeing. Trees raise our spirits and soothes our souls. Developers have created a false premise backed by disinformation and false facts. Developers and housing advocacy groups have made the issue only a choice between housing or trees. This is simply not true. We can have both at the same time by integrating our natural environment with housing developments. What we need is the proper policies and motivation to get the developer community

(3) Preservation and enhancement of Highway Vegetation Barriers should be a priority for the protection of the public health against exposures to toxic and carcinogenic pollutants from auto and truck emissions. Tree protective highway barriers need a higher priority for protection **and** enhancements. A list of scientific references on the growing evidence of the importance of highway vegetation barriers to public health is available upon request from Daniel Shane at [shanedan18@outlook.com](mailto:shanedan18@outlook.com) and Richard Baldauf at [baldauf.richard@epa.gov](mailto:baldauf.richard@epa.gov). I have much more information and data on the need to protect and enhance highway tree barrier systems located between heavily used highways and residential areas.

(4) Implement a policy that places a higher priority on using GIS urban land use management technology and software to evaluate the cumulative environmental impacts of housing developments. Currently, housing projects are evaluated on their own individual merit, and in a vacuum. The City Council and staff need to better understand the cumulative environmental impacts of all the projects in the queue taken together and not solely on an individual basis. The natural and human ecosystems are complex, integrated, and interconnected web of life and supporting systems that need to be understood and protected. The Planning Commission should set goals and objectives for preservation of the natural ecosystem within the urban setting. In other words, evaluate the environmental impacts by using an ecosystem (quality) approach rather than using the numbers of Heritage trees (quantity) approach.

(5) Hire and employ qualified staff (environmental engineers, environmental scientists, environmental specialists) to effectively assist in the implementation of these major public health and environmental policy changes.

(6) Introduce new policies and code changes that broaden the list of protected tree species and revise the circumference size thresholds to expand the numbers of trees protected. The City of Palo Alto is currently working on such a policy to better prevent the loss of trees during housing development. An article in Palo Alto On-Line is attached to this letter. Note: It appears that Palo Alto protected trees are evaluated according to the diameter of the trunk while Mountain View uses the circumference of the trunk at a certain distance from ground level. This needs to be verified.

(7) Elevate the Urban Forester position in the City Hall hierarchy.

Sincerely,

Daniel Shane

Spokesperson for the Cypress Point Community Preservation Group

[REDACTED]

Mountain View, CA 94043

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

**From:** [Peter Katz](#)  
**To:** [City Council](#)  
**Cc:** [, City Clerk](#)  
**Subject:** Item 6.1 for 12/13 City Council Meeting  
**Date:** Tuesday, December 13, 2022 3:28:43 PM  
**Attachments:** [Response to Second Draft of Housing Element.docx](#)

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The Mountain View Chamber of Commerce wishes to submit the attached letter to comment on Item 6.1 (Revised 2023-2031 Draft Housing Element) for tonight's agenda.  
Thank you very much

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**Shop Safe, Support Local at *the MV Marketplace!***

**Peter Katz • President & CEO**  
**Mountain View Chamber of Commerce & Foundation**

 650-968-8378  [REDACTED]

 [REDACTED]  [ChamberMV.org](#)

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