



Mountain View General Plan Update Neighborhood Workshop:

GRANT ROAD/SYLVAN PARK AREA

May 20, 2009

Huff 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 **May 20, 2009** meeting at **Huff Elementary School**. The feedback collected from workshop participants is summarized by citywide and neighborhood topics.

Citywide Policy Questions

1. *Economic and Community Development*

Sustainable Development

New development should embrace sustainable principles. A safe network of trails and open spaces should connect mixed-use and higher density developments. This would lead to a community with less traffic, where people can walk and bike to work.

- Create a walkable community through mixed-use development.
- Grow food locally and work with the public to diet healthier.
- Collect and reuse rainwater.
- Separate bike lanes and trails from auto-use.
- Build to meet geological concerns, like creeks, fault lines, flood zones, etc.
- Increase senior and affordable housing.
- Increase the heights of buildings if there is no room to grow outwards.
- Accommodate higher densities and mix-use in appropriate areas, especially near transit.
- Reduce the amount of asphalt used for parking surfaces.
- Locate a high speed rail stop in Mountain View.
- Add mixed-use/residential above office in industrial areas (Two Worlds example) and disclose any impacts.
- Increase the day-care areas throughout Mountain View.

El Camino Real

El Camino Real should be beautified and feel safe--not abandoned. Mixed-use developments would provide more local, walkable shopping opportunities with more resident "eyes on the street".

- Build more mixed-use developments, especially on the vacant, abandoned parcels.
- Supply efficient, effective transportation along El Camino Real because it is appropriate.
- Allow for higher densities along El Camino Real to improve safety.
- Beautify El Camino Real.
- Increased heights along El Camino Real are okay, but any buildings higher than 2-3 stories should be setback in order to reduce tunnel effect. The focus should include transitions, including landscaping.

- Pursue the beautification of El Camino Real, in coordination with adjacent cities which began some years ago.
- Create better, visible city boundaries and gateways for identification and a smooth transition, including but not limited to signs indicating the city and population.
- Allow uses identified during General Plan Visioning process.
- Improve existing retail east of Dale on W. El Camino Real.
- Expand Stevens Creek Trail to be accessible to El Camino Real west of Highway 85.

North Bayshore

Job growth is a community asset and should continue in the North Bayshore area, but special attention should be paid to impacts, such as a loss of open space, adaptation to rising sea levels, and traffic. The area could accommodate high density housing and a hotel, but services should be provided for current and new employees and residents.

- Increase job growth.
- Improve accessibility of mass transit to area.
- Preserve open space.
- Limit development because of the threat of rising sea levels.
- Provide more services and retail for employees, like a grocery store.
- Build high density, mixed-use residential and a full-service hotel.

San Antonio Center

The San Antonio Center should be pedestrian-friendly and provide better retail options. A new precise plan is needed to assist the many property owners in developing compatible projects.

- Make the San Antonio Center walkable and reduce traffic problems, making it more pedestrian-friendly.
- Clean the site up so that it can be redeveloped.
- Develop a new specific plan and have the property owners collaborate.
- Big-box retail is okay but some concerns over traffic.
- Underground the parking at the San Antonio Center for future development.
- Recruit more mid-priced, retail department stores (i.e. Kohl's) as space opens.

Downtown

- Provide a supermarket and more mid-priced, retail department stores.

Whisman

- Provide a grocery store for daily needs and services.

General

- Plan and supply housing to meet changing demographic characteristics.
- Concentrate commercial businesses in areas.
- Create walkable destinations for office and residential areas.
- Support affordable housing, especially mobile homes.

2. Open Space and Conservation

Intelligent Integration of Open Space into Land-use Design

- Intelligently integrate open space into land-use design, connecting the community through an accessible network. Connectivity is a key attribute.

Park Amenities

- Provide amenities/activities for all age groups, such as a basketball hoop for older kids.
- Provide gathering places, fountains, and other amenities at all parks, regardless of size.
- Increase water quality and collaborate with outside organizations to do so.

Community Garden

- Plant organic landscaping to supply local fruit and vegetables.
- Develop community gardens and programs for them.

Dog Park

- Expand dog space around the city because it is currently in the wrong part of town.
- Add dog parks to underserved Grant Road area.
- Allow off-leash dogs at Cuesta Park.

Trails

- Maintain trails.
- Connect Stevens Creek to the Heatherstone/Dale area with a bridge over Highway 85.
- Create more pedestrian access across busy streets—more trail connections.

