
From: Shani Kleinhaus
Sent: Monday, June 23, 2025 3:38 PM
To: City Council
Cc: , City Clerk
Subject: SCVBA Comment on Agenda Item 8.1 – Gatekeeper Policy G-9

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Dear Mayor Kamei and City Councilmembers,

I am writing on behalf of the Santa Clara Valley Bird Alliance (SCVBA) to express our appreciation for the following elements of the proposed **City Council Policy G-9**:

- **Section D.d – Park Land/Open Space**, which requires projects to dedicate a minimum of 24% of the site area as a public park, plaza, or trail. This is a meaningful and measurable standard that will help ensure developments contribute substantial public benefit in the form of accessible open space.
- **Section D.f – Trees and Biodiversity**, which requires a minimum of 75% native trees and landscaping. This is an important commitment to biodiversity, climate adaptation, and the health of our urban forest.

To make Section D.f more effective, we respectfully recommend a minor revision:

“The project proposal includes a minimum of 75% native trees and landscaping, utilizing the North Bayshore Precise Plan plant palette unless otherwise specified by the Biodiversity and Urban Forest Plan.”

This addition would ensure alignment with an existing, vetted palette of native and regionally appropriate plants, while allowing flexibility to adapt as the City’s Biodiversity and Urban Forest Plan evolves.

In addition, we urge you to address light pollution in this policy. Excessive and poorly directed outdoor lighting disrupts human health and wildlife behavior—particularly for nocturnal species and migrating birds—and diminishes the ecological value of natural habitat. We recommend incorporating standards that require fully shielded fixtures, a maximum color temperature of 2700K, and lighting curfews for non-essential lighting. These principles are consistent with Mountain View’s sustainability goals and would align with the forthcoming Biodiversity and Urban Forest Plan and Dark Sky ordinance.

Thank you for including these forward-looking provisions. They reflect a strong commitment to preserving and enhancing the natural qualities that make Mountain View a healthy and happy place to live.

Sincerely,

Shani

Shani Kleinhaus, Ph.D.
Environmental Advocate
Santa Clara Valley Bird Alliance



From: robert cox
Sent: Monday, June 23, 2025 10:21 AM
To: City Council
Subject: Livable Mountain View comment on Item 8.1 "New Council Policy G-9, Gatekeeper Application Policy and Procedures

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Mayor Kamei, Vice Mayor Ramos, and members of the Mountain View City Council,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on Item 8.1 "New Council Policy G-9, Gatekeeper Application Policy and Procedures.

The proposed new gatekeeper policy represents a major deviation from Mountain View's established historical gatekeeper process and we urge that the council reject it. This proposal is being set forth in this hearing without significant advance public outreach. It makes about one-third of the city's area eligible for streamlined gatekeeper projects. Our understanding from reading the staff report is that these could be approved on a single council vote. It is unclear from the staff report whether a public hearing would even be held, or if that vote would be on the consent calendar. It is also unclear how the public is expected to participate in the approval process or even how the public would become aware of what streamlined gatekeeper projects have been filed. All these questions need to be answered before considering such a major change.

Many of the included areas for streamlined gatekeeper projects are in the R3 zones that were specifically not selected in the R3 upzoning process. So, it appears that the streamlined gatekeeper process could be used to circumvent the council's choices for the R3 high intensity areas. Note that there is no minimum lot size, and yet the streamlining criteria (B)(2) requires a provision for open space. The report provides no rationale for this (contradictory) proposal in contrast with the current protocol where, gatekeeper projects generally were of a significant enough size to produce significant housing and merit consideration of a zoning change. Note that, also unlike what was considered in the R3 zoning changes, there are no density or height limits indicated, or even suggested, for streamlined gatekeeper projects.

Finally, not only is this a major change that would be implemented without the public outreach that council has previously acknowledged to be of the utmost importance, this proposed change could even deny residents the right to know what a developer is going to build since the staff report also includes consideration of gatekeeper applications with no associated development. The purpose of a gatekeeper application has always been to consider whether a specific project proposal which is not currently zoning compliant merits special consideration. What benefit is there to the public if a developer can obtain a zoning change without revealing what they intend to build?

For all these reasons, we ask that the council adopt Alternative (2): "Do not adopt Council Policy G-9 and direct staff to open the Gatekeeper submittal window under the existing Gatekeeper Process (utilized in 2024)." Also, we request that the council conduct public outreach and a publicly noticed study session to gather input from the public before adopting a new gatekeeper process.

Thank you for considering our views on this important topic.

Robert Cox, Louise Katz, Maureen Blando, Hala Alshahwany, Muriel Sivyler-Lee, David and Carol Lewis,
and Nancy Stuhr

For the Steering Committee of Livable Mountain View