

**From:** Tim Liu

**Sent:** Saturday, March 4, 2023 5:22 PM

**To:** [epc@mountainview.gov](mailto:epc@mountainview.gov)

**Subject:** Comments on the City of Mountain View Housing Element plan

Hi there,

My name is Tim and I live in Mountain View. I saw that there is a meeting about the housing element plan next month. I may not be able to attend, but would like to submit some comments about the plan. I have also sent these comments to Ellen Yau, who suggested I also send them to this email address.

I am very supportive of the housing element plan and am excited by the goal to:

"

...increase in housing opportunity equal to more than 60 percent of existing units and twice the City's 6th cycle RHNA

"

I strongly support more housing in Mountain View, and am excited that Mountain View is striving to dramatically increase housing.

I saw parts of the East Whisman precise plan and am also strongly in support of it. I support the creation of dense, walkable communities and am excited by the plan to have density bonuses and allow higher construction near public transportation.

Overall, I am very supportive of the Housing Element plan.

March 2023

To: City of Mountain View Environmental Planning Commissioners  
From: Mountain View Solidarity Fund | Fondo de Solidaridad de Mountain View

Dear City of Mountain View Environmental Planning Commissioners,

As members of the Mountain View community, we are writing to you to provide input on the Housing Element document currently under revision. We understand that the Housing Element document guides future decisions on housing preservation, protection, and production, and we hope that you will consider our community's vision of equity and inclusion in your revision process.

In our various capacities as community leaders and as founders of the Mountain View Solidarity Fund, we interact with many members of our community who face housing insecurity. In our work, some of the community's most pressing concerns include:

- Long term instability, including becoming ineligible for low income housing but not being able to afford market-rate housing.
- Fear of landlords or mobile home park owners selling properties, resulting in unforeseeable changes to rent or living conditions.
- Restrictive income eligibility requirements for affordable housing that sometimes result in housing insecurity when households are unable to pay full rental prices after changes in income.
- The concerning poor condition and deteriorating state of the regular low-rent housing buildings compared to the city-sponsored affordable housing.
- Many families spend over 70% of their income on housing, which continues to put pressure on providing basic living needs as inflation continues to grow.
- Low availability of multi-bedroom apartments for large families with children.

Our vision for the community includes goals for improved long term stability, such as community control of properties by working class residents, and realistic affordability, where people don't pay so much of their income towards rent. We are invested in fundraising a combination of grants, subsidies, and no interest loans to make these projects happen for members of the community.

Given these community concerns, we would like to suggest some items to be included in the next iteration of the Housing Element document, including plans for the construction and/or provision of:

- 5 buildings acquired by tenant cooperatives and/or community land trusts
- 50 housing units acquired by tenant cooperatives and/or community land trusts
- \$10 million investment from the city's BMR funds that would support the acquisition of these properties by tenant cooperatives or community land trusts

Ideally, these properties would:

- Be affordable, with rent comparable to 30% of families incomes.
- Be spacious or offer multiple bedroom options for large families.
- Be built with long-term sustainability in mind, using environmentally conscious materials that are better for both the earth and the health of our families.
- Include community spaces for activities for children and adults, meetings and educational classes, with flexible hours and available bathrooms.
- Be a source of community for families to gather, grow vegetables, and space for their children to play.

We'd like to see a timeline where the city researches community land trusts and cooperatives together with local nonprofits and experts and develops an action plan within a year. This project will take several years to execute, so we feel that time bounding the research and planning work is important given the urgency of the need.

We believe that these provisions will help the community's vision of equitable and inclusive housing options come to fruition over the next eight years. In support of this vision, the Mountain View Solidarity Fund is currently researching the possibility of bringing a community land trust and/or tenant cooperatives to Mountain View along with policy support in the form of COPA or TOPA.

