



Mountain View General Plan Update Neighborhood Workshop:

MIRAMONTE / SPRINGER AREA

June 1, 2009

Bubb Elementary School

Introduction

This first round of City-wide General Plan update workshops were designed to 1) reaffirm and refine community input received during the 2008 General Plan Visioning process; and 2) focus on neighborhood specific General Plan issues from participants who live and work in the specific neighborhood area of the City. Input from these meetings will help inform the development of General Plan update policies and land use alternatives.

In addition to City-wide neighborhood workshops, additional targeted outreach meetings have been held with a variety of groups, including business owners, youth, seniors, and non-English speaking groups. Input from these meetings will also be included in the General Plan update process.

General Plan Update – Discussion Topics

Workshop participants participated in small group exercises to discuss the following citywide topics: 1) Economic and Community Development; 2) Open Space and Conservation; 3) Health and Safety; and 4) Climate Change and Sustainability. They also discussed the following specific neighborhood level topics: 1) Land-Use and Design; 2) Housing; 3) Transportation; and 4) Public Facilities and Infrastructure.

During the small group discussions, facilitators used prompts developed from the community during the General Plan Visioning process, and from staff and consultant expertise regarding specific challenges and issues. These prompts not only assisted participants by providing additional information and context, but also helped reaffirm and refine prior feedback on current and future challenges and issues that have been identified by the community.

The following is a summary of the small group discussions from the **June 1, 2009** meeting at **Bubb Elementary School**. The feedback collected from workshop participants is summarized by citywide and neighborhood topics.

Citywide Policy Questions

1. *Economic and Community Development*

San Antonio Center

Create a modern, well-organized, pedestrian-friendly shopping center to serve the region and local residents.

- Allow residential uses in the center.
- Retain stores for “everyday shopping” opportunities such as Trader Joe’s and Wal-Mart, if the center becomes more upscale.
- Create a more “vibrant and varied” center, possibly similar to the Stanford Shopping Center experience.
- Increase the walkability in the center with stores clustered in particular areas and parking garage(s).

Other comments

- Balance the benefit of allowing housing in North Bayshore that allows people to live closer to their jobs with flood danger and the overall economic viability of the area.
- Balance pedestrian accessibility and the Downtown’s vibrancy when considering closing Castro Street to vehicular traffic.
- Continue industrial use in the East Whisman area.
- Consider large-tenant retail opportunities at Ellis and Highway 101.
- Add denser housing and a variety of dwelling types to El Camino Real, San Antonio Road, Castro Street or Evelyn Ave to keep pace with economic development and housing demand.
- Coordinate with NASA development.
- Discourage commercial flights from Moffett Field.
- Maintain small service uses like auto mechanics.

- Consider how sensitive uses should locate in the community (i.e. Gun store).
- Take action to improve the unfinished housing project at 919 Mountain View Avenue.

2. Open Space and Conservation

Parkland

Increase the City's parkland system to provide recreational opportunities for all residents, and improve the existing parks.

- Create a new large community park on the agricultural land on Whisman Road.
- Increase park dedication requirements for higher-density projects.
- Expand McKelvey Park so that the proposed flood basin will not be so deep.
- Provide more open space in the Hollingsworth-Gilmore Area.
- New open space is needed between El Camino and 101.
- Provide a more "natural" setting in parks with less lawn and more drought tolerant plants.
- Analyze the benefit of focusing resources to create large parks that provide a wide range of recreational opportunities compared to increasing the pocket park system to improve availability of open space to all residents.
- Provide programs for small scale agriculture for educational purposes, as well as for food production.
- Improve lighting at parks to reduce crime.

Cuesta Annex

Retain the Cuesta Annex as a natural open space in the neighborhood.

- Discourage a historical museum at the site.

- Encourage a flood basin to address stormwater runoff while maintaining a natural look.

Connectivity

Improve open space connectivity, both for recreational use and to improve access to open space for residents in all parts of the city.

- Expand the bike and creek trail network.
- Provide a shuttle system that stops at parks and open space.
- Create a trail connection between Cuesta Park and Stevens Creek Trail.

3. Health and Safety

Bike Trails/Lanes

Enhance bicycle facilities to provide opportunities for alternate modes of transportation and recreation.

- Construct more bike and walking trails, especially east/west to connect with Stevens Creek Trail, and between neighborhoods.
- Develop more bike lanes on City streets.
- Provide additional bike parking facilities Downtown.
- Consider bike paths that are separate from pedestrian traffic for safety purposes.

Traffic Calming

Neighborhood streets need continued efforts to reduce the speeds of automobile traffic. Care must be taken, however, that the methods used to slow traffic do not create a nuisance for residents.

- Provide drivers education to reduce automobile speeds in neighborhoods.
- Encourage traffic calming measures such as bulb-outs, narrower streets, roundabouts and diversions instead of speed humps.

Pedestrian Safety and Comfort

Improve the comfort and safety for pedestrians, especially on routes to school.