Increase, Preserve, and Restore Open Space

Opportunities for acquiring additional open space should be acted upon, whether for new trails, pocket parks, or the restoration of agricultural land. Emphasis should be placed on underserved areas in order to balance open space throughout Mountain View.

- Look for opportunities to increase Shoreline open space.
- Act on opportunities to increase mini-parks/pocket parks.
- Convert San Antonio Center into open space.
- Expand park land near northern end of Stevens Creek Trail.
- Balance open space citywide.
- Create lots of good parks.
- Build more parks on the north side of the city because it is underserved; the south side of the City has plenty of parks.
- Invest in more park land and do not over depend on schools for open space.
- Keep up the restoration of Stevens Creek Trail.
- Preserve Pacific Flyway at Shoreline.
- Locate parks in a walkable proximity from housing.
- Preserve orchards and other historical agricultural land and structures.

Cuesta Park

- Preserve Cuesta Park Annex as a more natural environment rather than a formal park.
- Maintain visual connection to mountains from Cuesta Park.
- Build public swimming pool at Cuesta Park.
- Extend trail from Stevens Creek Trail to Cuesta Park.

3. Health and Safety

Walking and Bicycling Pathways

Walking and biking pathways should provide connectivity and safety.

- Increase walkability and bikeability.
- Expand bike trails.
- Add more, better bike trail signage, especially when trails detour from the main roads.
- Acquire land now for future trails.
- Keep pedestrian networks safe.
- Explore better design solutions, like separating pathways and bike lanes from streets.

- Keep traffic on arteries.
- Encourage complete right-turn stops at traffic lights so pedestrians can cross safely.
- Create permanent no-traffic zones, particularly on Castro Street.
- Install illuminated crosswalks because they are easy-to-use.
- Build sidewalks that follow ADA regulations.

Mixed-Use Development

- Create mixed-use shopping areas that accommodate flea markets, art, or community gardens.
- Focus on walkable communities, with a concentration of shopping and mixed-uses within a close proximity.

Community Gardens

- Convert existing public garden areas to community gardens. There needs to be more accessible community gardens throughout the community.
- Encourage healthy food and gardening.

Problem Streets and Intersections

- Make the street to Sleeper Park safer. It curves and is unsafe because of the increased traffic resulting from Stevens Creek Trail use. Some suggestions include installing safety features, sidewalks, and bike lanes [some participants disagree with adding sidewalks].
- Enforce traffic regulations at the Sylvan Avenue and Moorpark Avenue intersection. Drivers run the stop sign, and it is generally unsafe to cross.

Farmers Market

- Expand the hours of the farmers market to include weekdays and nights.
- Establish Satellite Farmer's Markets—not on Sunday—in various areas around the City.

General

- Levy a special tax on fast food like on tobacco--a policy that will tax establishments on volume in order to enable a community health offset.
- Establish priorities and consider feasibility.
- Regulate smoking in public spaces.

- Increase the use of covered walkways in commercial areas for use in inclement weather.
- Construct a sound wall for Highway 85 [some participants disagree about effectiveness].
- Be more aggressive with planting trees for increased tree cover as well as with replacing those that have been removed by the City.
- Conduct public health outreach.
- Noise along Hwy 85 is huge impact.

4. Climate Change and Sustainability

Water

- Address concern about lack of water.
- Recycle gray water and provide outreach on its use.

Plants and Gardens

Planting and gardening activities can make Mt. View more sustainable. Private and public development should expand Mountain View's tree cover and focus on non-invasive, drought tolerant landscaping. Residents should be encouraged to compost and plant edible gardens.

- Focus on native plants for public and private development.
- Focus on growing foods that are water appropriate and healthy.
- Increase the number of trees and tree cover.
- Create low-water, drought-tolerant landscape guidelines and design templates.
- Encourage edible gardens.
- Protect fruit trees—can be valuable and sustainable source of fruit.
- Improve Mountain View's overview of landscape requirements such as tree removal.
- Encourage composting.

Green Building and Business

Mt. View businesses should reduce their impact on the environment through green business and building practices.

- Add solar on school buildings and homes; think outside the box.
- Be proactive in encouraging alternative energy use.
- Make businesses sell healthier things.
- Encourage more green business.
- Consider impact on what businesses sell.

- Green building standards should be implemented and be a uniform standard with neighboring cities.
- Some type of incentive for more green business practices.
- Encourage solar with easier permitting, lower fees, and a streamlined review process.
- Create building standards of installation of electric vehicle charging stations.
- Require LEED green building design.
- Increase the recycling of building materials for residential.
- Increase recycled water for landscaping.
- Promote solar programs that allow additional energy that was produced by a property owner to be sold back to PG&E or City.

