Height limit exemption effort starts in San Mateo

Group’s initiative would allow higher buildings, greater density, at transit

By Zachary Clark, Daily Journal, February 7, 2020

“With Measure P set to sunset by the end of the year, a group of San Mateo residents is pushing to extend existing building height limits in the city while exempting areas around transit from those restrictions.

“The initiative would extend voter-approved height and density limits in the city for 10 years while removing those restrictions around the city’s three Caltrain stations until new height limits are established through the general plan update underway. The initiative also contains provisions that remove barriers to affordable housing development in the city.

“Measure P, a 2004 extension of a measure approved by voters in 1991, caps building height in the city, including areas around transit, at 55 feet, and limits density to 50 units per acre.

“‘Don’t be fooled, this measure is not trying to meet the region’s most pressing problems,’ said Michael Weinhauer, a member of San Mateans for Responsible Government. ‘It’s nothing more than a Trojan horse for unrestricted high-rise development of 12 stories or higher in downtown, Hillsdale, and other transit sites. It ignores the traffic and infrastructure problems associated with more housing, no matter where it is located in our community.’

“Housing advocates, on the other hand, support the proposed initiative and argue it’s necessary to bring about construction of much needed homes.”

Read the full article here.