

Downtown Offices and First Floor Retail; Castro Street Businesses

Healthy cities need great public places. Castro Street is like our city's living room where Mountain View residents get together with family and friends meet neighbors and celebrate as a community. In the wake of COVID-19, public gathering and dining spaces like Castro Street are more important than ever as we ask what will our city look like when we are past this crisis. Offices on the first floor of Castro Street create dead zones where there is no reason to stop and engage, offer blank lobbies or desks and create dark, blank spaces at night. Dead zones negatively impact neighboring restaurants and retail because pedestrians want spaces that feel safer, are more lively and offer more reasons to visit.

- *If elected to the City Council would you vote to continue to support policies and decisions that restrict the ground floor of Castro Street buildings to restaurant and retail only and not allow offices, office lobbies and office cafeterias?*

I would vote to continue to support policies and decisions that restrict ground floors of Castro Street buildings to retail, restaurant and not allow offices, office lobbies, and office cafeterias. I believe this project creates a walkable, social public space. Right now during the pandemic, of course we discourage dense public gathering, but that public gathering on Castro Street was and will in the future be an important part of the social character of our city.

- *What would you do to make reopening Castro Street a success?*

Most critically, I believe we must not open Castro Street up to cars until we have completely dealt with COVID-19 and it is safe for restaurants to move back indoors. To open Castro Street prematurely would be to create an undue hardship on businesses, depriving them of outdoor seating. When our state and county officials give the green light, I will support having public hearings and commentary to advise the City Council on the most desired way to open up Castro Street in phases.

Historic Preservation

Historic buildings act as anchor buildings and create a sense of place around which vibrant restaurant, shopping and entertainment districts thrive have thrived. Cities like Sunnyvale and Santa Clara which have eliminated their historic downtowns are now seeking to recreate them. Mountain View started its historic preservation planning over a decade ago but never completed the process. In particular, the process lacks preservation tools and incentives needed for preservation to succeed in a rapidly growing city, so that we can retain the viability of Castro Street as a walkable urban destination for residents and visitors.

- *If elected to the City Council would you vote to support completing Mountain View's historic preservation process in Council's 2021 Work Plan?*

I am in favor of completing it if we have the staffing resources next year. My top priority is making it through our pandemic and the upcoming budget deficit without cutting our vital city

services. The pandemic severely complicates the prospect of getting the full spectrum of community input necessary to do this process in a fair and open way. But I am not in principle against prioritizing it, should we be able to fund the staff resources and ensure public participation. I hope to have a dialogue with Livable Mountain View in the coming week in order to better understand your perspective on the tradeoff here.

- *Would you actively support strong incentives like transfer of development rights (TDRs), land swaps and revolving loan funds as a part of the process? What additional mechanisms would you support to ensure that we preserve our city's historic buildings and places?*

TDRs and land swaps are generally useful legal and financial mechanisms to ensure conservation of natural, historic, or publicly beloved spaces. In particular, revolving loan funds are more general financial mechanisms which I do support, but have critical applications outside of this particular question. I am in favor of the diligent use of all of these and would support their institution and democratically accountable stewardship under municipal guidance.

Transit Center and Plaza

The 100 block of Castro Street with some of our most historic buildings has been the liveliest walkable block of our city for decades. It is a gateway to our city for visitors and residents. While city staff is moving ahead with the infrastructure for a new transit center, Mountain View does not yet have a real DESIGN for the new transit center facilities and massive plaza, which will be used by commuters and the community and complement our Historic Downtown District. Specific funds have not yet been set aside for the design of this important public space.

Our organization, Livable Mountain View, has been advised by city staff that the Council must prioritize and vote for this to be included in the Council's two year Work Plan which will be voted on in 2021. Livable Mountain View is advocating for our city to have a world-class design through an open competitive design and bid process with stakeholders and Council input.

- *If elected to our City Council would you prioritize, and vote for, funding a design competition for the development of our transit center and plaza in the upcoming two year Work Plan?*

We have a transit crisis and we need to address this. Mountain View's Environmental Sustainability Task Force 2 identified transportation as our number one emissions challenge. I am 32 years old and so by the end of my lifetime, I will witness the potentially devastating effects of the decisions our City Council makes in 2021. In particular, we need to expand our public transit and remove cars from the road. I will support a design competition if we can do it expeditiously and without delaying public transit expansion. I believe this should be doable.

Cannabis Stores

As of 2019, there was not a single city in the Greater Bay Area with a cannabis retail storefront in its walkable downtown. Many communities opposed cannabis retail storefronts in their downtowns because such stores would put excessive demands on our limited downtown parking, create an atmosphere less friendly to families, and alter one of the few places teens can explore freely in an urban environment. Many parents do not feel comfortable allowing their children to hang out around cannabis storefronts. Mountain View's Chief of Police has stated publicly that there would be no enforcement of regulations relating to cannabis without a police report of potential violations, that such reports would be of low priority and that they could not be enforced without increased police department staffing.

- *If elected to the City Council would you vote to prohibit cannabis stores in downtown Mountain View if the matter came before the Council?*

It is my understanding that cannabis storefronts are already banned in Mountain View <https://www.mv-voice.com/news/2019/05/24/council-votes-to-ban-storefront-pot-shops-in-mountain-view-allowing-only-delivery-services>. If we do make the decision to lift the ban, we need to do so slowly and not start at Castro Street. It is not my priority to unban storefronts. But if they are unbanned, then I am in favor of starting away from Castro Street, schools, etc. And moving slowly to give the public time to react and voice their opinions. I value residents' input on this issue and it will be my North Star.