Energy Reduction

- Build electric charging stations and incentivize the use of electric cars.
- Provide recharging facilities in City parking lots for electric vehicles.
- Perform outreach campaign to encourage citizens to use a clothesline.

Bicycling and Walking Pathways

- Build more pedestrian connections and overpasses for major arteries that divide the neighborhood.
- Build more bike paths.
- Increase safety of bikers.
- Institute a shared bike program throughout city.

Shuttles/Buses

- Connect shuttles/buses to major destinations such as San Antonio Center.

Mixed-Use Development

- Increase accessibility of stores and services to reduce the need to drive.

General

- Add noise walls along freeways.
- Support campaign to spare the air—reduce particulate matter from fireplaces.
- Strategy around healthy eating (i.e., taxes on unhealthy food).
- Fix the Evelyn Avenue and Moorpark Avenue intersection—hard to cross.
- Limit use of plastic bags—keep them out of creek.
- Do not develop Cuesta Park Annex.
- Hire City resource person--Sustainability Coordinator.

Neighborhood Questions

1. *Land Use and Design*

El Camino Real

El Camino Real should be developed to allow for a mix of residential and local-serving, commercial uses. The heights along El Camino Real can increase as long as the street remains comfortable for pedestrians. More bike and pedestrian use should be sought and accommodated, but auto-parking should be sufficient and well-designed.

- Allow uses identified during the General Plan Visioning. Commercial uses are preferred. One mixed-use opportunity property is the mobile home park at near Stevens Creek and El Camino Real.
- Retail needs to be improved along corridor and should be focused on serving local residents.
- Implement Grand Boulevard Initiative principles to create bike and pedestrian use, though there is concern that it will add usage.
- Increase heights along El Camino Real but keep it comfortable and pedestrian in scale. Sufficient, well-designed parking should be provided.
- Plant more trees along El Camino Real.
- Make heights two or three stories along El Camino Real near Sunnyvale.
- Create a transition from Mt. View and Sunnyvale.

Mixed-Use Development

- Develop creative mixed-use projects on undeveloped land.
- Redevelop Nob Hill Shopping Center and Mt. View Shopping Center as mixed-use developments.

General

- Develop land use areas and focus areas in tandem with transit plan.
- Redevelop old buildings while preserving historical significance.
- Spread the housing burden throughout city, instead of locating all the new units in one area.
- Improve bike accessibility.
- Attract new business and growth.
- Ensure range of housing costs for new development.
- Increase senior housing.
- Focus area boundaries are good.

Grant Road/Sylvan Avenue Area

- Locate new off-leash dog park near Sleeper Park.
- Mitigate new traffic from Grant Road/Levin Avenue redevelopment.
- Disperse the low-income housing throughout the entire neighborhood.
- Housing should remain the same in the Grant Road neighborhood, and new developments should be compatible.

2. Housing

Higher Density Development

- Locate higher density housing along Castro Street, between Highway 101 and El Camino Real, and near schools.
- Grow fast with an additional 3,000-4,000 units by next year.
- Create well-designed housing (i.e., Whisman Road).

Mixed-Use Residential

- Build mixed-use with housing along El Camino Real and at Nob Hill Shopping Center.

Single-Family Residential

- Provide low density, single-family residential with green space.
- Keep single-family residential in the Grant Road area.
- Relax restrictions on building granny flats.
- Build single-family, large lots in the nursery area at the end of Martens Ave. Do not open up Yorkshire Way to connect to Martens.
- Reduce noise from Hwy 85 into the Grant Road neighborhood.

General

- Reevaluate zoning restrictions in residential areas.
- Maintain neighborhood character.
- Residents need better access to schools from housing.
- Do not build housing if not enough water supply.
- Address lifecycle in housing stock due to natural turnover.
- Supply more senior housing to meet the need.
- Plan housing according to demographics.
- Locate community meeting rooms separately or in the school—have these be the centers of residential areas.

- Build housing at the abandoned 7-11 near the intersection of Moorpark Way and Sylvan Avenue.

3. Transportation

Pedestrian Access

- Improve pedestrian crossings at major intersections.
- Work with community and school to encourage kids to walk to school.
- Encourage safe routes to school programs.
- Add pedestrian connection from Yuba Drive and Sleeper Park neighborhoods to the Sylvan area.
- Rebuild the terrible, raised sidewalks near the intersection and along El Camino Real and Grant Road.

