

**From:** [Elke MacGregor](#)  
**To:** [Council, City](#)  
**Subject:** 800 San Antonio  
**Date:** Monday, May 6, 2024 7:59:01 AM

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## Honorable city council members

Please consider incorporating language into the 800 San Antonio apartment project that considers future bike and pedestrian access along the San Antonio corridor (*24' of public easement space for future expansion of bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure along San Antonio Road*).

The bike improvements along Charleston-Arastradero have been such a great benefit to the public and it would be nice to see this bicycle friendly approach continued on other East-West corridors in South Palo Alto. These corridors provide excellent access to the Baylands as well as to the hillside for locals using bicycles as transportation.

Elke MacGregor and family  
55 Roosevelt Circle, Palo Alto

**From:** [pennyellson12@gmail.com](mailto:pennyellson12@gmail.com)  
**To:** [Council, City](#)  
**Subject:** Comments on 800 San Antonio for Monday  
**Date:** Sunday, May 5, 2024 5:00:13 PM

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Honorable City Council,

Please consider my comments on the 800 San Antonio project (Item 15 on the agenda that is before you Monday evening).

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**On page 3 of Attachment B, the Draft Ordinance, under Section 6(a). Public Benefits,** the ordinance currently reads, *"The public benefits provided by the Project include deed-restricted BMR units in excess of the minimum required, retail commercial space on the ground floor, and space for future expansion of bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure along San Antonio Road."* **It should say this, "The public benefits provided by the Project include deed-restricted BMR units in excess of the minimum required, retail commercial space on the ground floor, and up to 24' of public easement space for future expansion of bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure along San Antonio Road."** This language would be consistent with the Supplemental Report Council received on Friday. Please add this language before you approve this document, so the purpose of the easement for bike/ped transit facilities, and the amount of space will be legally documented in the land use record so it cannot be lost.

**In Attachment C -- APPROVAL NO. 2024-\_\_\_\_ RECORD OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PALO ALTO LAND USE APPROVAL FOR 800-808 San Antonio Road Planned Home Zoning Project (23PLN-00010)**

The Table on **page 3** mentions Comp Plan Policy T-1.19 *"Provide facilities that encourage and support bicycling and walking."* In the column that is supposed to explain how the project adheres or does not adhere to Comp Plan, it says, *"The building includes sufficient short and long term bicycle parking."* While it is true that the project provides bicycle parking, the project's bicycle parking is not connected to bicycle infrastructure on the abutting San Antonio Road that could in any way be considered "sufficient" to "encourage and support bicycling". Sharrows on a 4- to 5-lane arterial, posted 35MPH with auto traffic volumes that exceed 30k daily are contraindicated. How can provision of bicycle parking be considered sufficient facilities to encourage and support bicycling if the owner of the parked bike cannot leave the premises safely due to dangerously poor bike infrastructure on the arterial street? What use is bicycle parking if there is no existing route to safely leave the building to ride a bike? When and how will San Antonio Road get "sufficient" bicycle facilities? Without bike lanes, the proposed on-site bike parking will be just another storage room for unused stuff.

**Please direct staff NOW to ensure that the conditions of approval require the public benefit of a public easement of up to 24' of special setback space for future expansion of bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure along San Antonio Road.** Without this, the project is neither functional nor "sufficient" for people who bike, and It will not be compliant to the Comprehensive Plan.

This project, without on-street bike facilities, fails to conform with numerous Comprehensive Plan Transportation Elements goals, policies and programs. Key among them is GOAL T-1: Create a sustainable transportation system, complemented by a mix of land uses, that emphasizes walking, bicycling, use of public transportation and other methods to reduce GHG emissions and the use of single-occupancy motor vehicles.

It fails to conform with Policy T-1.17: Require new office, commercial, and multi-family residential developments to provide improvements that improve bicycle and pedestrian connectivity as called for in the 2012 Palo Alto Bicycle & Pedestrian Transportation Plan.

What the Attachment C Table does not say is that Policy T-1.19 is coupled with other policies like Policy T-1.17 and specific Programs, like Program T1.19.2 “Prioritize investments for enhanced pedestrian access and bicycle use to/from surrounding communities, including by incorporating improvements from related City plans, for example the 2012 BTP...”

