



~~NOTICE OF INTENTION TO CIRCULATE PETITION AND STATEMENT OF REASONS~~

Notice is hereby given by the persons whose names appear hereon of their intentions to circulate a petition within the City of Santa Cruz for the purpose of amending the City's Zoning Ordinance/Local Coastal Program Implementation Plan to provide sustainable, human-scale, housing design by requiring a vote of the people for any proposed building height and density increases beyond what is currently allowed, and to address the housing affordability crisis by increasing the required percentage of affordable units from 20% to 25% in new housing developments of 30 or more units. A statement of the reasons of the proposed action as contemplated in the petition is as follows:

1. Vote for Design: To grant the citizens of Santa Cruz their democratic right to determine the future design of their city with regards to building height and density increases (beyond that allowed under current zoning regulations, as of May 22, 2023). The City Council and city staff have made decisions regarding building heights and Floor Area Ratios that are unsustainable, widely unpopular and have already irreversibly changed the quality of life and design of the city. The public deserves a direct voice in deciding when and where future height increases will occur. This initiative would require a popular vote to approve any such proposed height and density increases over what is allowed under current zoning.

2. DPE Project Impact: The proposed Downtown Plan Expansion project, covering 29-acres south of Laurel Street will allow 1,600 new housing units in an unspecified number of "12-story" buildings which have no defined height limit. These buildings would be by far the tallest in Santa Cruz, towering over the existing neighborhoods, blocking sunlight, solar power, and dominating the city skyline. The proposed 12-story buildings could easily be TWICE as tall, and far more massive, than the behemoth Pacific/Laurel/Front project. Under existing zoning, the DPE project area already allows building heights of 35-48 feet (4-stories) which when combined with developer state density bonus entitlements, results in buildings up to 7 stories with ~1,200 units. This Project will irrevocably change the design and affordability of the region. This initiative requires a popular vote to approve height-density increases in the City.

3. For Equity-Accept the Planning Commission's Recommendation: Currently, the City's affordable inclusionary requirement (percent of affordable vs. market rate units in a development) is 20%. When developers meet the 20% requirement, the State Density Bonus Law allows them to build 50% more units all at the market rate; thus buildings become substantially taller and more massive. Due to this law, new housing developments in the City have achieved affordability rates of only 11-13% instead of the intended 20% target. To remedy this loss, the Planning Commission investigated the potential for increasing the inclusionary requirement to 25% for large housing projects over 30-units; the Commission recommended that the City Council adopt this increase, but Council did not. This initiative will implement the Planning Commission's affordable recommendation by increasing the required percentage of affordable units in new residential developments to 25% to reduce erosion of the effective affordable unit rate. This initiative aims to create more socio-economic equity, diversity in housing and remedy the housing crisis.

We the undersigned hereby request that a Ballot Title and Summary be prepared by the City Attorney for the following initiative to be placed on the March 5, 2024 city ballot.

Signed  Date: 2/24/2023
 Stephen G. Bare, Retired, Local High School Teacher

Signed  Date: 5-24-2023
 Kerasha Durham, Climate and Environmental Activist, Local Teacher

TEXT OF THE PROPOSED INITIATIVE

To the City Council of the City of Santa Cruz: We, the undersigned, registered and qualified voters of the City of Santa Cruz, present to the City Council this petition and request that the following proposed legislative action be adopted without alteration and submitted to the registered and qualified voters of the City for their adoption or rejection at the earliest regular election for which it qualifies pursuant to Section 1405 of the California Elections Code. The full text of the Measure is as follows:

HOUSING FOR PEOPLE INITIATIVE

The people of the City of Santa Cruz ordain as follows:

SECTION 1. TITLE.

The title of this ordinance shall be "Housing for People: An ordinance to provide sustainable, healthy, human-scale, housing design by requiring a vote of the people for any proposed building height and density increases beyond what is currently allowed, and to address the housing affordability crisis by increasing the required percentage of affordable units from 20% to 25% in new housing developments of 30 or more units.

SECTION 2. PURPOSES.

Purposes of the ordinance are as follows:

1. To require an affirmative vote of the people to increase the building height and density limits in the city's General Plan or Zoning Ordinance. The people of the City of Santa Cruz have a democratic right to vote on amendments to the General Plan and/or Zoning Ordinance that would allow the construction of enormous, high-rise buildings with little to no affordable housing.
2. To prevent future development from exceeding the already significant height and density limits allowed in the current General Plan without an affirmative vote of the people.
3. To increase the low and moderate housing affordability requirements to at least 25% of new units for developments with 30 or more housing units (from the existing 20% requirement).

SECTION 3. FINDINGS.

It is hereby found and determined as follows:

1. The 2012 update to the Santa Cruz City General Plan (General Plan)

significantly increased density and height limits along the City's major corridors.

2. The State Density Bonus law allows individual developments to exceed both the density and height limits of proposed developments by 30-50% beyond what is set in the General Plan if affordability requirements are met.

3. Recently adopted state laws remove the City's discretion to deny, or make infeasible, any proposed housing or multi-use development consistent with the General Plan and State Density Bonus Law, despite the potentially significant impacts they may have on existing neighborhoods, including impacts of traffic, noise, light pollution, air pollution, loss of sunlight; and on the city as a whole with impacts to water resources, open-space, city infrastructure, city services, and overall visual quality.