Bicycle Pathways and Storage

The bicycle pathway network needs greater safety and connectivity throughout Mountain View. Bikers need to feel safe while riding and that their belongings are stored securely when their bikes are parked.

- Secure bike storage areas.
- Increase bike lane network with greater connectivity between communities.
- Separate bike lanes from auto-use.
- Add bike lanes to HWY 237, Grant Road, and Stevens Creek Trail.
- Finish Stevens Creek connection to increase school-related use.
- Improve bike/ped. connection safety amenities along El Camino Real
- Make Grant Road safe for bicycling, such as by adding a shoulder and reducing the number of driveways.
- Work with the community and school to encourage kids, especially high school students, to bike to school. One idea is to work with businesses on incentives, like a free Starbucks coffee or lower bus fares.
- Evaluate parking with regard to bicycle safety.
- Widen bike lanes to avoid bikers running into opening doors.
- Connect Stevens Creek Trail to Downtown Transit Station more effectively.
- Improved shuttle/bus from Grant Road to Downtown.

Public Transportation

Frequency and connectivity lead to the success of public transportation. Electric buses and feeder shuttles should connect to train and light rail stations.

Programs to target the segments of the community that are not reliant on cars need to be developed and pursued.

- Connect electric buses and shuttles to train and light rail stations.
- Encourage use of transit.
- Make convenient feeder transportation and connect to main rail transportation and downtown.
- Run smaller buses more frequently.
- Develop and implement shuttle services similar to Stanford's Marguerite, with potential stops being downtown and the medical center.
- Provide free shuttle/jitney shuttle system, potentially paid for by business owners.
- Target seniors with new shuttle system.
- Work with VTA to reinstitute program to bus kids to parks and recreation.
- Increase Caltrain service, especially on weekends.
- Improve access from Grant Road to trail.

Cars and Traffic

- Increase use of Zipcars.
- Discourage cars cutting through neighborhood with enforcement.
- Add more traffic calming measures, especially to Levin Avenue.
- Post an on-line ride-sharing program.
- Improve traffic on Grant Road from cars stacking from entry to Highway 85.
- Have multiple pick-up and drop-off areas at schools to disperse traffic.
- Reduce traffic from Mountain View High School.
- Reduce traffic along Grant Road during peak hours.
- Must consider traffic/transportation when planning for this area.
- Work with outside agencies to reduce the traffic problem during morning commute on Hwy 237.
- The El Camino Hospital has no traffic congestion
- Prevent neighborhood from getting cut-through. Drivers bypass Bernardo by taking Dale Avenue.
- Eliminate possibility of traffic from new Grant/Levin project at intersection.
- Manage noise from high traffic streets, roads, and highways.
- Make it possible to reach places in the City without a car.

General

- Must consider traffic/transportation when planning for this area.
- Include Sunnyvale's Cherry Chase Elementary on plans.

4. Public Facilities and Infrastructure

Parks

- Expand and extend the hours for Eagle Park pool.
- Build off-leash dog park at Cuesta Park—"the bowl." If not pursued, then another option is to allow off-leash dogs during certain hours.
- Encourage YMCA and such programs.
- Create more park areas for kids, like skate boarding.
- Expand picnic areas at parks.
- Add recycling bins at parks, especially Cooper Park.

Library

- Expand the library and keep current, good access.
- Make public libraries a high budget priority.

Sidewalks and Streets

- Improve the sidewalk safety on Grant Road and El Camino Real.
- Widen roads for new infrastructure.
- Keep neighborhood streets narrow.
- Add sidewalks in Waverly Park area [some participants disagree].
- Increase trees in median.
- Underground utilities.

Waste Disposal

- Pick-up garbage at parks and schools on weekends.

Facilities

- Reopen DMV in Mountain View.
- Locate more teen centers near schools.

Water

- Conserve water.
- Permit/allow gray water.
- Purchase of emergency water barrels.
- Encourage businesses to conserve water.
- Increase service from purple pipe.

- Install water collection devices.

Public Safety

- Decrease noise from Highway 85—sound wall stops.
- Make public safety a high priority and do not cut.

General

- Encourage churches and community centers which make cities healthier.
- Establish welcome wagon on sustainability for new residents.
- Create safe, walkable route for kids to walk to school from new Shea Homes development—consider even busing them.
- Install DSL/cable optic lines.
- Work with state to remove weeds along HWY 237.