### **Big Picture Things to Consider:**

**1). Given the unanticipated scale of development that has opened up for high density residential projects by the new Housing Element in targeted areas of Palo Alto, has the city considered studying aggregate impacts of this development on multi-modal LOS and perhaps implementing a Nexus Study to create a basis to collect Transportation Impact Fees to help fund needed bike/ped/transit infrastructure in these areas?**

**2). The type of action I have described above with regard to defining and preserving the public easement special setback will need to be incorporated in approvals for every San Antonio Road project in the pipeline or entering the pipeline in order to create useful, contiguous bike/ped/transit facilities for thousands of new residents all along the corridor. Please direct staff to consider the best way to get this important work done.**

It is very important to legally document the Special Setback’s purpose and size for use as a public easement for future bike/ped/transit facility use so community members and future decision-makers may refer to it to ensure that the special setback can be fully used for its intended purpose. The language must be clear—not open to interpretation-- and legally attached to the site’s land use record.

**Finally, please direct staff to incorporate similar language for the public easement 24’ special setback in the ordinances, and conditions of approval for all projects that are in or that enter the pipeline for the San Antonio corridor.**

Thank you for considering my comments.

Penny Ellson  
(writing as an individual)



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**From:** [Ken Joye](#)  
**To:** [Council, City](#)  
**Subject:** San Antonio Rd project (specific) and corridor (general)  
**Date:** Friday, May 3, 2024 2:51:41 PM

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I have learned that at the 6 May 2024 City Council meeting, item #15 on the agenda pertains to a project on San Antonio Rd:

PUBLIC HEARING / QUASI-JUDICIAL. 800 San Antonio Road [23PLN-00010]: Recommendation on Applicant's Request for a Rezone from Service Commercial to Planned Community/Planned Home Zoning (PC/PHZ).

One portion of that item has to do with a 24' special setback. As many people have observed, San Antonio Rd is both a focus of much housing "desire" and a very motor-vehicle-centric roadway. If many units of housing are to be developed on San Antonio Rd in the near future to meet our housing element targets, it will be quite important for that roadway to accommodate all types of users.

When you discuss this particular project, I sincerely hope that you consider how the land use there will work with other uses along that corridor. Please make sure that space along the length of the corridor is set aside for transit, pedestrians, bicycles and other non-automobile conveyances. If the municipal code does not provide for this already, please press staff to make changes so that it does.

Making a change for one specific project without considering the general need would be sub-optimal.

Requiring a special setback without specifying what may be done in that space would be similarly sub-optimal.

Thank you very much for your close attention to this and related matters!

Ken Joye  
Ventura neighborhood, Palo Alto

**From:** [pennyellson12@gmail.com](mailto:pennyellson12@gmail.com)  
**To:** [Kamhi, Philip](#); [Lait, Jonathan](#)  
**Cc:** [Council, City](#)  
**Subject:** 800 San Antonio--Action item 15 On City Council's agenda for Monday.  
**Date:** Friday, May 3, 2024 12:58:00 PM

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Hi Jonathan & Philip,

I'm looking through Muni Code re: the San Antonio Road Special Setback. I see no reference to its specific required future use for bicycle/pedestrian/transit facilities on San Antonio Road. Would you please point me to Muni Code language that requires this specific use?

I see the special setback for 800 San Antonio Road referenced in the Staff Report, but here again **I see no reference to its specific required future use for bicycle/pedestrian/transit facilities.** (I'll admit I read this quickly as I am busy with other volunteer work for the city today. It's possible I missed it.) Nor do I see such language in Attachment D to the Staff Report. Would you please point me to language that explains exactly how much of the Special Setback(s) is required to be used for bike/ped/transit purposes? (I do wish PABAC had opportunity to review the Special Setback language.)

Please clarify. Attachment D mentions a "Minimum Front Yard" (which also refers to a 24' Special Setback). On the next row, this table references a "Special Setback (Front)". I'm not sure how to read this. Does this mean the applicant must provide a 24' Minimum Front Yard plus a 24' Special Setback for bike/ped/transit facilities, totaling 48'? Or is there just one Special Setback for both of these purposes, totaling 24'? If there is just one 24' setback, what portion of that is required to be preserved for bike/ped/transit facilities? Would you please highlight these areas on the plans to help decision-makers ensure that street furniture, landscaping, etc. does not intrude on space intended for bike/ped/transit facilities?

Question: Does City Council need to incorporate preservation of a specified amount of Special Setback space for bike/ped/transit facilities in their motion if that is not already specified? Philip, what should that amount of space be for San Antonio Road?

**Please carefully and clearly document required bike/ped/transit use of the Special Setback space for the future, so it will not be contested when the city needs it. This new residential community will need a continuous preserved setback along the San Antonio corridor for these transportation facilities to serve new residents of the planned new housing.**

Thank you in advance for considering my comments and answering these questions.

Sincerely,

Penny Ellson  
(writing as an individual)

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**From:** [slevy@ccsce.com](mailto:slevy@ccsce.com)  
**To:** [Council, City](#)  
**Cc:** [Lait, Jonathan](#)  
**Subject:** 800 San Antonio rezone  
**Date:** Friday, May 3, 2024 10:52:23 AM

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Dear Mayor Stone and council members,

I write in support of the staff recommendations to move this project forward so these units can be built asap.