4. The result of recent General Plan amendments increasing density and height limits, combined with recent State laws, is that major developments are likely to be constructed at heights and Floor Area Ratios (FARs) out of scale with surrounding neighborhoods, and thus will be inconsistent with the visual character of the City.

5. Any future amendments to the General Plan that permit height or FAR increases could have a devastating effect on the City's beauty and quality of life, including impacts on access to sun and light, the city's infrastructure and increase in traffic and climate-causing emissions.

6. The uniqueness of Santa Cruz as a diverse community with the feel of a small town could be lost forever with buildings at heights and with FAR beyond those allowed in the existing General Plan and further increased by the State Density Bonus law.

7. The majority of the City Council has approved moving forward with a Downtown Plan Expansion General Plan Amendment that would allow an unlimited number of concrete towers of up to 12-stories tall (with no height limit in feet specified) in a 29-acre area south of Laurel Street.

8. The San Lorenzo River riparian corridor adjacent to the downtown area is an important visual amenity and environmental resource that could be severely damaged by the proposed building heights in the proposed Downtown Plan Expansion project.

9. The multiple 12-story towers that would be allowed in the Downtown Plan Expansion area south of Laurel could easily be twice as tall and bulky as the massive building being constructed at Pacific/Laurel/Front, and twice as tall as the Dream Inn and the Palomar Hotel, and would fundamentally change the visual character and beauty of the City forever.

10. Approval of 12-story height limits (with no objective height limit in feet) throughout the 29-acre Downtown Plan Expansion project area would set a dangerous precedent and likely lead to pressures for buildings of similar and greater heights elsewhere in the City.

11. Once the proposed height limit increases in the Downtown Plan Expansion project are approved and incorporated into the General Plan, they would be essentially irreversible, and state law would require that developments consistent with them be approved irrespective of any damaging impacts they would have on the City's visual quality, climate-changing emissions and character.

12. The City of Santa Cruz is in the middle of a housing cost crisis which is most serious for its lower and moderate income residents, yet the City's 20% affordable inclusionary requirement is rarely met due to application of the State Density Bonus law, often resulting in a net of less than 13% of the new units

being affordable.

13. As one of the least affordable cities in the country, the City needs to respond better to its affordable housing crisis by increasing requirements on market rate developments to provide more housing for moderate and lower income families.

14. The City's existing affordable housing requirements are insufficient to meet the need to adequately counter the affordable housing crisis.

15. The proposed Downtown Plan Expansion project would result in the loss of a significant amount of existing affordable housing and displace low-income, disabled and other residents.

16. The existing General Plan allows for an increase of 8,364 residential units (though the current state goal is 3736 units) and the draft Housing Element (Appendix G) states the city has a build-out capacity (which is available space under EXISTING zoning) to add 8,364 more units. This number of additional units is more than adequate to provide for the housing that Santa Cruz needs to contribute to meet the state housing goals of 3,736 by 2031, thus we do not need to allow 12 story buildings to meet our current RHNA housing target.

17. This initiative, if adopted, would produce more affordable housing while ensuring that city residents play a key role in decision-making on land use policy.

SECTION 4. IMPLEMENTATION

1. POLICIES. It is hereby determined that the following policies are approved:

1. The Santa Cruz City Council shall not adopt amendments to the City's General Plan or Zoning Ordinance that increase the allowable height limits or Floor Area Ratios (FAR) for development projects, which are greater than the height limits and FAR in effect in the City's General Plan as of June 1, 2023 (or the earliest date allowed by law), without a prior vote of the people approving the proposed increase. 2. The inclusionary housing requirements shall be increased from the existing 20% to at least 25% for developments with 30 or more housing units.

2. CITY COUNCIL ACTIONS. In order to carry out the policies contained in this ordinance the City Council is directed to take the following actions: 1. Codify the following policy in the City's Zoning Ordinance Section 24.06.080: 2. Height Limits. No amendments to the General Plan or Zoning Ordinance that would increase allowable height limits or Floor Area Ratios (FAR) for development projects shall be adopted without a prior vote of the people approving the proposed increase. 3. Amend the Zoning Ordinance to increase the inclusionary requirements to at least 25% for developments with 30 or more housing units.

SECTION 5. SEVERABILITY. If any portion of this ordinance is hereafter determined to be invalid, all remaining portions of this ordinance shall remain in full force and effect, and to this extent, this ordinance are severable.

SECTION 6. EFFECTIVE DATE. This ordinance shall take effect June 1, 2023 or as early as possible as provided by the State of California Elections Code and/or pertinent case law.

Bonnie Bush

From: Keresha Durham
Sent: Thursday, May 25, 2023 3:47 PM
To: Bonnie Bush
Subject: Housing For People submitted May 24, 2023
Attachments: Housing For People Initiative-Submitted May 24, 2023.docx

Hi Bonnie,

We submitted the attached Notice of Intention with signatures yesterday on May 24, 2023. Below are the addresses.

Thank you for your help!

We the undersigned hereby request that a Ballot Title and Summary be prepared by the City Attorney for the following initiative to be placed on the March 5, 2024 city ballot.

Stephen G. Bare, Retired, Local High School Teacher

Keresha Durham, Climate and Environmental Activist, Local Teacher

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Keresha Durham ~ educator, environmentalist
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