



March 15, 2021

Chair Cranston and Members of the Environmental Planning Commission
City of Mountain View
500 Castro Street
Mountain View 94041

Re: EPC Study Session, March 17, Agenda Item 5.1 – R3 Zoning District Updates

Dear Chair Cranston and Members of the EPC:

The LWV enthusiastically supports measures to increase the supply of safe, decent and adequate housing for all Californians. Therefore, we are pleased to see that the proposed R3 zoning district update might lead to 12,000 new housing units over time. Our main concern with the plan is its failure to include “no net loss” and tenant protections such as currently required by SB 330, which will sunset in 2025. We understand that the City plans to coordinate a new displacement policy with the R3 zoning update, but we would prefer that the R3 zoning also include these protections since approximately 11,500 units in the R3 zone are under CSFRA so with the proposed changes the City should see older R3 apartments being replaced by higher density units while ideally not displacing existing tenants.

That said, we commend the emphasis on form-based zoning rather than density, including the important concept that form-based zoning considers transitioning to adjacent neighborhoods. We also agree that height, lot coverage, setbacks, and parking requirements have been factors limiting new development. Form-based zoning and objective standards, according to the staff report and the excellent presentations by Opticos, show that new developments can be attractive without the current more restrictive requirements. Unbundling parking is a concept we have long supported, along with reduced parking near transit.

We are pleased to see the stress on welcoming streetscapes and tree canopy. These features work well with the concept of allowing POPA as parks, thereby reducing what are presently very high park fees.

We wonder if there could be incentives to encourage units with more bedrooms for larger families or commercial/retail on the ground floor where feasible or other types of development the City may want to incent.

Overall, we commend staff and Opticos for their proposal to create four “subzones” because the R3 zone applies broadly to so many different situations in Mountain View. The project clearly is complicated; therefore, we agree that some sort of design handbook to help those wanting to redevelop property within the various “subzones” would be helpful. Thank you for considering our input. (Please send any comments about this letter to Donna Yobs at dmyobs@yahoo.com).

Lisa McLain, President
Donna Yobs Co-Chair, Housing Committee
League of Women Voters Los Altos Mountain View

cc: Wayne Chen Kimbra McCarthy Martin Alkire Aarti Shrivastava