- Increase the number of shade trees on large arterials.
- Improve pedestrian safety on El Camino Real between Castro and Phyllis, the crosswalk at Cuesta and Bonita and near Graham Middle School.

Services

Improve health and safety related services, especially for high-risk and low-income segments of the population.

- Continue to support the El Camino Hospital.
- Improve access and development of more teen/youth mentorship services and activities, as well as services for immigrants.
- Expand health services and outreach for at-risk communities.
- Improve way-finding and circulation signage, such as at the Shoreline and Central Expressway interchange.
- Encourage cafeterias as a healthy option for low-cost dining that is not fast food.
- Increase police patrols to counter a perceived rise in crime.

Other Comments

- Reduce neighborhood air pollution by limiting wood fireplaces, pesticides and street sweepers.
- Expand choices in what kind of trees to plant.
- Prohibit smoking downtown, and enforce these rules.

4. Climate Change and Sustainability

Water Usage and Landscaping

- Develop systems using water recycling and grey-water for landscaping and other appropriate uses.

- Remove the grass/lawn from parking strips; replace with landscaping that does not need watering.
- Preserve trees, particularly heritage trees.

Solar/Alternative Energy

Residents strongly support expanded alternative energy options for local homes and businesses.

- Provide special financing opportunities for residents to purchase solar panels for their homes.
- Reduce permit fees and streamline the review process for solar panels.
- Require that all new development provide some generation of solar or alternative energy.
- Ensure that solar panels installations are attractive.
- Encourage electric cars to improve air quality.

Public Transit

Encourage higher density development near transit links and hubs, and provide for public transit services to reduce congestion and greenhouse gases.

- Consider that a high-speed rail station in Mountain View may generate demand for too much development.
- Encourage more business involvement in public transportation programs.
- Increase north-south public transit routes, possibly using local shuttles.
- Consider a shuttle-system for Shoreline Amphitheater concerts to reduce congestion for these events.
- Improve scheduling of VTA bus services to increase usage.
- Encourage the VTA to use varied bus sizes based on expected demand.

Pedestrian/Bike Connections

- Encourage more pedestrian and bike-accessible routes through neighborhoods.
- Emphasize bike lanes and paths to expand bike-ability in the city.
- Provide more bike paths in the North Bayshore area.
- Consider closing Castro Street to vehicular traffic.

Solid Waste

Simplify recycling and garbage collection for residents.

- Separate compost and food waste collection
- Allow for recycle bins without sorting.
- Provide recycling outreach programs in schools and businesses.
- Require local stores to charge for plastic bags.
- Provide more opportunities for recycling in public parks.
- Provide programs to recycle construction debris.

Other Comments

- Improve timing on arterial traffic lights to reduce idling time.
- Consider whether the city can accommodate 15,000 more residents without losing some quality of life.
- Increase fuel economy in police cars.
- Adopt provisions to allow Segways on sidewalks.
- Limit development in flood areas of North Bayshore.
- Prepare plans to address sea-level rise.

Neighborhood Questions

1. *Land Use and Design*

El Camino Real

El Camino Real has the opportunity to become a Grand Boulevard, i.e. more pedestrian friendly. On the other hand, too much building height along the street would be towering and could eliminate mountain views. Three story or higher buildings should be set back from the street and adjoining properties.

- Allow high density, mixed retail, office and residential uses along El Camino Real.
- Consider expanding the boundaries of the El Camino Real focus area to include some of the adjacent multi-family zoning districts, roughly 500-1000 feet further south than proposed.
- Encourage redevelopment of unused land and vacant buildings.
- Reduce fragmented ownership and encourage parcel consolidation.
- Provide City permit-only parking lots along El Camino Real to serve small businesses that do not have sufficient parking.
- Improve walkability by providing buffers to traffic noise and slowing traffic.
- Require high-quality architecture for high-density projects.

General Comments

- Consider higher density development in the Bonita/Boranda neighborhood.
- Consider adding senior housing, medical offices and other housing to the Blossom Valley Shopping Center and Grant Park Plaza.
- Consider opportunities for other uses, such as parking garages and recreation, such as tennis courts on top of garages.
- Establish an easier process to create one-story neighborhoods.

2. *Housing*

Support a variety of housing options, including high-density housing on transit corridors or near job centers and services, while being sensitive to residential development in existing neighborhoods.

- Allow mixed-use residential and non-residential housing in the Blossom Valley Center, Grant Park Plaza, along El Camino Real, on office sites along Castro Street and Miramonte Avenue and in the North Bayshore and Whisman industrial areas.
- Focus new housing near destinations to reduce the need for automobiles.
- Supply a variety of housing types to ensure viability of a variety of transportation options.
- Ensure that higher density provides a quality living environment for residents.
- Focus density along El Camino.
- Ensure security and traffic safety in higher density construction.
- Provide transportation improvements with higher density development.
- Consider higher density between Miramonte and Castro.
- Encourage one-story granny flats (companion units).
- Allow Habitat for Humanity to use the 919 Mountain View Ave site (4 partially constructed homes).
- Use affordable housing strategies, such as the Bridge Corp. model, to alleviate the land costs.
- Provide housing support to teachers and other community-serving occupations.
- Prioritize transit access for low-income residents.
- Ensure that senior housing is supplied, primarily on El Camino. Facilities should contain multiple levels of care.

