

**From:**

**Sent:** Wednesday, March 17, 2021 2:29 PM

**To:**

**Cc:**

**Subject:** Introducing GreenSpacesMV community group and Integrate Urban Nature into R3 Zoning Update

Greetings Environmental Planning Commission,

Hope this email finds you well and with a lot of luck!

On behalf of GreenSpacesMV, I'm sending a letter introducing a new community group. To reinforce mention of our group's goal at the previous EPC meeting (3/3) earlier this month, GreenSpacesMV strives for a healthy community that thrives with urban tree canopy, nature, and native biodiversity.

**Additional notes on R3 Zoning**

Given the urgency to bolster public health and ecosystem health through a time of a global pandemic, climate changes, and MV's urbanization, we value integrating (and leveraging) urban nature into city planning especially as the city develops. Regarding the upcoming discussion on R3 zoning, we support any opportunity to incorporate green, nature-based, biodiverse-sensitive infrastructure. Acknowledging Mountain View's foundation of walkable tree-lined streetscapes and ecological preservation, we hope that this inspires design standards for architectural variety, frontages, and landscapes. I personally am looking forward to the Multi-Family Residential Design Handbook, and encourage consideration for guidelines and expectations promoting light standards, tree canopy and native plant options (as inspired by [North Bayshore's Native Plant Palette](#)).

Please don't hesitate to reach out to Bruce England, who I've copied, or me if you have any questions or want to discuss with GreenSpacesMV! Our group's excited to find ways for all of us to live in green!

Sláinte,

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March 17, 2021

**Re: Introducing GreenSpacesMV**



Dear Environmental Planning Commission,

We're **GreenSpacesMV**, a community group that has regularly come together since the end of last year, realizing the shared goal of a healthy community that thrives with urban tree canopy, nature, and native biodiversity.

Meeting regularly every month, we want to extend an invitation for you to join our discussions! We're all still confronting overlapping public health crises of a global pandemic, enduring systemic racism, climate change threats and loss of biodiversity. [Healthy People 2030](#), released by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, notes that the environments we live, work, play, age have a huge impact on our health. Knowing [our health and well-being benefit from nature - more than ever through COVID-19](#)<sup>1</sup>, GreenSpacesMV supports growing a resilient Mountain View with robust urban nature. Foreseeing the challenges ahead, we hope to amplify the spirit of collaboration to increase accessible quality greenspaces that will contribute to public and ecosystem health for the long-term.

**This past year has planted seeds of inspiration for Mountain View to build a healthier and greener community!**

- People going outside daily to take a break and actively travel:
  - Utilizing neighborhood streets for more space to socialize and exercise
  - Biking, walking, and jogging on the Stevens Creek Trail, the Ellen Fletcher Bike Boulevard, and the other bikeways and slower neighborhood streets
  - Socializing at a distance and connecting with nature as they relax under the big trees of Cuesta, Eagle, and Rengstorff city parks
- People enjoying a vehicle-free, slow Castro Street for a safe and walkable experience
- Hearing the sounds of nature and birds, especially with fewer vehicles and reduced commutes and traffic congestion
- Community calls for park and green spaces in neighborhoods such as Old Mountain View and Monta Loma

**It's vital that we actively and explicitly integrate urban nature into city planning.**

Large, mature trees and native plants are integral to stormwater, heat, energy, and water management; contribute to biodiversity; and serve as a carbon sink. In addition to working 24/7 to clean our air and mitigate heat, these carbon-free *natural assets* provide a plethora of ecosystem benefits to all living creatures. They positively impact people's physical, mental, and social well-being as well as enhance wildlife and pollinator habitats.



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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gjh.org/views-from-the-field/the-urgent-need-for-nature-during-and-after-covid-19/>

**We're an interconnected web of life – let's invest in opportunities that expand and enhance nearby nature.**

We see creative opportunities to preserve and promote tree canopy and native plants, and especially to increase plantings where nature is scarcer and more needed. Here are some possibilities:

- Traffic calming measures
- Stormwater swales
- Bike and pedestrian buffers
- Schools and parking lots
- City parks
- Freeway entrances and exits
- Linear parks and community gardens, smaller land lots
- Living roofs and walls of new developments



Urban trees and native plants can vertically frame and enhance the utilization and experience of routes, making for calmer and safer streets. As our environments guide our behaviors and can inspire healthy lifestyles, we hope to connect greenways to increase accessibility and active travel to schools, community centers, and other public amenities.

**Thank you and we look forward to working together.**

We want to send our appreciation to commissioners and staff for all the ongoing efforts to address community needs through the COVID-19 pandemic, and for the emphasis on working together. Please do not hesitate to reach out to meet and chat!

Warm regards,

Members of GreenSpacesMV