Community land trusts (CLTs) are a capital-efficient way for cities and communities to provide affordable housing in perpetuity in communities like ours where the cost of housing is rising faster than income. There are over 250 community land trusts in the United States, including in Oakland, San Francisco, and San Jose. CLTs have been founded by non-profit organizations, community groups, and even cities. They are controlled by the community members themselves and purchase, own, and steward land in a community for the common good. Once the land enters the CLT, it is never sold. The land is used for affordable housing, community gardens, community oriented spaces, etc. For reference, here are two articles about CLTs and cooperatives in Oakland and San Francisco:

- Oakland: <https://oakclt.org/portfolio-items/hmc-fruitvale/>
- San Francisco: [https://www.sfexaminer.com/archives/co-ops-could-help-solve-san-francisco-s-affordable-housing-crisis/article\\_9010c823-fbb9-50f8-a52f-fdef35eae7a2.html](https://www.sfexaminer.com/archives/co-ops-could-help-solve-san-francisco-s-affordable-housing-crisis/article_9010c823-fbb9-50f8-a52f-fdef35eae7a2.html)

We are just in the beginning phases of our research. Over the next few months, we're looking forward to meeting with local community land trust organizations, City of Mountain View staff and council members, and experts to understand how these models work and how they might be helpful in increasing housing security for our most vulnerable residents in Mountain View.

Please reach out to us if you would like to speak more about our ideas. We look forward to being involved in the revision process and collaborating with all of you on behalf of our Mountain View families.

Thank you for your consideration,

*Mountain View Solidarity Fund | Fondo de Solidaridad de Mountain View* leaders (Olga Melo, Paula Perez, Azucena Castañon, Marilu Cuesta, Isabel Salazar, Sonia Sequieros, Nadia Mora)

*Mountain View Solidarity Fund | Fondo de Solidaridad de Mountain View* volunteers (Maria Muñoz Yepez, Anthony Chang, Makenzie Gallego, Paige Hill, Sarah Livnat)



03/10/23

Mountain View Planning Department and City Council  
500 Castro Street, PO Box 7540  
Mountain View, CA 94039-7540

Re: Mountain View still lacks ambitious parking reform

To the Mountain View Planning Department and City Councilmembers,

TransForm is a regional non-profit focused on creating connected and healthy communities that can meet climate goals, reduce traffic, and include housing affordable to everyone.

We acknowledge the work to date on the 6th Cycle Housing Element, however we still see room for improvement in regards to Mountain View's outdated parking standards. **We applaud the addition of Programs 1.2 and 1.3** which will eliminate parking requirements for 100% affordable developments by December 2024 and establish a TDM ordinance, respectively. These programs are an important first step but we still recommend the following policies listed in our first letter:

1. Require unbundled parking for certain transit oriented developments, which is easier for building managers to implement now with new parking tech tools like [Parkade](#).
2. Require developers to buy annual VTA Smart passes for residents at a discounted bulk rate as a part of the city's TDM ordinance.

We strongly urge you to include the policies above in the final draft of Mountain View's Housing Element as they would help create safer and healthier communities.

As with other cities like [San Jose](#) and [Alameda](#), parking reform packages can be passed even if not identified as a program in your Housing Element and we are committed to assisting cities in this endeavor.

To support Mountain View in their efforts to reform outdated parking standards, we believe the following resources could be useful:

1. [MTC/ABAG Parking Playbook](#): This guide provides descriptions, real-world examples, and sample code for various smart parking policies. A true "one-stop shop" for parking reform in the Bay Area.
2. [GreenTRIP Connect](#): Our Connect tool can be used on any parcel in the city. This tool is particularly useful to demonstrate exactly how policies like reduced parking provision can



help meet citywide goals, as we demonstrated in this [scenario](#) (that was in our first letter).

We sincerely hope to see Mountain View take steps to implement smarter parking reforms and TDM measures in the near future. During the course of potential study and implementation our team is available to partner with you and answer any questions you may have.

Sincerely,  
Zack Deutsch-Gross  
Policy Director  
[zackdg@transformca.org](mailto:zackdg@transformca.org)