I write as a long-time resident and also as an economist working with public agencies on housing related issues.

As you know

--this project is in an area designated by council for this type of housing and is close to a similar project already approved by council

--it brings larger and for sale BMR units--exactly what the council has been hoping for

--it arrives through the city's PHZ process supporting local control and is not a builder's remedy application and has full parking

--it will add customers to local businesses, meet our equity goals and through its location, bike and TDM process allow some trips to be made without driving

I want to also note two interesting and I hope guidelines for council in future actions

1) The "retail/commercial" portion is relatively small as council has permitted elsewhere to support project feasibility AND that the "retail/commercial area can be

a) food service, b) traditional retail, c) personal services and d) banking/finance

I HOPE COUNCIL MAKES THESE MARKET REALITY CHANGES TO THE RPO AND SIMILAR REQUIREMENTS TO ALLOW OUR LONG FACANT SPACES TO FILLED WITH NEW

CUSTOMERS

2) This project confirms what council learned in the ECR focus area and by examining recent applications

The zoning/development standards needed to bring forth feasible projects (hopefully not needing builder's remedy) are clear in terms of height, FAR, density, etc.

EXTENDING THESE ZONING/DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS MORE BROADLY IS THE PATH TO MEETING OUR GOALS AND RETAINING TRUE LOCAL CONTROL

Stephen Levy

Palo Alto resident and  
Director Center for Continuing Study of the California Economy



**From:** [Palo Alto Forward](#)  
**To:** [Council, City](#)  
**Subject:** 800 San Antonio - 5/6 - Agenda Item #15  
**Date:** Thursday, May 2, 2024 6:34:15 PM  
**Attachments:** [800 San Antonio Support Ltr \(05.02.24\).pdf](#)

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Honorable City Council,

Please find our attached letter of support for 800 San Antonio Road, Agenda Item #15 for the May 6th hearing.

Thank you,

--

Amie Ashton  
Executive Director, Palo Alto Forward  
650-793-1585



May 2, 2024

**SUBJECT: Agenda Item #15 - 800 San Antonio Road**

Dear Mayor Stone and Honorable Council Members,

We write in strong support of the proposed 75-unit housing development at 800 San Antonio requested through the Planned Home Zoning (PHZ) process.

In addition to helping meet our Regional Housing Needs Allocation numbers with 75 new units proposed, **construction of the 15 below-market rate (BMR) units – with zero public funding or subsidies** – is a win for our city. The project proposes several large-sized units, with the distribution of the BMR units proportionally by the building's range of unit sizes. This is especially helpful to families looking for larger-sized BMR units within our city.

We know that the San Antonio area will be changing substantially in the upcoming years, especially with the master planning effort being contemplated by the city. This project will contribute to the overall vision of a more mixed-use area along San Antonio. We note that care has been taken with landscaping in the front setback to support potential future bike access. We also commend the applicant for the provision of bicycle parking both in front of the building for visitors and within a bicycle parking room in the garage to facilitate multi-modal trips.

The project proposes dense housing in our jobs-rich area less than one mile from Caltrain, which directly helps our **environment** (with lowered vehicle miles traveled), **economy** (more residents to shop locally consistent with recommendation #10 from the City's Economic Development Strategy and a larger property tax base), **schools** (potential new students to stem enrollment declines), and **equity goals** (housing at various income levels makes for a stronger community where people thrive).

We urge you to approve this project. Demonstrate our city's commitment to housing to our residents, especially those who identified "more housing" as the #1 priority for the city in this year's annual survey.

Sincerely,

Amie Ashton, Executive Director

And on Behalf of the Board of Palo Alto Forward

[Homes for Everyone? YES!](#)

**From:** [pennyellson12@gmail.com](mailto:pennyellson12@gmail.com)  
**To:** [Council, City; Lait, Jonathan](#)  
**Cc:** [Architectural Review Board; Planning Commission; pabacpaloalto@googlegroups.com](#)  
**Subject:** FW: 800 San Antonio Road  
**Date:** Thursday, May 2, 2024 2:11:26 PM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)  
[image002.png](#)

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Hi Jonathan,

Thank you for your reply.

We can all work together to ensure that the San Antonio Road special setback is preserved for its intended use for bicycle, pedestrian, transit facilities. Let's make sure renderings and plans going forward do not fill the special 24-foot San Antonio Road setback with street furniture and plantings that will have to be removed later in order to put the special setback to its intended use. Drawings should clearly lay out which parts of the space are reserved for bikes, pedestrians and transit facilities. This transportation special setback should be in addition to space applicants wish to use for other important amenities. A lively, new residential street needs space for all of these things, so that the people who live there will feel like part of our community and so they will be safely, conveniently and comfortably connected via transit and foot-powered transportation.

