

1. Do you support the current council direction of the Housing Element and the R3 Zoning Update? If not, how should it be changed?

I support the Council direction for both the Housing Element and the R3 Zoning Update. Our direction for the Housing Element has been to use existing residential capacity in the General Plan to minimize the need to up-zone large portions of the City to meet the RHNA mandate. Most of the RHNA mandate will be met using residential capacity in North Bayshore, East Whisman, El Camino Real, San Antonio, and the General Plan Village Centers. However, HCD may require us to make modifications, and if additional sites are necessary, I support the Council's direction to use the "back-pocket" sites, which include other non-Village Center shopping centers, Moffett Blvd, and the Downtown Transit Center.

The Council directed staff to evaluate several potential modifications to the R3 Zoning District, including form-based zoning, updates to development standards that incentivize stacked flats and other housing types, and updated rowhouse guidelines. Many R3-zoned properties have been redeveloped over the past several years under the current development standards, including 1555 W Middlefield, 2005 Rock St, 2310 Rock St, 570 S Rengstorff, and 1950 Montecito Ave. All of these projects resulted in the demolition of existing, "naturally-affordable" housing; the displacement of current residents, including families; the removal of heritage trees; zero provision of parks or open space; and the construction of (sometimes fewer) expensive, multistory rowhouses and townhouses, with zero affordable units. The current development standards do not result in outcomes supported by the community, and they produce a singular housing type that does not accommodate many residents, particularly seniors seeking to age in place. I support the update of these development standards to achieve important community goals, including a greater variety of ownership housing products and redevelopment that preserves tree canopy and allows for dedication of land for parks and open space.

2. Do you favor amendments to the general and precise plans as an alternative to R3 Zoning Update and the Housing Element?

The Council direction currently for the Housing Element is to minimize the need for General Plan updates or significant up-zonings across the City. Since we have a 2030 General Plan, and the Housing Element cycle is from 2023-2031, the current residential capacity should be sufficient to meet the RHNA mandate. However, some precise plan updates may be necessary to address governmental constraints identified through the Housing Element process, and HCD may require those constraints and barriers to be reduced or removed. Additionally, some General Plan amendments and rezonings may be needed to meet the requirement to Affirmatively Further Fair Housing.

The purpose of the R3 Zoning Update is to address community concerns the Council has heard about the redevelopment of R3-zoned properties. Code-compliant projects approved over the past several years have not met community needs. The development standards encourage maximizing lot coverage – for example, 1555 W Middlefield is a 5.5 acre site that will be fully developed with 115 rowhouses, with no land set aside for a public park or for open space. Additionally, nearly 60 heritage trees have been removed from that site. The rowhouses, none of which are affordable, will not include accommodations for seniors or others with mobility constraints. Updated R3 development standards can produce different – and better – outcomes when these properties redevelop, and many will redevelop as the current structures near the end of their useful lives.

3. Which areas of the city do you see as additional opportunities for housing growth and why?

The General Plan identifies several “Change Areas” appropriate for significant growth: North Bayshore, East Whisman, San Antonio, El Camino Real, Moffett Blvd, and the Village Centers. We have already adopted precise plans for four of these areas, and we are working on a precise plan for the Moffett Blvd corridor. Additionally, the draft Housing Element includes aligning the zoning for the Village Centers with the mixed-use land use designation already in the General Plan. This is necessary to comply with state law (SB 1333), and it will provide defined development standards for any redevelopment that may occur, including commercial requirements (to incentivize or require retention of commercial space).

In aggregate, these “Change Areas” will allow for significant housing growth. This growth is anticipated to meet the state mandated RHNA. If the growth does materialize, it will almost certainly consume most or all staff capacity. I support prioritizing the development of these “Change Areas” before exploring additional opportunities for new housing growth.

4. Do you support a vacancy tax on commercial or residential buildings?

I strongly support a vacancy tax on commercial development to incentivize commercial property owners to fill vacancies. A commercial vacancy tax is currently being studied as part of the Economic Vitality Strategy. I am open to exploring a residential vacancy tax, but this will require significant community input. Since any vacancy tax would require voter approval, we will need to work closely with the community to ensure we fully understand all potential impacts of vacancy taxes.

5. Under what circumstances should developers be allowed to pay in lieu fees rather than build parking for their projects on site?

If a given precise plan or zoning district allows the payment of fees in-lieu of parking, then a code-compliant project must be allowed the opportunity to pay the fee. Since fees can be used to generate publicly accessible parking, in some cases an in-lieu fee may achieve a community goal that is more desirable than the provision of private parking in a given development. In any case, the City should work to ensure publicly accessible parking is provided when private development occurs in areas where there is strong demand for public parking, like Downtown.

If AB 2097 is signed by the Governor, the City's ability to enforce any parking minimum requirements is significantly curtailed. AB 2097 eliminates parking minimum requirements for all development types in areas near transit. In this case, we may need new or different strategies to address parking needs.

6. Would you support an ordinance that requires heritage trees remain in place (absent health and safety issues) when and if development takes place, both commercial and residential? If not, why not?

While I would support an ordinance that enhances the City's ability to preserve heritage trees, state law limits the ability of a city to impose new requirements or standards that have the effect of reducing density or imposing constraints on housing production. (This was mentioned in the recent R3 Update community meetings.) The Biodiversity Strategy will include an update to the Heritage Tree Ordinance, and this will be a good opportunity to see how the removal process can be improved, particularly in the context of commercial development, where the City generally has greater discretion.

For residential development, another idea to explore would be modifying development standards to provide flexibility (like additional height or reductions in setbacks) specifically and only when that flexibility will preserve existing heritage trees. In other words, rather than incentivize maximizing lot coverage the way current development standards often do, the standards should produce outcomes that achieve specific community goals. In this way, buildings would be designed with goals like heritage tree preservation from the outset.

7. Do you consider Mountain View's current notification limit of 750 feet sufficient for neighborhood outreach? If not what specific steps would you take to expand and improve outreach to all residents?

I support expanded and improved outreach to all residents. Not only is this courteous, but it also helps ensure that residents are able to provide input early on and at times when the input can best be incorporated into a given project or

policy proposal. Too often, residents learn about development proposals late in the process, when input is more challenging to incorporate.

Right now, the postcards sent out are often technical, not accessible to a general audience, and only printed in English. I would support development of a Citywide policy regulating outreach efforts to ensure appropriate outreach is conducted for development proposals or policies likely to be of interest to residents. San Jose, for example, as a Council Policy with robust development noticing requirements.

8. Please add anything else that you think we should consider while evaluating you for a Livable Mountain View council endorsement this year.

Apart from land use and development issues, I also strongly support good government reforms. I support releasing Council agenda packets earlier to allow members of the public more time to read the materials and provide input to the City. (For example, San Jose releases agenda packets 10 days prior to the Council meeting.) The City website and Ask Mountain View must be updated to enhance and facilitate the ability of the public to find information, report issues to the City, and provide input on key matters. I have been advocating for performance auditing to ensure that departments, policies, and programs are regularly evaluated to ensure they are operating effectively and efficiently. Finally, I would like to improve the Council goal-setting process to more meaningfully incorporate public input. Right now, individual Councilmembers simply brainstorm ideas in a study session format. I would like to explore a process that allows members of the public to submit written recommendations that the Council also can consider.