- Ownership housing, rather than rental units, create more stability in neighborhoods.
- Maintain continuity in single-family neighborhoods.
- Allow for neighborhoods to stay single-story.
- Improve noticing for new developments.
- Improve consistency in housing development guidelines.

3. Transportation

Bicycle and Pedestrian Circulation

Expand the bicycle and pedestrian circulation network and improve overall safety for users.

- Expand the bike route system to provide more north-south routes.
- Construct bicycle crossings over Highway 237 and 85.
- Create a bicycle connection from Cuesta Park to the Stevens Creek Trail.
- Encourage neighborhood bicycle and pedestrian connections between neighborhood streets, such as the Marilyn Drive project.
- Build a better bike/pedestrian connection from Mountain View Ave. to Marilyn Drive.
- Improve bike parking downtown and at other commercial locations.
- Add bike lanes to the neighborhood, including along Phyllis, El Camino and California Street.
- Create bike routes along quiet streets.
- Complete the Permanente Creek and Stevens Creek trails.
- Explore bike/ped paths that are separated from roadways.
- Provide support facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists, such as restrooms.
- Improve pedestrian safety, particularly crossing El Camino Real.

- Install mid-block, flashing crosswalks provide safe routes for walkers.
- Provide a crossing guard at Graham Middle School.
- Consider reducing the width and/or lanes on roads to reduce speeds or add room for bicyclists and pedestrians, including California Street and Miramonte Avenue.
- Improve access to Grant Park Plaza from across Phyllis Drive (Hans Ave.).

Transit

Enhanced transit services are necessary to serve the neighborhood.

- Improved transit facilities are necessary to accommodate increased density.
- Consider a “green” shuttle system that can provide options for youth and seniors to access parks and shopping areas. Utilize the Blossom Valley Shopping Center as a pick-up point.
- Provide bus facilities with restrooms, especially at Castro and El Camino.
- Improve the public perception, and reduce the cost of transit.
- Increase the parking supply at the train station.
- Explore “neighborhood-based transit” transit that serves the interior of neighborhoods, rather than arterials.
- Use technology to improve access to route and destination information available by transit.
- Consider dispatch-based transit options to improve non-automotive transportation opportunities for seniors and those who cannot afford car-ownership.

Other Comments

- Extend South Drive to Miramonte Avenue to improve connectivity.
- Encourage traffic calming measures such as roundabouts instead of speed humps.

- Reduce congestion levels on Grant Road and near Graham Middle School.
- Explore rental facilities for bicycles.
- Improve the intersection at Rengstorff and Central.
- Improve sight distances at intersections by limiting where cars can park.
- Plant more trees.
- Improve air quality.
- Install plug-in facilities at public properties.
- Increase the parking supply or reduce the number of cars in Downtown.
- Discourage a high-speed rail station in Mountain View.

4. Public Facilities and Infrastructure

Maintain excellent public facilities and infrastructure in Mountain View, including Cuesta Park, traffic engineering support, the maintenance cycle of public improvements and Graham Field.

- Maintain facilities before building new ones.
- Ensure facilities are scaled up in coordination with projected growth, especially schools.
- Focus attention on creating a high-quality, city-wide facility instead of creating multiple facilities spread throughout the community.
- Place utility lines underground.
- Increase the pick-up and cleaning of dumpsters.
- The outdated community center at Rengstorff needs replacement or maintenance.
- Build a real youth center.
- Build a senior center in south Mountain View.
- Provide more parking at train and light rail stations.

- Address St. Francis congestion issues with better pick-up and drop-off facilities. Encourage more carpooling/biking among the students.
- Encourage a restaurant at the train station.
- Bring back the bookmobile.
- Create a tool library to encourage people to improve their homes.

Parks

Explore opportunities to make improvements to the public park system.

- Create a new park in the Whisman area.
- Provide public tot lots for new residential developments.
- Increase usage of Gateway Park.
- Provide a new dog park.
- Increase the number and size of picnic tables at Bubb Park.
- Create a community garden at Cuesta Park.
- Expand hours for recreational swimming at community pools.
- Replace outdated lighting at Cuesta Park lighting.
- Increase enforcement at Rengstorff Park to reduce crime.

Public Involvement

Involve the public in new public facilities and programs.

- Be sensitive to community character when placing facilities.
- Improve notification for deliberation on facilities to improve participation.
- Inform the community about fiscal limitations related to new or expanded facilities or programs.
- Build leadership in volunteer services, especially by tapping into seniors.