I look forward to seeing how staff makes the special setback work toward the City of Palo Alto Comprehensive Plan Transportation Element's many Goals, Policies and Programs that require the city to *"Create a sustainable transportation system, complemented by a mix of land uses and other methods to reduce GHG emissions and the use of single-occupancy motor vehicles."* (Goal T-1)

I ask, going forward, the city's valued advisory committees (ARB, PTC, PABAC) to also watch carefully to make sure the special setback is preserved for future bicycle, pedestrian and transit facilities.

Since all of these projects will require significant transportation work, and we all recognize the significant alternative transportation deficits of San Antonio Road's existing profile, I hope that, as these high density housing projects fill the pipeline, they also will come to PABAC for review. Same for large projects that are likely to have significant traffic impacts in any other part of the city.

It takes a village to build a great village.

Best,

Penny Ellson  
(speaking as an individual)

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**From:** Lait, Jonathan <[Jonathan.Lait@CityofPaloAlto.org](mailto:Jonathan.Lait@CityofPaloAlto.org)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, May 2, 2024 9:41 AM

**To:** Ellson, Penny <pennyellson12@gmail.com>

**Cc:** Shikada, Ed <Ed.Shikada@CityofPaloAlto.org>; City Mgr <CityMgr@cityofpaloalto.org>; Kallas, Emily <Emily.Kallas@cityofpaloalto.org>; Frick, Coleman <Coleman.Frick@CityofPaloAlto.org>; Krishnan, Vishnu <Vishnu.Krishnan@CityofPaloAlto.org>; Kamhi, Philip <Philip.Kamhi@CityofPaloAlto.org>

**Subject:** RE: 800 San Antonio Road

Hi Penny, thanks for your email.

I reviewed the report and discussed with staff. While possible future use of a portion of the 24 foot special setback has been clearly discussed with the applicant, PTC and reflected on the project plans, the draft record of land use action did not have a condition memorializing this understanding. A City Council at-places memo will be published today adding such a condition as part of the staff recommendation and we'll mention this in our staff presentation on Monday.

Relatedly, staff is working to prepare a request for proposals for the San Antonio Road area plan that I hope to have released in June/July. This will be the comprehensive planning project that you and others have been anticipating. There will be ample opportunity for community engagement and I am happy to arrange a specific meeting with you and our consultants when selected to make sure you have a chance to share your local knowledge and perspective.

Thank you again for the email below allowing us to correct the record of land use action in advance of the council meeting.

Take care,

Jonathan



**JONATHAN LAIT**

Director

Planning and Development Department

(650) 329-2679 | [jonathan.lait@cityofpaloalto.org](mailto:jonathan.lait@cityofpaloalto.org)

[www.cityofpaloalto.org](http://www.cityofpaloalto.org)

Provide Feedback on Planning and Administration Services

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**From:** pennyellson12@gmail.com <pennyellson12@gmail.com>

**Sent:** Thursday, April 25, 2024 9:52 PM

**To:** Council, City <city.council@cityofpaloalto.org>; Shikada, Ed <Ed.Shikada@CityofPaloAlto.org>

**Subject:** 800 San Antonio Road

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Honorable City Council and City Manager Shikada,

I am looking at the plans for 800 San Antonio. My recollection is Mr. Lait had said a special setback would be incorporated in projects on San Antonio Road to provide room for future bike/ped facilities. I see a reference to the setback in the plans, but I also see a walking space, trees and plantings shown in areas where one might put bike facilities. Exactly how will this setback be used for bikes/peds/transit facilities?

San Antonio Road currently provides sharrows which are completely unsafe facilities on a multi-lane arterial posted 35MPH. These buildings have bike parking, but no way to safely ride a bike into town to school or to anywhere else—even for very skilled and fearless bicyclists.

I would appreciate the favor of a reply. With the number of large housing and hotel projects in the pipeline and already approved for this area, I am worried that too little has been done to plan for transportation and other needs, and soon it may be too late. Good planning is not reactive and piecemeal. The recent report by college students was very nice, but it was a learning exercise for a nice group of kids who had very shallow knowledge of the area. It was not a substitute for a comprehensive professional planning process.

What is the PLAN for bike and pedestrian and transit facilities on San Antonio Road? What is the community services facility plan for Cubberley?

As a south Palo Alto resident, I am concerned about transformative changes that are being made rapidly to this part of town with little meaningful planning or engagement of citizens.

Thank you for considering my comments.

Sincerely,

Penny Ellson



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