



April 11, 2021

Mayor Kamei and Members of the City Council  
City of Mountain View  
500 Castro Street  
Mountain View 94041

Re: Council Study Session, April 13, Agenda Item 3.1 – R3 Zoning District Updates

Dear Mayor Kamei and Members of the City Council:

The LWV enthusiastically supports measures to increase the supply of safe, decent, and adequate housing for all Californians. Therefore, we are pleased to see that the proposed R3 zoning district update might lead to 12,000 new housing units over time. As we wrote to the EPC, our main concern with the plan is its failure to include “**no net loss**” and tenant protections such as currently required by SB 330, which will sunset in 2025. The City has seen significant redevelopment in the R3 zones recently, leading to much displacement and often a lower number of new units being built replacing naturally affordable housing. We understand that the City plans to coordinate a new displacement policy with the R3 zoning update, but we would prefer that specific **anti-displacement measures be imbedded in the R3 zoning**, along with adoption of an Ellis Act ordinance. Approximately 11,500 units in the R3 zone are under CSFRA; our hope is that with the proposed changes the City will see older R3 apartments being replaced by higher density units while ideally not displacing existing tenants.

Another way to help mitigate displacement is to provide incentives like additional height or lower parking requirements to developers who provide more than the required number of replacement units.

Like the EPC, we commend the emphasis on form-based zoning rather than density, including the important concept that form-based zoning considers transitioning to adjacent neighborhoods. We also agree that height, lot coverage, setbacks, and parking requirements have been factors limiting new development. Unbundling parking is a concept we have long supported, along with reduced parking near transit.

We are pleased to see the stress on welcoming streetscapes and tree canopy. These features work well with the concept of allowing POPA as parks; we agree with the comments that amenities such as parks near denser housing need to be considered. We also believe there are lost opportunities in the proposed subzones as in many instances denser housing is not proposed near transit. Perhaps transit overlay zones would be helpful, while generally replacing the existing overlay zones with the new R3 subzone standards.

We wonder if there could be incentives to encourage units with more bedrooms for larger families or commercial/retail on the ground floor where feasible or other types of development the City may want to incent.

Overall, we commend staff for the proposal to create four “subzones” as the R3 zone applies broadly to so many different situations in Mountain View. We agree that a design handbook guiding redevelopment of property within the “subzones” would be helpful. (Please send any comments about this letter to Donna Yobs at [dmyobs@yahoo.com](mailto:dmyobs@yahoo.com)).

Lisa McLain, President LWV of Los Altos Mountain View  
Donna Yobs Co-Chair, Housing Committee

cc: Wayne Chen      Kimbra McCarthy      Martin Alkire      Aarti Shrivastava