

Presentation to the Mountain View EPC

To begin, the EPC should think of this proposal as Merlone Geier's first proposal, still an overreach and subject to large changes, and not be swayed by how much it has been "improved" from their original concept. Although the pedestrian experience has been upgraded from a failing grade, there is still much to do to make this work for both the region and the immediate neighborhood.

The Greater San Antonio Community Association is very concerned that this proposal is being billed as "below the density threshold of the General Plan". We question how much analysis, especially in terms of traffic, went into the creation of the nuts and bolts of the San Antonio section of the General Plan. It's our understanding that the General Plan is primarily an overview vision for creating several sustainable, walkable, village centers. It is not a document that could address the many potential problems, which was the reason for the community drive for the creation of a Precise Plan first.

We are adamantly opposed to allowing all the proposed uses on this one four acre property at one of the city's busiest traffic intersections. If this were to go forward at the proposed intensity, there would need to be MAJOR mitigation efforts, along the lines of sponsoring a "super shopping shuttle" bus all around Mountain View, including San Antonio Road, or funding a major portion of the San Antonio overpass make-over. As Merlone Geier is most likely planning on acquiring more property within the center or nearby, it can spread these uses out, giving more open space as a neighborhood trade-off for the vastly increased heights and traffic impacts that come with the implementation of the General Plan.

There are three main areas of concern for the immediate neighborhood-
traffic: general congestion; and safety issues, like short cut traffic through the residential neighborhood
loss of local small businesses
poor placement and small amount of public open space

Traffic

First and foremost, we are concerned about the impact to our neighborhood's traffic and safety. Specifically, we ask that MGP move the location of the parking garage to the San Antonio side of the project. Where it is currently proposed, drivers, not wanting to miss the start of their movie, will divert off of southbound San Antonio Road, instead of waiting for multiple traffic signal changes in order to turn left, and hurry around the curve by the music school, pass the pedestrians crossing from the train station, and then cut through Pacchetti Way, where kids cross alone by the circle to get to a primary Crossings park and pool. Or, drivers would stay on Showers Drive, where there is heavy pedestrian crossing activity with poor visibility due to a curve. Also, it is the residents' vision to create a pedestrian and local services- friendly main street on California Street, and traffic coming in and out of the parking garage there would ruin the chances of that being fulfilled. We would like to keep San Antonio and El Camino the main arteries and keep the bulk of car traffic off of Showers Drive and California Street.

Preserving Local Character and Serving Local Needs

Local businesses within the change area should not only be preserved, but be fully integrated into this broad new village center concept. The finite shared parking arrangement with the Milk Pail is unacceptable. The Milk Pail is as much an anchor to the village as the Safeway and any other retail that leases the center and will bring much more foot traffic than Fidelity or Jared's Jewelers. It should not look like a lone remnant from an earlier period, but highlighted as a Mountain View gem. Diversity of

styles and price points is a hallmark of an authentic downtown experience. The General Plan specifically highlights the balance needed to be both a regional and a community destination. That is difficult to achieve strictly through market forces, which is why we recommend city intervention to achieve this important goal. This may mean requiring below market rental rates for resident-serving businesses, such as the Kumon tutoring center.

Open Space

A much larger plaza, directly connected to the theaters, for movie-goers to meet friends and mingle into the evening, should be placed where it would minimize noise to the nearby residents. We also suggest placing offices above the California Street retail, to be particularly convenient to Caltrain, and quieter at night. We feel strongly that all the new shopping and theater visitors as well as new residents from Phase I and other planned apartments in the change area should enjoy a city neighborhood park, as our small but lovely privately owned and maintained parks will be easily be overwhelmed by the influx of people. A Shockley site exhibit could also easily become the focal point of another sizeable plaza or park which would greatly enhance the walking experience along those busy streets.

We all have a common goal. We want to see this project become one of Mountain View's finest assets. Our neighborhood association is eager to work more closely with MGP and the city to ensure that we get the outcome we're all looking for: a vibrant regional center that's also a beloved neighborhood village. A place that's easily accessible by car or by foot, is safe and quiet for residents at night, and allows popular retail chains and cherished local businesses to thrive.

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