

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 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 agree that we should not have dead zones on Castro Street or on the main cross streets. It is important to have active uses on the ground floor for all the reasons listed above. I support current policies that allow restaurants and retail only and prohibit offices, lobbies and private cafeterias on the ground floor.

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

The City is hiring a senior economic development person to lead this effort. It is important to listen to the ideas our businesses have and help them navigate the County's health orders. The City needs to be flexible with permits and regulations to accommodate new ways of doing business. And the City needs to be flexible and allow change over time as what works now might not work a few weeks from now.

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 was the Councilmember who put this project on the list. I continue to support completing this important project.

- *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?*

We need to be creative when it comes to historic preservation and explore ideas that surface to assist with the preservation of historic resources. In concept, I support land swaps, TDRs and loans, but each situation is different and needs to be evaluated in its own right. I would like to explore reducing/eliminating fees and reducing/eliminating property taxes.

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?*

I am surprised to hear that staff says this needs to be brought forward as part of the goal setting process. I am happy to bring it forward during that process. But I am also happy to bring it forward outside of that process and support it.

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?*

I voted No on the motion to allow two cannabis store-front cannabis shops in Mountain View. I don't see any circumstances under which I would change my perspective on this. If we are going to have cannabis businesses in Mountain View, they should be delivery-only businesses.

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 do not support blanket upzoning and do not support preemption by the state on any topic, diminishing local control. Mountain View has a good General Plan and good Precise Plans that were carefully constructed to address the job/housing balance, affordable housing, infrastructure improvements, sustainability, and community benefits to name a few. It would be detrimental to Mountain View to have these plans overruled by the state or federal government.

- *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?*

The Council recently updated our affordable housing requirements from 10% to 15% of all new units being developed. And in two Precise Plans (North Bayshore and East Whisman) developers are incentivized to build 20% of the units as affordable units. The Council also now requires the units to be built rather than accept in lieu fees.

Displacement is a challenging issue to address. The rental housing stock in Mountain View is old and in need of investment. Many of the owners are elderly and want to retire, or are passing leaving the apartment complex to their children. There isn't an incentive to invest in older properties and many heirs want to exit the rental housing business. The City can't force an owner to invest or stay in the rental housing business. John McAlister has been suggesting the City buy the older complexes and keep them as affordable units, but the City will have greatly reduced resources to do this since in lieu fees are no longer the standard. I'm concerned that the pandemic is going to cause even more displacement. While the City has provided \$2.5 million in rent relief, enacted an eviction moratorium, and provided a six-month payback period for back rent, I am concerned about further extensions. A great deal of the older, more affordable rental units in Mountain View are Mom and

Pop businesses. Their expenses are not being reduced or deferred. I would like to think that housing providers and tenants can work together to address this situation. Most importantly, we need to get people back to work earning a living.

The County owns homelessness and should be allocating appropriate resources to address the issue. In the absence of this, the City has stepped in to help. Many who are homeless have issues such as mental health issues, addiction issues, etc. that the County is responsible for addressing. I would like to work with the County to help them do a better job of addressing homelessness in Mountain View.

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 was the Councilmember who led the re-scoping of the Downtown Precise Plan update and I continue to support the current scope. I also continue to support a phase two update to the Downtown Precise Plan which would encompass the rest of the areas not in phase 1.

- *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?*

The Moffett Boulevard area was identified as one of the five change areas in the General Plan and is already on the list to be updated. It has been delayed because the long-term planners at the City had to update the North Bayshore Precise Plan to include residential use, and work on the visioning for the Terra Bella area. It should be back on track at this point. If it is not, I support prioritizing the Moffett Boulevard Precise Plan update over the Terra Bella Precise Plan creation and would try to convince my fellow Councilmembers to support this.

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?*

I am concerned that the City is going to be very focused on recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic for quite some time leaving little room for projects to support Council goals.

My top priorities are the following:

- Maintain structurally balanced budgets
- Help residents and small businesses recover from the pandemic
- Make policy, process, and system improvements to City operations
- Safely provide a broad range of high-quality services to the community

Additional priorities are:

- Require complete neighborhoods in North Bayshore and East Whisman where substantial new housing can be built
- Continue to support expansion of the free community shuttle, trails, and bicycle infrastructure to schools and major employment areas
- Keep the Sustainability Action Plan on track in order to meet our carbon emission reduction goals
- Complete the update of the Downtown Precise Plan that is focused on the historic area
- Preserve and enhance the natural environment, especially in the North Bayshore area