Office-Housing Balance and Local Control

Mountain View has been a Bay Area leader in linking the approval of new office projects to the development of new housing. For example, the office-housing balance is a central principle in the city's new East Whisman Precise Plan. Furthermore, new residential developments are now required to provide a 15% affordable (subsidized) housing component.

California state legislation such as the former Senate Bill 50 (SB-50) and related bills seek to eliminate local control and block cities like Mountain View from controlling office development (and therefore job growth) by linking it to the creation of housing. Such bills in their various forms mandate upzoning without requiring the construction of affordable housing. They also would end Mountain View's ability to require community benefits such as parks, trees, and bike lanes. These benefits are essential to keeping Mountain View livable as the city's density increases.

- *If elected to the City Council, would you oppose state and local efforts for blanket upzoning?*

I am in favor of upzoning in areas not subject to gentrification and displacement. I do not favor and would not support automatic, blanket upzoning because of the consequential loss of local control over taking care of our vulnerable residents. I favor instead the deliberate and sustainable growth of public and private housing, both municipally-subsidized and cross-subsidized housing. I will be an advocate for both dramatically expanding housing as well as doing it on our city's terms.

- *What actions or policies would you support that would directly address the need for affordable housing, and to address displacement and homelessness in Mountain View and the Bay Area as a whole?*

I support expanding public housing to meet the needs of the community who cannot afford market rate housing. We have to be honest that our longstanding reliance on private housing development has failed to end the housing crisis. I support building public housing which is available for low income, mixed income, and cross-subsidized structure. I am not opposed to allowing the construction of market rate housing as well. We need strong public housing development as well as allowing private housing development to get out of the housing crisis.

Additionally, I will continue to advocate for expanding funding to our safe parking program in order to locate our RV residents in lots which are fully serviced by waste removal, showers, and – as our summer heat wave is currently proving – must be shaded from the oppressive summer heat. RVs are not long term solutions to homelessness or housing, but the fact is that for environmental and humanitarian reasons, we can work with the County to expand our program and make it a just and fair transition for RV residents into permanent housing.

Downtown and Moffett Precise Plan Update

The Precise Plans on both sides of our downtown train station have not been updated in decades. Good transit-oriented development prioritizes denser urban development, while preserving the places in our city which our residents cherish, like parks and historic districts. Our outdated and often ignored precise plans leave Mountain View’s small historic core threatened, while neglecting the opportunity to make Moffett Boulevard a walkable and attractive transit-oriented avenue with its own amenities, like housing over restaurants and retail.

- *If elected to the City Council would you vote to keep the current Council project to “Review and consider amendments to various aspects of the Downtown Precise Plan, with the work phased to prioritize preserving the character of the downtown core and preventing, to the extent possible, preemption by State legislation,” in the Council Work Plan and act to ensure preservation of our Historic Downtown?*

I am in favor of updating our precise plans. I believe we need extensive public hearing and comment to learn more fully what the people of Mountain View want in our precise plans. I want to host open and fair public hearings where all voices from our community can attend. I am in favor of maintaining the commercial core of downtown Mountain View, expanding transit, and increasing the walkability and densification of nearby residential neighborhoods.

- *Would you vote to support a project in the Council Work Plan to update the Moffett Precise Plan to create a walkable and attractive transit-oriented downtown complete with ground floor retail and restaurants and upper floor housing along Moffett Boulevard?*

I support creating a walkable and attractive transit-oriented downtown so described along Moffet Boulevard. My only concern is staff availability. We’re in a pandemic and my top priority

is getting through our upcoming budget crunch without cutting our cherished and vital social programs. As soon as we have staff availability to conduct this project, I support undertaking it.

Your Action Plan

We have found that council members who have an action plan are the best prepared to achieve their goals.

- *What will be your top priority as a council member to enhance Mountain View's livability?*

Livability means many different things to our residents of Mountain View. Livability covers a wide range, from being able to walk to Castro Street and get a haircut, to being able to ride the community shuttle to the grocery store, to being safe in the knowledge that you aren't more likely to be arrested for being Latinx (The sad and unfortunate fact is according to Campaign Zero's Police Scorecard, it is true <https://policescorecard.org/?city=mountain-view>), to knowing that you will be able to afford to stay in your rental unit despite rent hikes or the pandemic. It is my intention to advocate to preserve and enhance our dense, walkable city as well as address the other issues of livability which I have raised.

Here are some of my action plans and priorities:

I will advocate to expand the protections of the CSFRA such as the landlord registry and the just cause eviction protections as widely as possible. I will advocate for municipally-funded legal representation for tenants in the case of evictions. I will advocate for public housing construction in order to get us out of our housing crisis. These steps are necessary for housing security livability.

I will advocate for expanding rent relief, extending the eviction ban, preventing evictions due to missed payments during the pandemic, and investigate with the Law Foundation of Silicon Valley the possibility of canceling rent and mortgages during the pandemic. I will also advocate for expanding funding to the Community Services Agency to meet the material needs of our residents. These steps are necessary for public health livability.

Due to our city-forecast fiscal crisis over the next two years and in order to meet the demands of the Movement for Black Lives I advocate for cutting funding to and demilitarizing the police department. This is necessary for public safety livability, especially of our Black and Latinx neighbors.